



Talking Points in Support of Anti-BDS Legislation - Idaho

INTRODUCTION

Christians United for Israel (CUFI), the nation's largest pro-Israel organization, is supporting anti-BDS legislation in Idaho. CUFI has over 40,000 members in the state, 10 million in US

To date, 30 states have passed legislation or advanced executive orders banning the state from investing in and/or engaging in contracts with entities that are boycotting Israel. In addition, the US House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed an anti-BDS resolution in strong bipartisan fashion. The movement to Boycott, Divest from and Sanction (BDS) the Jewish state has also seen defeats on university campuses across the country whose students and/or leadership have rejected boycotts of the Jewish state.

Through demonization and boycotts, the BDS movement's end goal is the destruction of the Jewish state of Israel. *The goal of this legislation is to ensure that our state is not complicit in that repugnant and immoral effort.*

GENERAL

- There has been an uninterrupted Jewish presence in Israel for more than 3,000 years.
- When in 1947, the UN resolved to divide the Holy Land into two-states, one for Jews and one for Arabs, the Jews accepted the partition, the Arabs rejected it and tried to destroy the newly independent Jewish nation.
- Since Israel's independence every Israeli offer of peace with the Palestinians has been rejected.
- Jordan had illegally been in control of the West Bank from 1948-1967 when Israel took control of it in the 1967 Six-Day War—a war of self-defense. The territory is disputed, not occupied.
- Settlements are not the obstacle to peace. Israel has repeatedly offered peace deals to the Palestinians in which land swaps would account for any territory in the West Bank in which Israelis live.



THE TRUTH ABOUT THE BDS MOVEMENT

The goal of this legislation is to ensure the state does not become complicit in the effort to destroy Israel.

While some may claim otherwise, the BDS movement's goal is to destroy the state of Israel through demonization and boycotts. But you don't need to take our word for it. Here's what the leaders of the BDS movement have to say:

- "Definitely, most definitely we oppose a Jewish state in any part of Palestine." – Omar Barghouti, co-founder of the BDS movement and founding committee member of the Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel
- Headlines from April of 2020 - **BDS founder: Israel-invented virus vaccine would be OK for boycotters to use.** Omar Barghouti says no problem cooperating with Israel if it saves millions of lives. but says Arabs and Palestinians should not use coronavirus as excuse to normalize ties. He wouldn't go the Al Hussein Hospital.
- "The real aim of BDS is to bring down the state of Israel....That should be stated as an unambiguous goal. There should not be any equivocation on the subject." – As'ad Abu Khalil, professor of political science at California State University, Stanislaus
- "Our corporation boycotts all Israeli products and services, and encourages other institutions, companies and individuals to cease and avoid all economic, academic and cultural activity that supports the racist state of Israel until that state dissolves itself." – Paul Larudee, co-founder, Free Palestine Movement
- "We're resisting colonialism in Palestine, and colonialism entails all of occupied Palestine, from Haifa, to Jerusalem, to Ramallah..." – Lara Kiswani, Executive Director of the Arab Resource and Organizing Center
- "We need to wipe out Israel." – Anna Baltzer, leading pro-BDS activist, author and speaker



ECONOMICS AND THE BDS MOVEMENT

- State contractors who engage in BDS harm their ability to provide the best services at the lowest cost to the state: Israel is an integral part of the world's economy. Many of the technologies we use in our day-to-day lives were created in Israel. In fact, as one writer put it, "There is not a single human being on this planet that has access to electricity and the internet that actually boycotts all Israeli products."
- A full accounting of Israeli technology and innovations is far too long to list here, but a few examples are worth mentioning:
 - Drip irrigation
 - Pillcam (non-invasive intestinal visualization)
 - The cherry tomato
 - Disk-on-key (USB storage devices)
 - Windows NT and XP operating systems
 - ICQ (Instant messenger technology)
 - Intel SandyBridge and Centrino processors
 - Java platform for Amazon Kindle
 - Answers.com
 - Waze navigation
 - Mobileye (advanced driver assistance system used by BMW, GM, Volvo, Hyundai and Ford automobiles)
 - Krav Maga (self-defense system used by CIA, FBI and US Marshals as well as a host of American police departments)

Idaho – Israel Economic Relations:

- Idaho exports to Israel in 2019: \$18,923,737.
- Total Idaho exports to Israel since 1996: \$418,716,409.
- Since 1979 more than \$450,000 in agricultural research and development grants have been shared by Idaho, via the University of Idaho, and Israel.



RESPONSES TO ARGUMENTS AGAINST ANTI-BDS LEGISLATION

- **Freedom of Speech/Freedom to Boycott:** Pro-BDS activists will argue that they should have the freedom to boycott Israel – and we agree, but:
 - This legislation does not outlaw boycotting Israel, it merely states that the government will not engage with entities that do so.
 - The people have the right to choose with which companies their government will associate. As spelled out above, entities that participate in the BDS movement are supporting a movement to destroy the world's only Jewish state. The people have the right to ensure their tax dollars are not complicit in that immoral effort.
- **Fiscal and Fiduciary Duty vs Morality:** Investment managers, accountants, and other state employees and contractors that are associated with retirement funds or who secure contracts on behalf of the state may argue that the people are best served by placing no restrictions on investments and/or with whom the state contracts – we disagree.
 - Ours is not an amoral society, nor should our government behave with no moral compass to guide it.
 - Just as we encourage the hiring of veterans and contracting with minority owned businesses, so too must we allow our better angels to guide the state's investments and contracts. In this context, doing so means refusing to give our taxpayer dollars to entities that seek to end the existence of a free and democratic American ally.
- **Why Pass this Legislation Now?**
 - One does not wait to lock their doors until after they've been robbed. The anti-Semitic BDS movement is seeking to infect the American economy. As a leader among the states, Idaho should lead on this issue of both local and national importance.
- **Does this Legislation Comment on Final Status Issues?**
 - This legislation does not seek to comment or pass judgement on Israeli communities in the disputed territories. Rather it is an acknowledgement of the reality on the ground: namely that Israeli businesses in the West Bank hire and pay a strong wage to both Israelis and Palestinians.
 - Moreover, what better way for Palestinians and Israelis to understand each other than for them to work together, make products together and spend time with one another?



- Excluding territories under Israel's control will do harm both to Israelis and Palestinians and diminish the positive on-the-ground interactions these two peoples have when working side-by-side. Put another way, excluding territories under Israel's control so is not pro-Palestinian, it is anti-peace and anti-humanitarian.



