

Rachel Statham
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LD 1383

Thank you for considering this important bill and taking the time to listen to the people of Maine.

Chair and members of the State and Local Government Committee: my name is Rachel Statham, and I live in Winthrop, ME. I'm a librarian who has worked at two Maine libraries (which means I have money invested in MPERS), and I'm here to testify in support of LD 1383, An Act to Require State Divestment from Perpetrators of International Human Rights Violations.

My parents always told me that a government job was a good investment in my future: stable work, benefits, and a retirement I could count on. That has been true in the basic sense—those benefits help keep me going and provide security.

But I've come to understand that money is only one kind of investment. The other kind is what our money makes possible.

When the State invests public funds in corporations that profit from weapons, military-grade surveillance, or other systems connected to genocide and serious human rights violations, that isn't an investment in Maine's future—it's an investment in harm. And when those profits come from community destruction—bombs that shatter families, or surveillance and logistics that enable detention and deportation—none of us can pretend we're separate from the consequences.

I want my public service to mean I'm invested in my community, not in corporations that tear communities apart—abroad or here at home. I don't want my retirement security tied to human rights abuses.

LD 1383 takes a practical, responsible approach: it directs review, requires divestment consistent with fiduciary duties, and sets a clear completion date, with transparency through public reporting.

Please vote in favor of moving LD 1383 forward. Thank you for your time and consideration.