

HB 1394
Civil Actions – Nonprofit Organizations – Unauthorized Support of Israeli
Settlement Activity (Not On Our Dime Act)

Hearing before the House Judiciary Committee

March 5th, 2025

Position: FAV

My name is Heather Rounds and I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB1394. I firmly believe that the "Not On Our Dime Act" is essential for several reasons.

The bill aligns with international law, specifically the Geneva Conventions, which prohibit the unlawful transfer of civilians into occupied territories and acts of violence against protected persons. Israel frequently violates international law through its actions in the occupied territories. Israel's construction of settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem breaches the Fourth Geneva Convention, which prohibits an occupying power from transferring its own population into the occupied territory. The blockade imposed on the Gaza Strip is a form of collective punishment, which contravenes international humanitarian law. Additionally, Israel's military actions in Gaza and the West Bank, including airstrikes and ground operations routinely lead to civilian casualties and destroy civilian infrastructure, violating principles of distinction and proportionality. The torture and ill-treatment of Palestinian prisoners, as well as severe restrictions on movement in the West Bank, further underscore Israel's lack of adherence to international law. These actions not only harm the affected populations but also undermine the legal and moral standards upheld by the international community.

Nonprofit organizations play a significant role in society, and it is vital that their activities align with ethical standards. House Bill 1394 ensures that these organizations do not engage in or support activities that violate international law, thereby promoting ethical practices and accountability. The bill aims to protect vulnerable populations in occupied territories from violence and exploitation. By prohibiting support for activities that harm these populations, Maryland can help safeguard their rights and well-being. Furthermore, I appreciate that this bill empowers the Attorney General and other authorities to take action against nonprofit organizations that violate the law. This strengthens state oversight and ensures that organizations operating within Maryland adhere to legal and ethical standards.

By discouraging support for unauthorized settlement activities, the bill contributes to efforts to achieve peace and stability in conflict regions. It sends a clear message that Maryland stands against actions that perpetuate conflict and supports initiatives that promote peaceful resolutions. In conclusion, House Bill 1394 is a necessary measure to ensure that nonprofit organizations in Maryland operate ethically and in accordance with international law. It protects vulnerable populations, promotes accountability, and contributes to global peace and stability.

I respectfully urge this committee to support HB1394.

Thank you,

Heather Rounds

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