

February 21, 2026

Public Testimony in Regards to 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 the Chairs and to the Honorable Members of the Committee on State and Local Government for allowing me to speak today.

I am speaking in favor of LD 1383 and urging passage of this bill. My name is Jonathan Haines. I am a resident of Biddeford and a retired nurse.

I grew up in Biddeford when the textile mills were closing and moving to the South. As my friends' parents were laid off, as local businesses closed and Main Street became a row of empty storefronts, I watched the civil rights movement of that time expose the systems and the suffering that made the South a more profitable place for the textile companies. I began to understand how human rights abuse in the South related directly to my life here in Maine.

At that time, Dr. Martin Luther King famously observed that "The bombs in Vietnam fall at home: they destroy the hopes and possibilities for a decent America." His warning remains true today. For example, Palantir provides the research, development and technology used to target and kill healthcare workers in Gaza as well as to organize indiscriminate raids by I.C.E. on communities of color here in the US.

Human rights abuses anywhere will always reverberate throughout the world. This is why we have international, national and local laws that aim to prevent and to punish crimes against humanity.

Investment does not happen in a vacuum, nor do oppression and genocide. Oppression and genocide require systems, resources and complicity. It may seem overwhelming to challenge these systems and their vast resources, but I want to stress today that **we do have control** and that **we can take action** to refuse complicity in human rights violations wherever and whenever they occur. That is why I support LD 1383.

We as Mainers want and deserve a system of investments that calculates not only the bottom line of those investments but also the human costs and consequences of those investments. We have the right and the responsibility to refuse to be complicit with acts of genocide. We cannot afford otherwise.

I urge you to support the passage of LD 1383. Thank you.