



**HB 521: State Procurement - Commercial Nondiscrimination Policy -
Antisemitism
Position: Unfavorable
February 18, 2025**

Chair [Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk](#) and members of the Health and Government Relations Committee.

Peace Action Montgomery is part of National Peace Action, the largest grassroots peace network. Our county chapter has over 1,400 members.

We are concerned about the reference to the IHRA definition put in the preamble of this bill. The IHRA definition is a weaponized version that aims to censor criticism of Israel. This is particularly disturbing in the context of Israel perpetuating a genocide against Palestinians in Gaza which have killed nearly 5% of the population there.

The definition was first introduced as an executive order under the first Trump administration. Critics of the definition include the [ACLU](#), the [American Academy of University Professors](#) and the National Coalition Against Censorship. Wikipedia has put a ban on the Anti-Defamation League [because of their support of IHRA](#). And the American Bar Association has refused to adopt it.

Even the creator of the definition, Kenneth Stern has been a [vocal proponent](#) of the definition. The IHRA definition has been used to target a number of human rights organizations including Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch. In my county, paid lobbyists for Israel have used it to ban the word genocide in our school system and suppress student walkouts.

I hope that you will resist efforts to censor political expression, especially when the targets are human rights organizations. For these reasons, I ask that you issue an unfavorable report.