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

Thank you to Senator Baldacci, Representative Salisbury, and honorable members of the Committee for allowing me to speak today. My name is Matthew Fein, and I am a resident of Brunswick and volunteer for a number of organizations in Maine that are committed to human and civil rights. I am here to support LD1383 to prohibit the state of Maine from investing state resources into and generating profits from corporations that abuse human rights.

It would seem like a no brainer that we would not want the state to invest a significant amount of its assets in organizations whose entire mission is to violently eradicate the human and civil rights of its citizens, its immigrants, and its institutions. The reason we have to stop this now, is because its going to get much worse as these organizations become even more embedded in our institutions. These organizations are explicitly designed to cause maximum harm in the world around us. We only have to look outside the window to what is happening in Maine today, as ICE, CBP and DHS instill fear as they violate every aspect of due process and legal rights in rounding up anyone who is not white, and taking them to who knows where, essentially disappearing them. Much of this occurs through utilizing the mechanisms of organizations this bill addresses. In essence by investing in these organizations, the state of Maine is complicit in illegal actions and horrific harm. This is not hyperbole. This is historically egregiously problematic, it never ends well. Just like everyone that is testifying today, now is the time to show up to meet the moment in whatever capacity your role allows, and your role today is to respond to the voices of the majority of Maine's constituents to whom you serve and the urgency of the present moment, as we stand on the precipice of even greater loss and existential harm. This committee has the power to move this bill forward in a way our collective voices cannot.

As someone who is in strong relation to persons in my community, and has worked as a social worker and therapist in various communities in Maine, I daily see the impact of these harms on the lives of those around me. At baseline, we should have the reasonable expectation to feel safe in the world around us, and when the institutions meant to keep us safe, cause the most harm, it causes irreparable trauma, especially to those with the least power, many of whom have come from places where they have already experienced serious traumatic impact. We all know that inevitably this impacts us all in ways both immediate and into the future. This moment is dire. I strongly recommend that you support this bill. Thank you for your time.