



**PROPONENT TESTIMONY BEFORE THE OHIO SENATE  
TRANSPORTATION, COMMERCE AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 10  
FEBRUARY 27, 2018**

**PROPONENT TESTIMONY OF MICHAEL GOLDSTEIN  
STATE OF OHIO DIRECTOR  
PROCLAIMING JUSTICE TO THE NATIONS**

Chairman LaRose, Vice Chair Kunze, Ranking Member Schiavoni, and honorable members of the Senate Transportation, Commerce and Workforce Development Committee. My name is Michael Goldstein, and I am the State of Ohio Director of Proclaiming Justice to the Nations, a Christian organization dedicated to educating Christians on their Biblical duty to support and defend the State of Israel and the Jewish people, and to pass a better America on to future generations of Americans. We are on the web at [www.pjtn.org](http://www.pjtn.org).

I appreciate the opportunity to speak with you this morning as a proponent of House Concurrent Resolution 10, "To Condemn the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions Movement and Increasing Incidents of Anti-Semitism." On behalf of PJTN I want to thank the Committee members for their courtesy, and thank HCR 10's sponsors, Representatives Andy Thompson and Dave Greenspan. We also thank my colleagues and fellow witnesses Chris Long, President of the Ohio Christian Alliance; Ed Douglas, State of Ohio Director of CUFI (Christians United for Israel); Rabbi Eric "Yitz" Frank, State of Ohio Director of Agudath Israel of America; and the student witnesses, Gabe Sirkin and Nick Abdallah.

PJTN sees HCR 10 as a turning point for the State of Ohio, and, in particular, for our universities, especially with respect to protection of our First Amendment right to freedom of speech. PJTN strongly supports passage of HCR 10.

This resolution has three basic elements, all of which reflect core American values. All of these elements are necessary to begin the process of removing anti-Semitism from our campuses and from our state:

- It reconfirms the General Assembly's, and the citizens of the State of Ohio's, support for the sovereign State of Israel.
- It condemns the international BDS movement for legitimizing anti-Semitism and for seeking to undermine the Jewish people's right to self-determination.

- It encourages and supports the exercise of free speech and civil debate for all people, particularly on our college campuses.

“BDS” stands for “Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions” against Israel. It is the international movement to delegitimize the State of Israel and to cause its destruction. On our college campuses in Ohio and throughout the nation, BDS practices anti-Semitism and promotes its spread among the entire student body, including our children and grandchildren.

***How do the on-campus BDS organizations go about supporting their goal of isolating and eliminating Israel?*** They carry out an array of intolerant activities to silence Jewish and pro-Israel voices, many of them Christian, most frequently through shutting down or disrupting pro-Israel events, but also through the vilification and intimidation of pro-Israel groups and individuals, with the clear intention of delegitimizing their point of view, or causing these students to be too afraid or too uncomfortable to express their point of view at all.

This is not just a Jewish problem. As a 30-year Naval Officer and member of the Intelligence community, and as a student of American and World History, I recognize that the BDS movement and anti-Semitism on our campuses is, at its essence, an American problem, because it violates the free speech rights of Jewish and pro-Israel students, rights guaranteed to every American by the First and Fourteenth Amendments to the Constitution of the United States. When these actions are facilitated, or even tolerated, by the university administrations so as to create a hostile environment for Jewish students, those students are protected by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which allows a private cause of action against the offending university and its administrators, in both their official and personal capacities. The BDS attack on free speech on campus is an attack on America and our values.

Anti-Semitism on campus is a large problem that isn't going away. Nationally, there was a 40% percent increase in overall campus anti-Semitic activity from 2015 to 2016.

Of colleges with the largest increase in anti-Semitic activity from 2015 to 2016, The Ohio State University had an increase of 10 incidents, or over 400%, from one year to the next. OSU also ranks 5th of 15 for the highest Incidence of BDS Activity on campus. And Oberlin College made the list of the highest Incidence of Anti-Semitic Expression on campus.

Four Jewish students at Ohio University were arrested and charged with a crime while peacefully attempting to exercise their free speech rights at a Student Senate meeting in 2014. One of these students, who could not be present to testify today, did testify as a proponent of HCR 10 in the House Government Accountability and Oversight Committee about his experience, and his testimony can be found at <https://youtu.be/aRcgHjKkAfo>.

For Ohio University there is a very important recent postscript. On Friday morning September 29, 2017, on the verge of the holiest evening in the Jewish calendar, Yom Kippur eve, swastikas were found on the university campus. The press report said that the “vandalism was reported to the OU Police Department.” I spoke with the University Police Chief later, and he assured me that he had opened an investigation to find and deal with the vandals. I have heard nothing since.

I have seen no indication that the Ohio University administration has taken any concrete steps to reduce anti-Semitism on its campus.

Another Ohio incident, which may be deemed a violation of students’ freedom of speech by unlawful prior restraint imposed by the university administration, took place at John Carroll University in University Heights, in the Spring of 2016. A John Carroll student, Nicholas Abdallah, who was then and still is the President of Hillel, the JCU Jewish students’ organization, is here today to testify about that incident.

HCR 10 is a “heads up” to university administrators to address freedom of speech concerns before Title VI complaints are filed. In this resolution the members of the General Assembly:

1. Affirm our legislature’s and our citizens’ support for the State of Israel in many specific ways. This is no more than the treatment the United States accords to all sovereign states.
2. State that the trustees, administrators, and educators at all levels in our universities in Ohio should take an active stand against all anti-Semitic actions and intimidation against Jewish students on their campuses, so all students may feel safe, and be safe, from harm due to these pernicious activities.
3. Encourage and support the exercise of free speech and civil debate, particularly on college campuses, and further encourage university and college administrations to curb any impediments to free speech and any abridgment of free speech on campus by any individuals or groups, and urge them to take disciplinary action against all students, faculty, and administrators who engage in actions that abridge free speech on campus in violation of the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

Proclaiming Justice to the Nations urges this honorable Committee to take the first step to remove the scourge of anti-Semitism from our Ohio college campuses. The adoption of HCR 10, which calls upon university administrators to modify the behavior of their institutions and their constituent members, is the first step in that direction.

Thank you for your time and attention. I stand ready to respond to your questions.