

**Testimony in Support of HB1455:
State Retirement and Pension System Divestment from Israel**

As a retired public high school teacher in the state of Maryland, and thus a contributor into Maryland's State Retirement and Pension System, I would like to urge the House Appropriations Committee to issue a favorable report on House Bill 1455.

I do not believe this bill is directed at any single country; it is not "pro" or "anti" Israel. This bill is directed towards policy—it is about taking a moral stand against war crimes in Gaza and apartheid in occupied territories. How is it possible to teach our children about international law and the crimes of war and remain silent when we see these atrocities daily with our very own eyes?

I wish enacting such legislation were unnecessary, but it is necessary today. Just as women and men of conscience opposed the actions of minority-ruled South Africa, the voice of the international community—including the Maryland General Assembly—must now take a small step to express our opposition to what is happening in the Middle East.

I hope we will all live to see the day when our state's pension fund can reinvest in Israel without contaminating our conscience. But for today, we must support HB1455 to help bring about a more just and peaceful world.

For these reasons I urge a favorable report for HB1455.

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