

Good morning. My name is Nahla Saleh. I am a resident of Powell, Ohio, a proud Ohioan, a Palestinian American, and I stand in strong opposition to HB188. This is a bill that has been designed to benefit Israel, a foreign country first and foremost, not Ohioans. Israel has been experiencing growing isolation around the world. It is now widely considered to be a pariah state as the world witnessed for two years straight, a live streamed slaughter of over 20,000 children. This is a county that is currently being tried in the International Court of Justice for committing genocide.

This attempted partnership and proposed bill is a direct result of lobbyists for Israel actively trying to create a lifeline for an Israeli economy that is drowning under the weight of war, constant economic instability and political volatility. Israel has experienced a significant decline in venture capital funding over the past two years, with a 74% decrease in 2023 compared to the previous year. This decline is a reflection of broader investor concerns. Concerns that should be a big giant red flag for Ohio lawmakers who are considering this bill and should have the best interest of their constituents at heart.

It is precisely because there has been a global pull back from investing in Israel that they NEED this partnership. They want us to use our Ohio money to help save them from further economic decline. What's even more troubling is that they need a constant flow of American funds to help them to maintain this settler colony and illegal apartheid system, which denies millions of indigenous Palestinians their basic human rights.

Ultimately, when it comes to Ohio, why shift resources away from local investment opportunities into a country facing major capital-shortage and uncertainty. There are so many alternative investment opportunities here at home that would more directly benefit Ohio's economy through innovation and its workforce. According to [Jumpstart.org](https://www.jumpstart.org) start ups and small businesses in Ohio generated over 1.7 billion in economic output in 2024, underscoring the local impact of investing in Ohio based firms.

We all know this proposed legislation is not in the best interest of Ohioans. It diverts crucial resources away from our local economy and aligns us with a foreign nation facing severe economic and political instability all while making us liable for violations of International Law. I urge you to reject HB188 and prioritize the prosperity and well-being of Ohio and its residents.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

