

Dear Chair Wells and Members of the House GLE Committee:

I am writing to strongly urge you to support and pass House Bill 1382, critical legislation that restores and safeguards the constitutional right of Marylanders to engage in boycotts as a form of political expression. This bill ensures that the state does not condition procurement contracts on whether businesses or individuals certify that they are not engaged in boycotting foreign countries.

Boycotts have historically been a fundamental tool for advancing justice, from the Civil Rights Movement to global human rights campaigns. The U.S. Supreme Court has upheld the right to boycott as protected free speech, and HB 1382 aligns Maryland law with these constitutional principles. It is vital that our state does not weaponize its contracting processes to silence political advocacy or discriminate against those who take principled stances on international human rights issues.

By passing HB 1382, the committee will:

- Protect free speech and political expression from government overreach.
- Ensure state procurement policies do not discriminate based on political beliefs.
- Uphold Maryland's reputation as a state that values justice, civic engagement, and fundamental rights.

I urge you to stand on the right side of history by advancing this bill out of committee and supporting its passage in the General Assembly. Maryland should not impose ideological conditions on state contracts, nor should it penalize individuals or businesses for exercising their First Amendment rights.

I respectfully ask that you vote YES on HB 1382 and help protect Marylanders' constitutional rights and prioritize them above foreign governments.

Thank you for your time and consideration.