

HB 1006 -- ANTI-DISCRIMINATION AGAINST ISRAEL

SPONSOR: Rehder

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on General Laws by a vote of 7 to 3. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules- Legislative Oversight by a vote of 6 to 4.

This bill prevents any public entity from entering into a contract with a company, except a sole proprietorship, that is boycotting Israel. There is also an exemption for contracts under \$100,000. This section shall be known as the "Anti-Disrimination Against Israel Act."

This bill is similar to HB 2179 (2018).

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that the bill represents Missouri's public policy of not benefiting any organization engaging in national origin discrimination and that the state can rightfully exercise such discretion when spending public funds. The current boycott movement is plausibly characterized as anti-Israel and includes some extremist elements.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Rehder; Jewish Community Relations Council of St. Louis; and Daniel Swindell.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that similar legislation has been held unconstitutional and that boycotts are a protected form of free speech. The requirement to swear that an entity will not participate in a boycott is similar to an impermissible loyalty oath. The boycott movement seeks to use legitimate policy tools to protest an unjust government which engages in human rights violations. The Palestinian people should be entitled to equal rights.

Testifying against the bill were Neveen Ayesh; Yael Shomroni; Talia Earle; Michael Berg; George P. Smith; and Sara Baker, American Civil Liberties Union Of Missouri.