

Jess Cooper  
South Paris  
LD 1351

Honorary Members of the Maine Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary,

As a citizen of Maine I strongly oppose this bill, LD1351 - An Act to Require Antisemitism to Be Considered as Motivation When Determining a Violation of a Criminal or Civil Law.

The IHRA definition of antisemitism is a non-legally binding working definition, developed as a tool for monitoring anti-Semitic incidents worldwide. Its stated purpose is to increase "Holocaust education, remembrance and research". It was never intended to serve as a legal framework for institutions or governments. Most dangerously, it conflates criticism of the state of Israel and Zionism with antisemitism.

I believe this will become a dangerous tool to suppress free speech and the right to protest.

Again, I strongly oppose this bill and urge the committee to NOT adopt a dangerous definition of antisemitism.

Thank you,  
Jess Cooper