

Honorable Chairs and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify against the bill HCR10. My name is Alison Cameron and I am a senior at Oberlin College, which is within the Cleveland metropolitan area. I am a member of Oberlin's chapter of Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP). This organization has been an essential part of my Jewish identity, as it reflects my dedication to pursuing the Jewish values of justice and equality.

Our work on Oberlin's campus is met with great opposition. In Spring 2013, Oberlin College Student Senate passed a divestment resolution: the resolution proposed that Oberlin divest from six companies that profit and perpetuate the Israeli occupation. We had overwhelming support from Oberlin's community: students, staff, professors, and town residents alike. Many supporters expressed how important it is to participate in a global, non-violent movement for justice.

Ohio has already passed HB 476, which withdraws state funding to businesses which support campaigns like BDS. Free speech stalwarts like the ACLU of Ohio spoke out against this bill, as seen here:

<http://www.acluohio.org/archives/press-releases/anti-boycott-legislation-violates-free-speech-rights-says-aclu>.

This continued violation of our constitutional right to free speech is inexcusable and unconstitutional. We must prioritize Ohio's citizens' and students access to their right of free speech, dedication to justice, and right to stand in solidarity with Palestinian people through BDS.

A similar bill to the one I mentioned above (H1685/S1689) was also introduced to the Massachusetts State House, the state I am originally from. The Boston JVP chapter, along with other pro-Palestine organizations, testified against this bill and the bill was not passed.

(<http://jvp-boston.org/a-victory-for-the-right-to-boycott-in-massachusetts/>)

I encourage the members of the Ohio state government to follow Massachusetts' lead in supporting activists' right to free speech, especially on college campuses. It is essential for young college students in Ohio to have the opportunity to learn, grow, and advocate for what they believe in in order to receive a fruitful education. I truly believe that HCR10 will do nothing but hinder that process. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Alison Cameron