

Maine LD1383 - An Act to Require State Divestment from Perpetrators of International Human Rights Violations

Hello, my name is Jim Anderberg.

I am a resident of Vienna and have been a retiree receiving a pension from MainePERS for the past 17 years. Thank you for the opportunity to speak today in support of LD 1383.

I served as IT Director for the City of Augusta for nearly 30 years, contributing to the Maine state pension fund throughout my career. For the past 17 years, as I mentioned, I've been a retiree receiving income from that fund.

I need the assurance that these funds are not being used to support the genocide and ethnic cleansing or other human rights atrocities occurring in the world today.

Money talks. With roughly \$21 billion in assets, MainePERS has significant influence in global markets—influence comparable to those wealthy individuals and institutions now shaping world events.

It's imperative that this influence works for good, not complicity in atrocities.

I have seen that ethical investing works. Before my time in Augusta, I worked at Iowa State University and contributed to TIAA/CREF. When I left that position, I was given the option to invest in socially responsible funds. That choice recognized something important: people care how their money is used. It reinforced for me that responsible investing is both possible and prudent.

LD 1383 brings that same level of conscience to Maine.

It is sensible because it provides a mechanism for accountability. By establishing a commission to monitor international reports and identify perpetrator states, it ensures that Maine is no longer a silent partner in these atrocities. It includes reasonable exceptions for humanitarian aid and waivers when Maine's interests require it.

This isn't radical—it's sensible stewardship. The funds Maine retirees have entrusted to the pension board should not contribute to human suffering. We can protect our financial security while ensuring our investments reflect our values.

Passing LD 1383 is a sensible and moral step to ensure Maine's investments work for the good of the world.

Thank you.