

Jade Hopkins  
Presque Isle  
LD 1351

I am writing to voice my opposition to this bill. This bill conflates criticism of Israel with antisemitism; it would be a huge mistake to collapse these two things. Antisemitism is a horrible bigotry directed at Jewish people. Israel is a nation, and we must be allowed to criticize the actions of any nation freely. I think we all understand why conflating the morality of a nation's behavior with the rights of people is a terrible and shortsighted idea.

This act will have a chilling effect on speech. It also dilutes the gravity of actual antisemitism, by conflating something everyone should do - hold nations to account for their actions - with actual harms perpetrated against Jewish people. Moreover, what this is really about is giving Israel cover against justified outrage over its genocide against Palestinian people. The ICC, Human Rights Watch, and the international community all understand that Israel is committing crimes in their treatment of this ethnic minority. This bill serves to silence people in the Maine and further entrench the government's desire to dictate acceptable speech, which is particularly worrying given the fact that the international community understands that these criticisms of Israel are correct on the merits.