

My name is Robert Rosen, and I am a resident of Portland. Based on my experience with the city of Portland, you have already made up your minds to ban doing business with Israel even though you have omitted name Israel by name. The international organizations named in this bill have a well-documented bias against Israel.

Israel turned over Gaza to Palestinian control in 2006, removing its own citizens from Gaza in an attempt to secure peace. Just one year later, in 2007, the Palestinians elected Hamas as their leaders. The Hamas charter calls for the destruction of Israel. For years, Hamas fired rockets into southern Israel. Israel approved large sums of money from Qatar to be given to Hamas totaling over 1 billion over the years. Rather spending the money on the Palestinians, Hamas built rockets and tunnels.

Hamas planned for many years planning to attack Israel on October 7, 2023. They planned that there would be many Palestinians killed as a result. Their goal was the total annihilation of Jews and Israel and Jews throughout the world.

Israel has had no friends in the Middle East. It has consistently exchanged land for peace over their history, and it shelters religious minorities that have been persecuted in surrounding Middle Eastern countries, including Christians, Druze, and members of the Bahá'í Faith. If you pass this bill and Israel is targeted, the country will continue to supply the world with scientific and industrial advances. The Palestinians will not benefit. There is a better way to support Israelis and Palestinians, and this bill will only harm Maine —promoting division between communities, encouraging a double standard applied to Israel, and doing long-term damage to Maine's reputation and fiduciary obligations.

Robert Rosen