

Peter Lindsay
North Yarmouth
LD 1351

Testimony – Opposed to LD 1351
April 7, 2025

To: Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Members of the Judiciary Committee,

Maine continues to promote free speech and allows for dialogue concerning current events, Maine laws, and even international affairs. Free speech is a bedrock of our constitution.

LD 1351 proposes using a definition of anti-semitism that is overly broad and dangerous. This IHRA definition was never developed to be used in law, but was a framework for discussion. By adding this definition in the law, it weaponizes anti-semitism, infringing on free speech and precluding anyone from criticizing or trying to hold other governments like Israel accountable.

I have learned that humanitarian and civil rights organizations including Human Rights Watch, American Civil Liberties, the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights and, most importantly, the Israeli rights group B'Tselem urged the United Nations not to use this dangerous definition in its work to challenge anti-semitism around the world.

Maine should not pass a law that aims to suppress free speech and the peaceful right to protest. This broad definition is a means of censoring speech or protest.

I urge the Committee to vote against this bill and this definition. This is not the correct way to counter anti-semitism, but rather would harm Jews as well as anyone wanting to hold Israel or any government accountable for its actions in the world.

Thank you for listening to my concerns.

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