

21 Jan. 2026

LD 1383, An Act to Require State Divestment from Perpetrators of Human Rights Violations

In support of LD 1383, I will tell you about a terrified, distraught woman who arrived in New York City with two small children in tow, hardly a penny to her name, no home to go to. The year was 1939. She was fleeing a genocide. That woman was my grandmother.

My grandmother did not want to leave her home in Czechoslovakia. She did not want to leave her elderly parents behind in Prague but they told her, *go while you still can, we will follow as soon as possible.*

They were never able to follow. Instead, they were murdered in a gas chamber.

My grandmother was able to come to the US legally purely because of luck, because someone had the right connections and stamped the appropriate documents.

If that had not worked, she would have tried to find a way to get out to anywhere *illegally*. As a mother, she desperately wanted to protect her small children, including my 9 year old father.

She went from living a comfortable, middle class life in Czechoslovakia to barely making ends meet in a dingy apartment in the Bronx.

*She came so that her children might live.* That is all any good parent wants.

When I was a teenager, my grandmother attended rallies against the Vietnam war, against children being burned alive by napalm dropped from US military planes.

She never had a pension fund, but if she did she would have protested against her money being invested in companies that made that napalm and also Agent Orange.

Today, our state has pension fund investments in Palantir, whose AI enables genocide in Gaza and ICE deportations at home. And in Boeing, which helps Israel incinerate Palestinian babies. My grandmother would be horrified.

My grandmother did not have to worry that her foreign accent would get her swept up off the street by masked ICE agents. But today, Maine is invested in Signature Aviation, which transports our kidnapped neighbors to far away detention centers where God knows what happens to them.

My grandmother would have been the first to say, “no human being is illegal.”

I speak out today not just because of my grandmother, but because I am human. I do not want my government to fund human rights crimes anywhere. And I don’t want my neighbors picked up by ICE agents.

We can make a difference here in Maine. Please pass LD 1383.

Thank you.

Jamila Levasseur, Waldo, Me.