

Leonid Eichfeld

Portland

LD 1383

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

Thank you members of the Committee for the opportunity to speak to you today. My name is Leonid Eichfeld, and I am a resident of Portland Maine. I am in strong support of LD1383.

I work with youth at a community center. Recently, I have needed to walk children who live close to the center home because they and their guardians are frightened by the reports of ICE in Maine. Especially within the last few weeks, youth have been on edge, scared for the safety of themselves and their loved ones. I had a conversation about ICE with one child, just last night. I told him that we need to believe that there will be a day when ICE will no longer terrorize his community, or communities around the United States. He responded with disbelief, saying that there is still a genocide in Palestine after so long, so what hope is there for safety here? I told him we must also believe that we will live to see a free Palestine. Hope and belief can only be sustained with action, and we as adults need to show up and act right now for these children who are very aware, and very scared. Divesting from corporations that deport our community members, and bomb civilians around the world is how we show up.

I hope to go to work very soon to teach youth about bills, pensions, and divestment, showing students a real life example of how Maine recently divested from genocide and human rights violations. Please help these kids continue to be hopeful and support this bill. Thank you for your time.