To Whom It May Concern,

The Louisville Board of Rabbis and Cantors would like to express our strong support for HB 138, which recognizes the rights of teachers of all religions to take time off for religious observance without being penalized in pursuit of retirement status.

As Jewish clergy, we are very aware of the struggle of many Jewish people to take the time they need to attend synagogue and properly observe Jewish holidays. While the major Christian holidays are often federal holidays in our country and are assumed as time off, Jewish observance can mean missing nearly 10 days every year of qualifying workdays depending on when the holidays fall. This is something that Jews must deal with no matter their workplace, but it can be particularly impactful for teachers who need to meet certain requirements for pension benefits.

HB 138 still stipulates that teachers must work to earn their retirement credit but allows them to do so while still taking the necessary time for religious observance. We are Jewish clergy, but we also imagine that this bill will be helpful for Muslims, Hindus, Bahai and other religious minorities who call Kentucky home.

We hope that you will support the timely passage of HB 138 and ensure that it becomes law during this session.

Sincerely,

Members of the Louisville Board of Rabbis and Cantors

Rabbi Beth Jacowitz Chottiner (President)

Rabbi David Ariel-Joel

Rabbi Ben Freed

Cantor Sharon Hordes

Cantor David Lipp

Rabbi Laura Metzger

Rabbi Stan Miles

Rabbi Joe Rapport

Rabbi Gaylia R. Rooks

Rabbi Nachshon Siritsky

Rabbi Robert Slosberg