

# Anti-BDS Legislation in the U.S.



2013

## American Studies Association Endorses Academic Boycott

2013: The ASA passes a resolution endorsing the academic boycott of Israel.

None of the legislation described here affects your right to advocate for Boycotting, Divesting, and Sanctioning (BDS) Israel. Boycotts to effect political, social, and economic change are protected by the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

2014

## Bills Attacking Academic Freedom Fail to Pass

Winter and Spring 2014: Bills introduced in U.S. Congress, New York, Illinois, and Maryland seeking to defund or reduce funds to colleges/universities that subsidize groups or membership in groups that boycott Israel.

**None of these bills pass.**

## Resolutions Condemning Academic Boycotts Pass

February 2014: South Carolina House of Representatives passes non-binding resolution condemning the ASA boycott.

March 2014: Pennsylvania House of Representatives passes non-binding resolution condemning the ASA boycott.

April 2014: Florida Senate passes non-binding resolution condemning academic boycott of Israel. Maryland passes state budget, including language condemning the ASA boycott.

2015

## Resolutions Condemning Boycotts of Israel Pass

April 2015: Tennessee passes non-binding resolution condemning the BDS movement.

May 2015: Indiana passes non-binding resolution condemning the BDS movement.

Resolutions also pass in New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania.

*Unlike laws, non-binding resolutions cannot be enforced. They are merely symbolic statements of policy with no teeth.*

## South Carolina Enacts Anti-Boycott Law

June 2015: South Carolina enacts law prohibiting public entities from doing business with companies engaged in discriminatory boycotts, including boycotts because of "national origin." While intended to be an anti-BDS law, it does not impact BDS, which targets Israel for its human rights violations, not because of national origin.

## Anti-BDS Language Included in Federal Trade Law

June 2015: The Trade Promotion Authority, a federal law, includes language aimed at discouraging BDS abroad during ongoing trade negotiations between the U.S. and the European Union.

## Illinois Passes Anti-Boycott Pension Law

July 2015: Illinois enacts law requiring state pension funds to divest from foreign companies engaged in politically-motivated boycotts of Israel.

## More Legislation Pending

Anti-BDS bills and resolutions are currently pending in Congress and several states, including Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Israel advocacy groups have threatened to introduce many more.

Anti-BDS legislation is part of a larger effort to silence and intimidate Palestine human rights activists. Remember: no federal, state, or local law can infringe on your constitutionally-protected right to advocate for BDS. For more information on the potential impact of anti-BDS legislation, visit [palestinelegal.org/legislation](http://palestinelegal.org/legislation).