

I am here to speak in support of LD 1383 because, as a Jewish person, my conscience demands it.

My ancestors lived in what is now Spain and when the Catholic kings demanded that they convert on pain of death or exile, they complied. Their compliance did not save them. Men with steel and fire came for them and the survivors were forced to flee, enduring many horrors along the way until they found a place that would take them in.

This history echoes in our time as ICE harasses, arrests, deports, and even murders members of our community. Those who came here legally are not safe. U.S. citizens are not safe. Indigenous Americans, people whose right to live on this land should be beyond all question, are not safe. For these innocent people, as with my ancestors, compliance is not safety.

And it doesn't end with our borders. Greed and reckless hate spread from America like infection from a wound, subjecting distant peoples to unspeakable horrors in the name of profit and empire.

This bill offers the chance to resist without violence and without risk except to the pocketbooks of those who profit off of misery and death.

Modern Jewish faith does not put much focus on the afterlife. Still, I have to believe that at the end of our days we face some kind of reckoning. When you face yours, will you be the ones who used your position to push back against evil, or will you be the ones who complied in the hope that the monster would eat you last?

Benny Stiebel