

April 7, 2025

Dear Members of the Maine Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary,

**I am writing in opposition of LD 1351.**

My name is Julia Harper, and I am a resident of Lewiston. I care deeply about the safety of all people, including the members of my chosen family who happen to be Jewish residents of Maine. As such, I would support any legislation that I thought would address antisemitism in such a way that it would enhance their safety and of all our state's residents.

The language of LD 1351, however, dangerously asks the state to adopt a definition of antisemitism that conflates any criticisms of the state of Israel - a foreign nation - the political ideology of Zionism with antisemitism. Directly linking the actions of the state of Israel or Zionists with the cultural, ethnic, and religious identity of all Jewish people ultimately undermines their safety. This would also dangerously threaten constitutional protections of free speech.

Additionally, the IHRA definition of antisemitism is a non-legally binding working definition, developed as a tool for monitoring anti-Semitic incidents worldwide. Its stated purpose is to increase "Holocaust education, remembrance and research". It was never intended to serve as a legal framework for institutions or governments. Most dangerously, it conflates criticism of the state of Israel and Zionism with antisemitism.

Please oppose LD 1351.

In Community,

Julia Harper  
43 Charles St  
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