

Bill: HB1382
Position: Favorable
Committee: Government, Labor, and Elections
March 09, 2026

Favorable Testimony for HB1382 – State Procurement – Prohibited Certifications - Boycotts of Foreign Countries

Honorable Chair Wells, Vice Chair Kerr and esteemed members of the Committee,

My name is Coen Doss, and I am a Master of Social Work student at the University of Maryland, Baltimore, a member of the school's Anti-Imperialist Student Union, and a resident of Legislative District 32. I am writing today in **strong support** of HB1382 which would effectively repeal Executive Order 01.01.2017.25.

As a refresher for those who may not remember, prior to the executive order being signed into law in 2017, the BDS movement had been gaining significant traction in the U.S. following endorsements from major organizations such as the American Studies Association and the United Auto Workers Local 2865 (Salehi, 2015). Perceived by supporters of Israel as a new form of antisemitism that threatens to delegitimize Israel, they brought the issue to the attention of state policymakers who sympathize with their perspective and also view the movement as a threat to the state's economic interest. Laws targeting the BDS movement were then brought before the MGA twice in the following years. In 2014, bills HB998 and SB647 that would have penalized public universities for supporting academic boycotts of Israel but was defeated. In 2017, broader anti-boycott bills HB949 and SB739 that would have applied to state investments and contracts were and was also defeated due to organizing by civil rights groups (Palestine Legal, 2016). Only after these failures did Governor Hogan endorse what is now Executive Order 01.01.2017.25.

Maryland's Executive Order 01.01.2017.25 presents a fundamental conflict with core democratic principles. It seeks to force political conformity and was only enacted via executive power after repeatedly failing to make any progress by means of the legislative process, fundamentally circumventing any input from community members and the officials they have elected to represent their interests. Furthermore, the policy's existence is inherently inequitable. It uses the state's economic power not to ensure efficient or ethical procurement, but to punish a specific form of nonviolent protest which has historically been used throughout U.S. history to address social justice issues. It forces individuals, many of whom are Maryland residents, to choose between their livelihood and their deeply held political and moral convictions regarding genocide and systems of apartheid. Lastly, by codifying in state law that boycotting Israel is a disqualifying act for the opportunity to contract with the state, the order makes a clear statement to Maryland's citizens about which people are deserving, and which are not.

For these reasons, I urge a **favorable report of HB1382**.

Thank you for consideration.