



DON'T SUPPORT BILLS THAT OPPOSE CAMPAIGNS TO BOYCOTT FOR PALESTINIAN RIGHTS

Issue: Don't support bills that oppose campaigns to boycott for Palestinian rights S.Res.120, introduced by Sen. Cardin/H.Res.246, introduced by Rep. Schneider

Ask

- Thank Senators and Representatives who have **NOT** cosponsored these AIPAC-supported resolutions (as of April 5, 32 Senators and 165 Representatives have sponsored it).
- Ask Senators and Representatives who **HAVE** cosponsored these resolutions to consider removing their sponsorship.

Talking Points

- These resolutions oppose civil society efforts to organize for Palestinian rights through nonviolent tactics of boycott, divestment, and sanctions, which have been utilized for centuries, both in the United States and throughout the world, to advance justice. Congress should not be choosing sides in a robust debate taking place within US civil society. This type of interference goes against the spirit of the First Amendment by placing the government firmly on one side of an issue.
- These resolutions employ coded language to buttress an unconstitutional effort to penalize speech supportive of Palestinian rights and critical of Israel's separate-and-unequal policies toward the Palestinian people. By opposing efforts to "delegitimize the State of Israel", the resolution makes reference to a discredited Department of State definition of anti-Semitism which was never intended to apply domestically. The Trump administration has embraced this definition and is using it to crack down on free speech on college campuses that is supportive of Palestinian rights. Israel's policies denying the Palestinian people freedom, justice, and equality are what is not legitimate.
- Throughout US history, boycotts have been utilized as a nonviolent form of protest to advance social justice from the Boston Tea Party, to the civil rights-era Montgomery bus boycott, to the 1960's-era boycott of grapes to protest labor conditions, to boycotting apartheid South Africa, to the boycott of North Carolina today over its discriminatory anti-LGBTQ policies. Boycotting for Palestinian rights is a tactic that builds on this time-honored tradition to advance social justice.

Background

The Palestinian civil society-led campaign for boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS) to achieve Palestinian freedom, justice, and equality has made dramatic strides since it was launched in 2005. In the United States, at least ten church denominations have passed resolutions to boycott products from illegal Israeli settlements, divested their holdings from companies profiting from Israeli military occupation, and called on the US to end weapons transfers to Israel. Additionally, dozens of campus student governments have passed resolutions calling on their universities to end their investments in corporations profiting from Israeli human rights abuses. Public figures such as NFL athletes, Grammy Award-winning performers, and Emmy Award-winning actors have turned down trips from the Israeli government and canceled performances in Israel to protest its government's policies.

Supporters of Israel have responded by advocating for bills that seek to penalize and, in some cases, even criminalize individuals, groups, and businesses boycotting for Palestinian rights. While these bills have failed in previous Congressional sessions, in half of the states, legislatures have passed laws denying contracts to those who boycott for Palestinian rights. Federal district courts have enjoined Kansas and Arizona from implementing these laws, ruling that they are unconstitutional. While these resolutions are non-binding and do not penalize people engaging in boycotts for Palestinian rights, they lay the groundwork for future bills which aim to do so.