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Portland
LD 1383

Senator Baldacci, Representative Salisbury, and Members of the Committee
Testimony in Opposition to LD1383

I was born in Lewiston, Maine and have lived most of my life in Auburn. I am an LCSW who has been in private practice for 40 years. I have worked most of that time in Lewiston-Auburn and began working in Portland when I moved there in 2013. Presently, I work throughout the state using Telehealth.

My clients are adults of all ages. Some of them are struggling or can't afford housing, groceries, healthcare, heat, and/or childcare. These are areas that I believe are much more important for you to be focusing on and spending the state's money on. This bill is not going to help any of my clients in need or the rest of Maine's residents to live their lives. On the contrary, it is going to take away money that could be spent on those important and necessary needs.

I also believe this bill is divisive and can cause prejudice towards the different ethnic communities in Maine who may have come from those countries whose companies are boycotted and divested. This has already happened as a result of the BDS Resolution passed by the Portland City Council. Overt Antisemitism has increased greatly in Portland and throughout the state since that resolution.

I experienced very little Antisemitism growing up in Auburn. When I was older my Mother told me that when I was four, my neighbor across the street wouldn't let her daughter play with me because I was Jewish. As a teenager two of my close friends told me that their parents were Antisemitic, but it wasn't overt. They were polite to me, and my friends ignored their parents.

In contrast, the Antisemitism since the BDS Resolution has been overt, and caused a great deal of fear for many Jews in Maine. Presently, we need security at all Jewish functions, and a number of activities have been cancelled or replaced by zoom because of threats. Many Jewish people were afraid to testify at this public hearing or send testimony. I am aware that every time that I go to pray at my Synagogue, or attend a Jewish function, I could be at risk. I have never before felt unsafe living in Maine.

Also, I would encourage the committee to focus on bills that deal with threats to different religious and ethnic groups in Maine, and support safety for them. In addition pass bills that encourage people to work together and find common ground.

In contrast LD 1383 is divisive and will take needed funding and resources away from the important needs of Maine people. Please vote against this bill. thank you.