

Sarah English  
Portland  
LD 1351

My name is Sarah English and I'm a resident of Portland. I'm also Jewish, and I'm the granddaughter of refugees who had to flee Eastern Europe in the late 1910s because of anti-Jewish violence and discrimination. I grew up immersed in my family's painful, real-life stories of anti-Jewish hatred, and I'm very sad and frustrated that antisemitism remains a very real problem here in the U.S., currently all the way into the highest levels of our government.

But legislation like LD 1351 is NOT the way to combat antisemitism. LD 1351 uses the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism, which conflates criticism of Israel with antisemitism. This is a very misleading, manipulative, and dangerous way to define antisemitism. Many Jewish people, both in Israel and around the world, do not support the Israeli government's decades-long systematic oppression of Palestinian civilians. We have to be able to criticize the government of Israel, and also the U.S.A.'s role in supporting it, without being labeled antisemites.

Ultimately, legislation like LD 1351 will only make antisemitism worse, as it helps to silence legitimate criticism of a humanitarian crisis.

I urge you to reject LD 1351. If we're serious about combating antisemitism, let's use a more accurate definition of what antisemitism is.

Please, vote "ought NOT to pass" on LD 1351.

Thank you.