

Chairman Blessing, Vice Chair Reineke, Ranking Member Clyde, Members of this honorable Committee, Ladies and Gentlemen, my name is Don Bryant and I am here to ask you to vote against HCR 10.

As a US citizen and a resident of Ohio, I enjoy the freedom to take positions and stances for and against various issues. I sometimes have opinions contrary to those of lawmakers, mayors, or even presidents. I do that because the US Constitution allows me to.

Our US Supreme Court has recognized that boycotts "to bring about political, social and economic change," like human rights boycotts of Israel, are unquestionably protected under the First Amendment. NAACP v. Claiborne Hardware Co., 458 U.S. 886, 911 (1982) (citing Carey v. Brown, 447 U. S. 455).

HCR 10 wrongfully places The General Assembly in condemnation of my right to boycott in Ohio. It also accuses those who engage in boycotts of being anti-Semitic. Anti-Semitism is defined as hostility to or discrimination against Jews. Israel is a state, not a people. Critique and boycott of a state is not indicative of prejudice against its people.

HCR 10 concludes the activities of the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions campaigns in Ohio are harmful and have a deleterious impact on the educational environment. This contradicts Supreme Court rulings. The Supreme Court has ruled for decades, that speech cannot be restricted simply because it offends some listeners. Justice Douglas famously wrote, "[F]ree speech . . . may indeed best serve its high purpose when it induces a condition of unrest . . . or even stirs people to anger. Speech is often provocative and challenging. It may strike at prejudices and preconceptions and have profound unsettling effects as it presses for acceptance of an idea." Terminiello v. Chicago, 337 U.S. 1, 4 (1949).

Thank you for your attention. I urge you to vote NO on HCR 10 and to protect free speech in Ohio.