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I am a proud Maine Jew, I love being Jewish, and I spend a lot of my free time organizing for social justice, which includes fighting against antisemitism. I have also studied antisemitism and how it interacts with other forms of oppression for almost 10 years. With that all being said, I want to be crystal clear: the IHRA definition of antisemitism only furthers the Zionist and far-right agendas, making Jews less safe and fueling antisemitism under the guise that it is not. It focuses on criticism of Israel, which is not inherently antisemitic (since Israel does not equal Jews), and ignores true antisemitism that we do see increasing under this far-right administration.

Palestinians (and anyone else) have a right to SAFELY and legitimately oppose what Israel is doing right now to innocent civilians. 15,000 children have been killed in Gaza. My Jewish values tell me that I MUST speak out against such violence and injustice. And NO ONE should be punished for doing so.

In summary, this bill would impede free speech AND serve to ultimately make Jews less safe (by weaponizing the far-right's definition of antisemitism while ignoring the true rise of white nationalism and antisemitism). While this bill seems like a good thing on the surface, especially if you are not well-versed in this area, it is in fact incredibly dangerous and an easy choice to vote no.