



HOUSE HEALTH AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

HOUSE BILL 1460

STATE PROCUREMENT - PROHIBITED CERTIFICATIONS - BOYCOTTS OF FOREIGN COUNTRIES

MARCH 11, 2025

OPPOSE

Agudath Israel of Maryland, the Mid-Atlantic regional office for Agudath Israel of America – a renowned national Jewish advocacy organization with chapters across the country - speaks on behalf of the Orthodox Jewish communities across Maryland. Thousands of the members of our community have visited Israel, have lived in Israel, and/or have family members who live in Israel, and we speak on their behalf as well. We speak today in opposition to House Bill 1460.

House Bill 1460 would prohibit a procurement officer from requiring certification from a bidder or offeror or including a certain clause in a State procurement contract or contract renewal, relating to boycotts of foreign countries.

While the bill attempts to remove this ability from the State, Maryland's governors have recognized the fact that the so-called Boycott, Divest, and Sanction movement, which exclusively targets Israel, the Jewish State, is in large part rooted in an unhealthy and hateful distaste for a specific type of person, and for this reason have in place an executive order prohibiting agencies from entering into procurement contracts with companies that boycott Israel, while providing exemptions in necessary circumstances. Originally issued by Governor Larry Hogan, this policy has been maintained by Governor Wes Moore.

Almost forty states have similar types of policies. Although anti-Israel voices claim that any such policy by definition is unconstitutional, this is not the case. In addition to the determination by the Eighth Circuit Court in *Arkansas Times LP v. Mark Waldrip*, No. 19-1378 (8th Cir. 2022), in our own state of Maryland the executive order was upheld in *Ali v. Hogan*, No. 20-2266 (4th Cir. 2022).

We believe that attempting to remove this ability from the executive is the wrong move. Multiple administrations, including the O'Malley administration, the Hogan administration, and the Moore administration, have recognized the harmful and bigoted trends within the BDS movement. We respectfully urge you to issue an unfavorable report on House Bill 1460. Thank you.