

The Honorable Chair
Delegate Melissa Wells
House Government, Labor, and Elections Committee
142 Lowe House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Vice Chair
Delegate Kenneth Kerr

**RE: FAVORABLE - SUPPORT of House Bill 1382
State Procurement - Prohibited Certifications - Boycotts of Foreign Countries**

To the Chair Wells, Vice Chair Kerr, and esteemed members of the Government, Labor, and Elections Committee,

My name is Zoë, I am a resident of Frederick, Maryland. I am writing to name my support for HB 1328 the "State Procurement - Prohibited Certifications - Boycotts of Foreign Countries" bill. This bill undoes former Governor Hogan's executive order that prevented state contractors from participating in a boycott of Israel. Executive Order 01.01.2017.25 conflicts with the basic first amendment principle that people have a right to engage in peaceful political action without being coerced by the state.

The executive order was unpopular when it was passed, and yet has remained in place for 9 years despite a new governor, so legislative action is necessary to correct it despite assurances from leadership it "won't be enforced." If it won't be enforced even have it on the books? The Boycott, Divest, and Sanctions (BDS) movement is one of the few ways for people worldwide to support Palestinians and meaningfully challenge Israeli apartheid and settler-colonialism. Not only is it a right, but it has proven examples of success. It is based on the same peaceful tactics that worked against the apartheid regime in South Africa, which were as moral and necessary then as they are now.

Maryland contractors should not have to choose between their morals and their contracts, between their constitutional rights and economic opportunities. Dialogue and advocacy are cornerstones of a healthy democracy and require nonviolent means to practice one's freedom of expression. Supporting this measure does that, affirming Maryland's commitment to human rights, free speech, and non-discrimination.

For these reasons and many more, **I ask the Government, Labor, and Elections Committee to give HB 1382 a favorable report.**

Thank you for your time,
Zoë Dell
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