

Dear Honorable Chair Young, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Philip Ateto and I am a lifelong Marylander, currently residing in Annapolis, in Anne Arundel County. I am writing in support of support of **HB 1382 – State Procurement - Prohibited Certifications - Boycotts of Foreign Countries**

I am writing because in these times it is extremely important to protect our civil rights in the Constitution, which this bill unjustly curtailed.

I support **HB 1382** because for far too long the state of Israel has been given cover to commit whatever injustices and atrocities they wish in violation of international law and with the support of our government, with impunity and without any accountability. Additionally federal, state, and local governments have all illegally and unjustly exacted severe backlash as well as economic and personal costs to anyone who dared to speak up against these injustices, and it is inconceivable and unacceptable for our great state to continue to be one of the municipalities doing this.

Now more than ever it is important for people and organizations to speak up about the atrocities committed by Israel in Palestine and to attempt to coerce groups not to do so is to try and preempt justice. It is the equivalent of defending and protecting South African apartheid in the 80s, which unfortunately this country did and it remains one of many scars on the moral fabric of this country.

It seems the tides are finally turning on public sentiment toward Israel's illegal and inhumane actions in Palestine and it is past time for us to get on the right side of history, the least the state of Maryland can do is get out of the way so those of us with the courage to speak up and act to stop these atrocities can finally put an end to them.

For these reasons and many more, I respectfully urge the committee to issue a **favorable report** on **HB 1382**.

Thank you for your time and consideration.