

Mark Fede
South Portland
LD 1351

The IHRA definition of antisemitism falsely conflates criticism of the state of Israel, and Zionism, with Judaism. Judaism is a beautiful, thousands years old religion. Zionism on the other hand, is a racist political ideology that formed roughly 130 years ago. The state of Israel ethnically cleansed Palestinians from their land during its foundation, and has implemented an illegal occupation of that land and people ever since. It is currently carrying out a full blown genocide of Palestinians in Gaza, with military and political aid from the U.S. government. The IHRA definition of antisemitism is a tool used by Israel and its allies to suppress criticism of their war crimes.

In this moment, when students are being abducted for participation in peaceful protest and expressing their political views, which are both rights granted to citizens, permanent residents and visa holders, our great state of Maine should not be adopting legislation that makes it easier to take away our rights. That is exactly what this act will do. Reject this backwards bill, and protect the rights of Mainers to free speech.