

January 21, 2026

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

My name is Shelby Leighton, and I live in South Portland. I'm asking you to vote Ought to Pass on LD 1383.

As a Jew, the history of the Holocaust was instilled in me from a young age. I would imagine what I would do if someone came to take me or my neighbors away – where would I hide? How would I escape? What would I do amidst an unfolding genocide?

Unfortunately, the scenarios that seemed far removed from my reality as a kid in Maine are all too real for many people today—from genocide in Palestine to masked men taking our neighbors from their cars and homes in Maine today as we speak.

These horrors are made possible by corporations like Signature Aviation, Palantir, and Boeing, which rake in profits from the suffering of people around the globe. And because the State of Maine is investing in those corporations, it is profiting from that suffering too. That is unconscionable.

Fortunately, Maine has a strong history of standing up to corporations that violate human rights: we divested from apartheid South Africa and from genocide in Darfur. This moment calls on us to do so again, and this bill would make clear that any corporation that facilitates genocide, war crimes, or apartheid will not have our financial support now or in the future. We can use our collective power to say “not with our money,” which is the bare minimum we can do right now.

I want to address accusations that this bill is antisemitic. It's not. Divesting the State from genocide, war crimes, and other grave human rights abuses is an expression of the Jewish values I was taught and the lessons of the Holocaust I learned as a child. What *is* antisemitic is reducing Judaism to support of a foreign government as it commits genocide. This bill stands for one simple principle: the retirement funds of hardworking Mainers will not be used to enrich corporations that enable war crimes, no matter the country committing them. The only people it singles out are the war profiteers.

In short, our State's investments should reflect our values. Let's divest from harm and invest in the world we want to see.

Thank you.