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LD 1383

I call for the divestment of our tax dollars from corporations that carry out genocide and kidnapping. We know that Maine's motto is Dirigo, which means "I lead". I urge you to support LD 1383, to show that Mainers support human rights and refuse to be complicit any longer. While we might not be directly dropping those bombs abroad or unlawfully detaining our neighbors without due process, we are paying for the trigger and helping to fund these actions through the corporations we support with our tax dollars.

Currently, Maine's retirement systems holds shares in Boeing and Lockheed Martin, two of the largest military companies in the world. These two companies supply a large percentage of the bombs and missiles that used to kill civilians in Gaza, while also facilitating and profiting from the persecution of communities of color here in the US through weapons and surveillance technology contracts with US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and Immigration Control Enforcement (ICE).

We also invest \$19 million dollars in Palantir, a company that provides AI surveillance to law enforcement, military, and intelligence agencies carrying out human rights violations around the world. Palantir AI tools allow ICE to conduct workplace raids, deportations, and family separations and more broadly, compromise our privacy.

Palantir is owned by Peter Thiel, a Silicon Valley technocrat who seeks to create a new governing body where algorithms, AI, and digital surveillance replace democracy, individual liberty, and the free market. We are currently investing in the erosion of our democracy that we are seeing nationwide.

Divesting from corporations that cause harm is not new for me. I have not shopped at Amazon for over 10 years due to their predatory business practices, union busting, and human rights violations. I haven't shopped at Target since they rolled back their DEI initiatives. I haven't shopped at Starbucks in years because of their union busting policies. I know I'm just one person, but I consider it a moral and ethical obligation to reduce harm by being intentional about what my money supports.

Think of the impact that our state can have by being intentional about where we invest millions of dollars! Hopefully, other states will look to us as a model and follow suit.