

**Opponent Testimony on House Bill 188 Ohio Israel Trade and Innovation Partnership**

Matthew Brown – Resident

Before the House Development Committee

10/27/2025

Chair Hoops, Vice Chairman Lorenz, Ranking Member Brownlee, and members of the House Development Committee:

My name is Matthew Brown and I am a lifelong Catholic, a Columbus resident, and an IT professional.

Thank you for the opportunity to give testimony in opposition to House Bill 188. While framed as an economic development initiative, this bill raises serious questions regarding transparency and accountability at a time when we should be putting Ohio first and investing here at home.

The cost of living in Ohio is becoming increasingly unaffordable for more and more people. Lack of affordable housing, stagnant wages, and cuts to food stamps are threatening Ohio workers, our families, and small businesses every day.

HB 188 would take money out of Ohio and funnel it into a partnership with Israel, a risky economic partner and a gamble that we cannot afford. Israel's credit rating has been downgraded multiple times and remains at risk of further [decline](#) under strain from its prolonged military campaign.

A trade commission with Israel would lock Ohio into partnership with a politically volatile, fiscally unstable country that the International Court of Justice has found to be in [violation of international law](#) and leading human rights organizations accuse of [genocide](#).

I urge you to put Ohio first, vote no on House Bill 188. Thank you.

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