

Daisy Goodman
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LD 1383

RE: LD 1383, An Act To Require the State To Divest Itself of Assets Invested in Corporations That Contribute to Genocide and Human Rights Abuses

Thank you to Senator Baldacci, Representative Salisbury, and honorable members of the Committee for the opportunity to submit testimony to the committee in support of LD 1383. I regret that my clinical duties prevent me from being able to give testimony in person today. I am a resident of Old Town and a health care provider. If enacted, LD 1383 would prohibit the state of Maine from investing state resources into and generating profits from corporations that abuse human rights. As a healthcare provider and community member, I feel it is essential that you, as our elected officials, use your fiduciary power to stand up against profiteering from companies who cause harm and to ensure that Maine is on the right side of the law and of justice.

We are at a historical time now when everyone who believes in human dignity and the rule of law has to take a stand. "Neutrality" is not an option when people are being in the service of making a good return in the stock market. Unfortunately, Maine state pension funds are currently invested in a number of companies which are actively involved in manufacturing and selling weapons of mass destruction, information technologies which are used by ICE to identify and pursue our immigrant neighbors who are peacefully trying to make ends meet for their families, including corporations that make profit off of current genocides and corporations that fuel the majority of ICE deportation flights, such as Palantir and Signature Aviations. I am horrified as we learn of people being kidnapped on the streets even in our state, and flown out of the country without due process. As a Jew I also strongly object to any investment of Maine taxpayer dollars in companies which have participated in the killing of innocent Palestinians in Gaza. I do not want my tax dollars to contribute to these crimes. By divesting from these and other such holdings that make up less than 1% of the total pension fund, we could align our dollars with our values.

There is no such thing as "neutrality" when it comes to human rights abuses. We should follow our own state's righteous precedent of divesting from the heinous apartheid system in South Africa and from Sudan following the Darfur genocide. With LD1383, investments of Maine taxpayer dollars and/or pension funds would be guaranteed to reflect our values and not support companies that profit from death and destruction or violate the human dignity of our neighbors and friends. Thank you for voting in favor of LD1383, this is an important step forward for our state and for a better world where states as well as people accept responsibility for the consequences of their actions.