

January 16, 2026

LD1383 An Act to Require State Divestment from Perpetrators of International Human Rights Violations

Thank you to Senator Baldacci, Representative Salisbury, and members of the Committee on State and Local Government for listening to public commentary today. My name is Christine Boucher and I am a resident of Portland. I submit written testimony today in support of LD1383.

My family and personal wealth has been built slowly over the decades in this state. My grandfather was a wage-earner in the pulp and paper industry in central Maine; my father studied in Orono to become an engineer in that same industry and worked to adapt his paper plant to align with our improved understanding of the impacts of its emissions on Maine's air and waters; and I became a speech-language pathologist working towards equity in education for Maine children with disabilities. I come from generations of hard-working Mainers who worked, scrimped, and saved through investment in mutual funds and ETFs to build financial stability from humble immigrant beginnings.

I am recently coming to terms with the fact that by investing in faraway funds, many of which are offered pre-packaged to individual investors, some of our money has gone toward corporations that operate in opposition to our personal convictions. This year I am committed to examining my personal investments with the goal of divestment and reinvestment in alignment with my deep personal values of human rights and dignity, social justice, and environmental protection. I am but one person with relatively moderate savings. However, with LD1383 we have an extraordinary opportunity to act collectively with the large sum of money at the state's disposal. We can align our state's money with the principles of safety and peace for all.

As a speech-language pathologist in Maine's public education system, my retirement funds are invested in Maine PERS. When PERS invests in companies like Signature Aviation, Palantir and Boeing, the state and its public educators become complicit in these companies' crimes. I can spend my days speaking against ICE deportations without due process and genocides abroad, while my retirement fund actively funds the perpetrators of these human rights abuses.

Will the State of Maine join together with me to invest in funds that align with our highest principles? With divestment from South African apartheid and genocide in Darfur, Maine has already shown itself to be a capable beacon of values-based investment. In 2026 it is once again time. I urge you to support this bill. Thank you for your time.

Christine Boucher
Portland
LD 1383

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