

Hello Chair Bartlett and Members of the Committee:

I am writing to you as a concerned constituent and advocate committed to human rights, accountability, and the responsible use of charitable resources in our state. I respectfully urge you to support House Bill 1184, the Not On Our Dime Act.

Marylanders are generous people who give to charitable organizations with the expectation that their contributions will help those in need and support lawful, humanitarian causes. That trust must be protected.

HB 1184 ensures that nonprofit organizations registered to solicit charitable donations in Maryland cannot knowingly use those funds to aid activities connected to unlawful settlement expansion or acts that violate international humanitarian law in occupied Palestinian territory.

For decades, the international community has recognized that the transfer of civilian populations into occupied territory, the forced displacement of protected civilians, and violence against those civilians violate the Fourth Geneva Convention. Yet credible reports continue to document settlement-related violence, destruction of homes and agricultural lands, and the seizure of private property, for example, in the occupied West Bank.

HB 1184 establishes a straightforward principle: charitable donations raised in Maryland should not be used to support activities linked to displacement, violence, or the unlawful appropriation of land. The bill creates reasonable accountability measures to ensure that organizations benefiting from charitable status in our state do not facilitate conduct that undermines international law and basic human rights.

This legislation is not about restricting humanitarian work or targeting any community. It is about protecting the integrity of Maryland's charitable sector and ensuring that organizations operating under the privilege of tax-exempt status adhere to fundamental legal and ethical standards.

Maryland has long stood for the rule of law and the protection of human dignity. Passing HB 1184 would affirm that charitable institutions operating in our state must reflect those values.

I respectfully urge the committee to pass House Bill 1184 and give it a favorable report.

Thank you.