

**HB 1382**  
**Favor (FAV)**  
**Southern Maryland Democratic Socialists of America Inc.**

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Southern Maryland (SoMD) Democratic Socialist of America (DSA) supports HR 1382, which would prohibit state contracts from including requirements that the contractor not engage in boycotts of foreign countries. The legislation essentially overturns former Governor Larry Hogan's Executive Order 01.01.2017.25 barring state contractors from engaging in boycotts of Israel.

SoMD DSA advocates passionately for the human rights of Marylanders and all people around the world. This advocacy should and will include boycotts of any entity, including nation states, that oppress the vulnerable, deny rights, undermine peace, or otherwise cause social harm. Boycotts are a voluntary, non-violent, and effective tool for necessary social change. Discouraging them is not a valid purpose of Maryland state government.

Executive Order 01.01.2017.25 is particularly odious by focusing on one nation – Israel – over all others, including the United States itself. The result is an incoherent procurement certification system. For example, the current procurement rules allow a foreign corporation that boycotts all economic activity in Maryland to seek a state contract for business promotion but bars a human rights organization supporting divestment from providing any services to the state, no matter how unrelated those services are to Israel.

Marylanders hold diverse views on Middle East policy. The state should not elevate one viewpoint while suppressing another. SoMD DSA stands proudly in solidarity with the Palestinian people, who have been victims of credible accusations of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide. This perspective should not taint any future interaction between SoMD DSA and the Maryland state government.

This legislation would not mandate any boycott or prevent supporters of Israel from advocating their position. It would simply restore neutrality and ensure that the state does not discriminate based on constitutionally protected political activity. The proper role of government is to safeguard rights, not curtail them.

SoMD DSA believes that justice, human rights, and democracy are strengthened—not weakened—when dissent is protected. Passing HB 1382 sends a clear message that Maryland stands firmly for free speech and against political blacklists of any kind.