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LD 1351

Dear Maine Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary,

I am offering testimony this morning in opposition of this bill, as it actually doesn't do anything to combat actual anti-Semitism, and it is actually anti-Semitic in itself.

The IHRA (a US/Israel lobby group) definition of anti-Semitism is not based on a desire for harm reduction. It intends to conflate the supremacist ideology of Zionism, a political stance, with the religion of Judaism in such a way that any and all criticism of the Israeli government is then synonymous with anti-Jewish rhetoric.

We cannot allow this to happen.

Not only would this bill open the door to a grotesque suppression of free speech, but the weaponization of anti-Semitism only serves to intensify discrimination and exclusion of vulnerable communities in Maine and throughout United States – including Jews.