



HB1382 – UNFAVORABLE

State Procurement – Prohibited Certifications – Boycotts of Foreign Countries

House Government, Labor, and Elections Committee

Hearing Date: March 11, 2026 at 1:00 PM

From: Jewish Federation of Annapolis & the Chesapeake

Chair Wells, Vice Chair Kerr, and Members of the Committee,

The Jewish Federation of Annapolis & the Chesapeake respectfully submits this testimony in opposition to House Bill 1382.

HB1382 would prohibit Maryland from requiring state contractors to certify that they are not participating in boycotts of foreign countries. In doing so, the bill would effectively dismantle the policy established by Executive Order 01.01.2017.25, which directs Maryland executive agencies not to contract with companies that participate in boycotts of Israel.

Maryland’s existing policy reflects a straightforward procurement principle: taxpayer funds should not support discriminatory commercial boycotts. State procurement law already requires vendors to certify compliance with numerous legal and ethical standards, including nondiscrimination in employment, labor law compliance, tax obligations, and conflict-of-interest rules. The anti-boycott certification operates within this same framework and simply ensures that companies receiving public funds are not simultaneously participating in discriminatory boycotts.

Israel is also a major partner in innovation and technology that benefits people in Maryland, our state itself as well as people across the United States. Many widely used technologies and products developed in Israel improve daily life, health care, public safety, and infrastructure. Examples include:

- **PillCam**, a swallowable capsule camera that allows doctors to examine the digestive tract without invasive procedures, used in hospitals across the United States.
- **Drip irrigation technology**, pioneered in Israel, which helps farmers conserve water while growing crops more efficiently—an increasingly important tool as communities manage drought and water scarcity.
- **Mobileye** advanced driver-assistance technology, used in many vehicles to help prevent crashes and improve road safety.
- **Water purification and desalination technologies** that help communities produce clean drinking water and manage scarce water resources.
- **Cybersecurity technologies** that protect hospitals, government agencies, and businesses from cyber threats.
- **ReWalk** exoskeleton devices that help people with spinal cord injuries walk again, improving mobility and quality of life.

- **ICU monitoring and medical alert systems** developed in Israel, which enhance patient safety in hospitals and nursing facilities.
- **Agricultural robotics and precision-farming tools**, used in Maryland and nationwide to improve crop yields and reduce environmental impact.
- **Emergency response drones and disaster management technologies**, which assist first responders in natural disasters and emergencies.

Boycotts targeting Israeli companies can discourage partnerships and collaboration that help deliver these kinds of innovations.

Maryland is not alone in its procurement approach. More than thirty states have adopted similar policies restricting state contracting with companies that participate in boycotts targeting Israel. These measures have been enacted by states across the political spectrum. HB1382 would move Maryland away from this widely adopted procurement practice.

Finally, this issue arises during a period of increased concern about antisemitism in the United States and in Maryland. Federal hate-crime statistics consistently show that Jewish Americans are among the most frequently targeted religious groups in reported hate crimes. At a time when Jewish communities are facing heightened security concerns, dismantling policies intended to counter discriminatory boycotts targeting the world's only Jewish state sends a troubling signal.

For these reasons, the Jewish Federation of Annapolis & the Chesapeake respectfully urges the Committee to give House Bill 1382 an unfavorable report.

Respectfully submitted,
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