

Wednesday January 21st, 2026

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 considering my testimony today. My name is Demetri Blanas, and I live in Bath, Maine, and I am a member of Jewish Action Maine. I am here today to support LD 1383 to prevent the state from investing in corporations committing grave human rights abuses.

I am a physician and over the last several weeks and months I have cared for numerous patients detained by ICE. These patients are mothers, fathers, students who have lived, worked, paid taxes, and attended church in Maine for years without so much as even a traffic ticket. Their families, communities, employers, and Maine businesses depend on them and have been devastated by their sudden disappearance. Imagine for a moment being dragged from your home in the middle of the night and thrown in the snow and being torn from your family and community by a group of armed men, which is exactly what happened to one of my neighbors in Bath last week – a scene that is being repeated throughout Maine as we stand here today.

I am also Jewish and I know that within living memory German corporations such as BMW and Allianz happily greased the wheels of the Nazi genocide machine as they profited from military contracts or forced labor.

Today, corporations such as Palantir and Signature Aviation are making handsome profits by facilitating the mass abduction of members of Maine communities, and companies like Boeing and again Palantir are profiting by selling bombs and technology that are being used to kill children and families, and demolish schools, hospitals, and places of worship.

My wife is a member of MPERS and we are horrified that our retirement savings are invested in corporations that are spreading terror, suffering, and misery. The community of hundreds of Jews in Maine, and the spiritual community Jewish Action Maine, of which I am a member, support 1383. The lessons of history and the decision before you could not be more clear. 1383 allows us to decide: do we choose to profit from death, cruelty, and destruction - or do we choose life.