

Committee on State and Local Government in the Maine State Legislature

Chairperson Baldacci, esteemed members of the Committee on State and Local Government:

My name is Paige Loud, and I am a social worker in Maine. I am writing in strong support of LD 1383, which would ensure that Maine does not invest public funds in corporations or entities that profit from internationally recognized human rights violations. As a social worker, my profession is grounded in the core values of human dignity, social justice, and ethical responsibility, and this bill reflects those values. Our tax dollars should never be used, directly or indirectly, to support forced labor, ethnic cleansing, mass displacement, or other abuses condemned by the global community.

Divestment is a moral and practical tool. It sends a clear message that Maine will not be complicit in systems that exploit, harm, or dehumanize people for profit. History has shown that economic pressure can be an effective nonviolent means of holding bad actors accountable when diplomatic or legal mechanisms fail. This bill also aligns with Maine's long-standing commitment to ethical governance. We already recognize that how the state spends and invests money reflects our values. LD 1383 simply extends that principle to the international stage, where human rights violations too often go unchecked.

As someone who works every day with people harmed by unjust systems, I know that accountability matters. Survivors of violence and oppression deserve to know that governments like ours are willing to act when fundamental human rights are violated.

I urge the committee to vote Ought to Pass on LD 1383 and affirm that Maine's investments will reflect our shared commitment to justice, human rights, and ethical responsibility. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Paige Loud
Citizen and Taxpayer