

BOLDER AND MORE RESILIENT

**PALESTINE ADVOCACY RESISTS
GROWING BACKLASH**



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Palestine solidarity activism in 2022 was characterized by bold campaigns, particularly by students and faculty, to draw attention to the Palestinian liberation struggle and to invite concrete acts of solidarity from a growing community of allies.

This emboldened advocacy was met with vicious silencing efforts by Israel-aligned groups, which went into overdrive to undermine activists. Palestine advocates persevered through and often overcame repression on campuses—in the form of increasingly aggressive disciplinary proceedings, censorship, and condemnations from administrators—as well as in the workplace and on social media by mobilizing grassroots support to defeat censorship attempts and expose the repression for what it is: an effort to shield Israel from accountability.

Palestine Legal responded to 214 incidents of suppression of U.S.-based Palestine advocacy in 2022.

Seventy percent of these incidents targeted students and scholars at 80 colleges, universities, schools, and school districts across the country. Additionally, we responded to 48 legal questions from activists who were concerned their rights were under threat.

In nine years, from January 1, 2014, through December 31, 2022, Palestine Legal responded to a total of 2,201 incidents.

This data reflects only what was reported directly to Palestine Legal and is therefore not an exhaustive account of the suppression. The incidents shared here were reported directly to Palestine Legal or were publicly reported in the media and do not include confidential incidents.

State and federal lawmakers introduced at least 24 legislative measures in 2022 aimed at silencing, condemning, or punishing advocacy for Palestinian rights. These included bills targeting boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS) campaigns as well as those adopting a distorted definition of antisemitism that justifies classifying virtually any criticism of Israel as antisemitism. A number of cities and counties also adopted this anti-Palestinian definition. Pushback from activists helped defeat anti-Palestinian bills in several states, including Georgia and Virginia.

This report illuminates trends that characterized organizing in 2022, as well as in the repression by Zionist groups and the resilience and resistance in the face of such repression efforts.

NEW SOLIDARITY INITIATIVES MAKE STRIDES ON CAMPUS DESPITE BACKLASH



PHOTO CREDIT: HARVARD PALESTINE SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE

Across the country in 2022, students and faculty engaged in creative campaigns on campus to demonstrate their solidarity with Palestinians. These campaigns persevered despite targeted backlash.

A NEW GENERATION OF CAMPUS BOYCOTTS

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) at the University of Chicago launched a campaign in January 2022 drawing attention to classes at the university that promote pro-Israel propaganda. SJP UChicago's campaign, titled "Don't Take Sh*tty Zionist Classes," called for students to boycott classes funded and sponsored by the Israel Institute. The student-run *Chicago Maroon* published an op-ed by Zionist students against the campaign, which falsely accused SJP of antisemitism and misinformation. After students mobilized in response, the paper retracted the

op-ed, and editors apologized for its publication. In April, one of the classes targeted in the second quarter of the campaign was canceled as a result of low enrollment. In May, the Trump-aligned David Horowitz Freedom Center distributed thousands of leaflets on the UChicago campus demonizing Palestinian students and their allies. Students remained undeterred and continued to boycott and protest Zionist classes throughout the year and into 2023 despite the backlash.

TUFTS

Tufts SJP launched a wide-ranging boycott campaign on their campus in March. They asked students, faculty, and staff not to purchase products from companies that support the Israeli military or operate in illegal Israeli settlements and not to join projects that normalize or benefit Israel, including campus Israel advocacy clubs, study abroad in

Israel, and Birthright trips. The campaign was condemned by university administrators, which led to further condemnation in the right-wing press. Like the UChicago students, Tufts SJP pushed back against smears and institutional pressure and continued its boycott campaign into 2023.

BERKELEY LAW

In August, Berkeley Law Students for Justice in Palestine (LSJP) invited student clubs at the law school to stand in solidarity with Palestinians and adopt a policy against hosting speakers who hold anti-Palestinian views. After announcing the campaign, members of LSJP and the eight other clubs that had added the

policy to their bylaws were targeted and smeared on both the local and national stage after a pro-Israel crusader published an article accusing the university of creating “Jewish free zones.” As a result of this false characterization—further fueled by comments published by multiple university administrators implying that the bylaw might exclude Jewish students from campus activities—Palestinian students and their allies began facing harassment and threats on and around campus. A right-wing advocacy group claiming to defend Jewish students hired a truck featuring imagery of Hitler to drive around the campus, and later arranged for a mobile digital billboard doxing the leaders of clubs that adopted the sol-



PHOTO CREDIT: BERKELEY LSJP

idarity bylaw and calling them antisemites. Months later, the same group sent trucks featuring the names of student organizers to their hometowns in Texas over winter break, while another put up multiple billboards throughout the city of Berkeley and neighboring Oakland equating anti-Zionism with antisemitism. Students also faced public demands that they be prevented from getting jobs or even being licensed to practice law because of their solidarity with Palestinians.

In December, the Department of Education opened an investigation into the University of California, Berkeley, after an Israeli government-funded law firm and a Florida lawyer filed a complaint claiming that the university had violated Title VI of the Civil Rights Act by allowing students to adopt the bylaw. The investigation was still open as of February 2023.

In spite of this backlash, students persevered, forcing administrators to publicly recognize that the bylaw was protected by the First Amendment.

They also inspired others beyond their campus, including the National Lawyers Guild, to adopt similar bylaws. Community members organized against the billboards that targeted the campaign, acting as human billboards to reject efforts to equate anti-Zionism with antisemitism.

CASE WESTERN

In November, after years of organizing, students at Case Western Reserve University passed a resolution in student government sponsored by SJP and a coalition of allied student organizations calling on the university to divest from Israeli apartheid and the prison and military-industrial complexes. Immediately after the resolution was passed, Case Western President Eric Kaler issued a statement condemning the resolution and calling it profoundly antisemitic. Both SJP and its partners and the editorial board of the student newspaper *The Observer* issued robust responses to the president, highlighting the president's hypocrisy and disregard for student safety.

STUDENT JOURNALISTS SPEAK OUT

HARVARD

In April, the *Harvard Crimson* student newspaper published an editorial titled "In Support of Boycott, Divest, Sanctions and a Free Palestine." In the piece, the *Crimson* editorial board expressed its support for Palestinian dignity and freedom and reversed its previous position against boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS) as a tool for achieving these goals. The board credited the campus group Harvard College Palestine Solidarity Committee

THE CRIMSON EDITORIAL BOARD

In Support of BDS and a Free Palestine

We are proud to finally offer our support for Palestinian liberation and BDS

When oppression strikes anywhere in the world, resistance movements reverberate globally. The desire for rightful justice spreads, like wildfire, moving us to act, to speak, to write, and right our past wrongs.

Over the past year, the Harvard College Palestine Solidarity Committee has strived to do just that. Amid escalating tensions between Israel and Palesti-

our campus might well find its messages provocative, or disagree with their philosophical outlook, nothing about them is, in our view, worthy of that delegitimizing label. We have a certain community-wide tendency to dismiss opposing views as inherently offensive and unworthy, straw-manning legitimate arguments and obfuscating difficult but necessary discussions. Yet civil discourse and debate, even when trying, are funda-

ability to speak to them and face comparatively less unjustified retribution — compel us to take a stand. Palestinians, in our board's view, deserve dignity and freedom. We support the Boycott, Divest, and Sanction movement as a means to achieving that goal.

In the past, our board was skeptical of the movement (if not, generally speaking, of its goals), arguing that BDS as a whole did not "get at the nuances and

with inspiring the editorial through its efforts to educate the campus community. “The desire for rightful justice spreads, like wildfire, moving us to act, to speak, to write, and right our past wrongs,” the editorial explained. The board faced backlash from Harvard alumni, faculty, the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), and U.S. Senator Ted Cruz (R-Texas), who falsely accused the *Crimson* of antisemitism for its recognition of Palestinian humanity. The paper quoted Palestine organizer Christian Tabash as saying that the backlash was simply an effort to divert attention away from Israel’s crimes.

“For those of us who are concerned about freedom and justice, we have to keep our eyes set on what actually matters, which is keeping Palestinians at the center of our conversation,” Tabash said.

WELLESLEY

In September, the editorial board of Wellesley’s *The Wellesley News* also published an editorial in support of Palestinian liberation. The board demanded an end to Wellesley’s complicity in harm in Palestine and elsewhere. As evidence of this complicity, the board cited the Mapping Project—a database documenting the links between Boston-area institutions and colonization and policing in the U.S. and Palestine that has faced widespread backlash, censorship, and a reported federal investigation. The *Wellesley News* editorial board itself faced intense backlash over the editorial, forcing the paper to remove the names and photos of the editorial board from its site. Wellesley College President Paula Johnson sent an email to the Wellesley community titled “Condemning Antisemitism.” Ignoring the vast majority of the editorial and making no reference to Palestine or Palestinians, the email made the erroneous claims that the *News* had “endorsed” the Mapping Project and that the Mapping Project poses a threat to the physical safety of the Jewish community. After the email, members of the *Wellesley*

News editorial board faced intense vitriol, including doxing and online harassment, but also received support from students and alumni.

Despite the pressure they faced, the *Wellesley News* editorial board maintained their bold stance in support of Palestinian rights.

ACADEMICS STAND IN SOLIDARITY WITH PALESTINE

In March, the Middle East Studies Association (MESA) passed a resolution endorsing the Palestinian call for boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS) for Palestinian rights. Eighty percent of participating members voted in favor of the resolution. The resolution recognized that boycotts do not target individuals, but rather institutions com-

plicit in Israel's violations of Palestinian rights, including Israeli academic institutions, because of their assistance to Israeli military and intelligence forces. After MESA adopted the resolution, Israel advocacy groups pressured universities to cut ties with the association over the resolution and falsely reported that eight institutions had done so. *The Chronicle of Higher Education* found that five of the eight institutions "had not renewed for budgetary reasons unrelated to BDS, or that they had actually renewed or intended to renew." Only a single institution, Brandeis University, had dissociated from MESA over the vote.

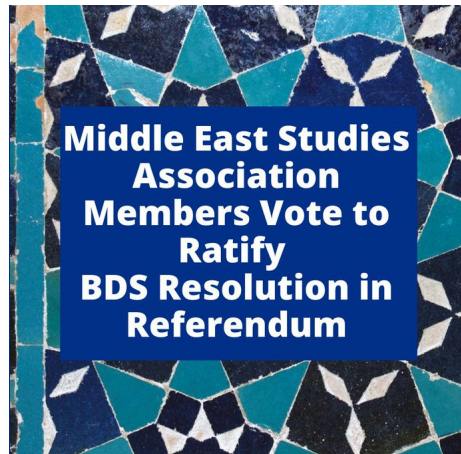


PHOTO CREDIT: @MESA_1966 ON INSTAGRAM

CUNY

In May, City University of New York (CUNY) Law School faculty unanimously voted to endorse a student government resolution in support of Palestinian liberation. CUNY Chancellor Matos Rodríguez issued a statement distancing himself from the resolution, wrongly suggesting that New York's anti-BDS executive order prohibits CUNY from participating in BDS, and lauding his recent trip with other top CUNY administrators to Israel. After the vote, a member of the New York City Council seemingly punished residents of her own district over the endorsement, withdrawing \$50,000 she had previously earmarked for CUNY Law to provide free legal services to her constituents. In October, Chancellor Rodríguez pledged to adopt the anti-Palestinian International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism as part of the university's systemwide diversity training for staff and students. In response, CUNY's Jewish Law Students Association (JLSA) and over a hundred other students, faculty, and alumni from across the CUNY system signed an open letter to the CUNY community denouncing the chancellor's statement and refuting the claim that IHRA would increase their safety on campus.

GROUPS PUSH UNIVERSITIES TO SILENCE ACTIVISTS

PHOTO CREDIT: WIL FYFORDY

Throughout 2022, Israel advocacy groups pushed for universities to chill student activism through investigations, bureaucratic hurdles, and falsely equating Palestine activism with antisemitism.

Palestine Legal responded to 150 incidents of suppression at 80 colleges, universities, schools, and school districts across the country in 2022. The backlash against activists in 2022 followed well-worn patterns that target individuals for political speech critical of Israel, often attempting to stop people from speaking out for Palestinian rights in the first place and making universities primary violators of free speech and academic freedom principles. Bold action by students and faculty often thwarted these campaigns, as activists mobilized their communities to support them against backlash and draw more attention to the issue of Palestine.

BASELESS STUDENT CONDUCT INVESTIGATIONS

NYU

In April, a member of the NYU campus group Law Students for Israel sent a message on a schoolwide email discussion forum condemning “acts of Palestinian terror” and extolling the U.S. government’s bipartisan support for Israel. Members of NYU’s LSJP responded to the message contesting its framing and condemning the illegal occupation of Palestine. LSJP members faced demands to retract their statement and condemn Palestinian resistance. When LSJP refused to do so, anti-Palestinian students submitted complaints to school administrators accusing LSJP of antisemitism. The emails were also leaked to right-wing media outlets, which amplified the false accusations, claiming that NYU would have to punish LSJP members and publishing the names of LSJP allies who had received prestigious scholarships seemingly in an effort to personally intimidate them. NYU President Andrew Hamilton also repeated the false accusation of antisemitism in a public statement, stating that

complaints filed about the email would be investigated. A right-wing Israel advocacy group also wrote to the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights complaining of the incident and demanding that the office monitor NYU pursuant to an agreement the university had entered into in 2021 after an earlier complaint against Palestine activism on campus. Though LSJP members eventually learned that the investigation had been closed, they were never formally notified of the closure, nor did the university publicly clear their names. Palestine Legal provided legal support to LSJP.

GEORGE WASHINGTON U

In October, George Washington University filed disciplinary charges against GW SJP and its student president for protesting an event on campus featuring Doron Tenne, a former senior intelligence official in the Israeli military. GW SJP organized a postering campaign to demonstrate student support for Palestinian rights. The posters, which were wheatpasted in public areas around campus in compliance with university policy, contained messages such as “Decolonize Palestine,” “GW for a Free Palestine,” and “Zionists Fuck Off.” On the day of the event, SJP and allied student groups also staged a protest outside GW Hillel, which had invited Tenne to campus.

Following the protest, Israel advocacy organizations and media outlets smeared the student activists, disingenuously alleging that the action—which was co-organized by the campus chapter of Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP)—was antisemitic. One blacklisting site posted a photo of the Palestine solidarity activists and asked its 60,000 followers for help doxing the students. Pro-Israel students on campus reported student protesters to

the administration, alleging that threatening and harassing comments were made during the protest, that the protest was excessively noisy, and that there was property damage. An Arab member of SJP was contacted by university police, seeking to question her about the protest. The head of SJP, Lance Lokas, was called in for a student conduct meeting and was eventually charged, along with SJP, with misconduct related to property. Hillel falsely alleged that he had personally caused thousands of dollars' worth of damage to Hillel property by scratching benches while wheatpasting. During the student conduct process, in which Palestine Legal represented SJP and Lokas, it was revealed that the



PROTEST IN SUPPORT OF GWU STUDENTS

PHOTO CREDIT: STUDENTS FOR JUSTICE IN PALESTINE AT GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY

university's own Diversity, Equity and Community Engagement leadership had called police on students. It was also revealed that the university had been aware that JVP members had taken credit for the postering outside Hillel, but had nonetheless pursued charges against SJP, whose members are primarily Palestinian and Arab. After a formal disciplinary hearing, both Lokas and SJP were cleared of all charges.

In February 2023, Palestine Legal filed a complaint with the Department of Education Office for Civil Rights demanding an investigation into the hostile anti-Palestinian environment on campus as exemplified by this incident. Palestine Legal's complaint also described how, for years, Palestinian students and students perceived to be Palestinian had been denied access to mental health services, falsely accused of committing crimes, and subjected to racist anti-Palestinian comments in class. The complaint highlighted the backlash after GW professor Lara Sheehi organized an event featuring a Hebrew University professor who is a Palestinian citizen of Israel. Anti-Palestinian students took over Sheehi's class the Monday after the

event, making numerous racist statements, including a claim that the Palestinian speaker "would dance on [the student's] niece's grave," that Palestinian civilians killed by the Israeli army are terrorists, and that Trump had made it illegal to criticize the political ideology of Zionism. Sheehi, who faced intense racist backlash after Israel advocacy groups widely publicized a distorted narrative that sought to paint her as the bad actor in this incident, boldly resisted the campaign to silence and punish her with legal support from the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC).

NYU

In November, NYU opened a student conduct investigation against graduate student Naye Idriss. Idriss, who worked as an Arabic language translator at the university library, had come across an Israeli postal service bag in the trash at her workplace in July. She wrote the word “Fuck” above the word “Israel” on the bag and later added “Free Palestine.” Months later, she was called in for an investigation into alleged vandalism and antisemitism. Though Idriss was a member of the graduate student union and was being accused of misconduct on the job, the school attempted to deny her right to union representation, in violation of the National Labor Relations Act, by charging her with misconduct as a student rather than as an employee.

The school also declined to rehire Idriss at the end of the semester, first stating that her position was no longer available and later rehiring Idriss’s two colleagues for other positions while telling her there were no other vacancies. After Idriss’s union filed a grievance against the university and Idriss went public with her story in January 2023, NYU dropped the charges against her. Palestine Legal worked with GSOC-UAW Local 2110 to provide Idriss legal support throughout the process.



ISRAELI POSTAL SERVICE BAG IN TRASH CAN
PHOTO CREDIT: NAYE IDRIS

EFFORTS TO CANCEL PALESTINIAN VOICES FLOUNDER

Palestinian writer and activist Mohammad El-Kurd toured universities across the country in 2022 in support of his debut book of poetry, *Rifqa*. Israel advocacy groups both on and off campus attempted to derail the book tour, falsely accusing El-Kurd of antisemitism for relating his experiences as a Palestinian. In March, the student government at Arizona State University repeatedly delayed and attempted to block funding for an event featuring El-Kurd, claiming that doing so would violate the IHRA definition of antisemitism, which encompasses virtually all criticism of Israel. After Palestine Legal wrote to the school explaining that this would be a violation of the First Amendment, the student government approved the funding, and the event went forward as planned.



MOHAMMAD EL-KURD

The IHRA definition was also invoked in an unsuccessful effort to block funding for an event featuring El-Kurd at Duke University in March. After the event, an editorial in the school paper called for a complete overhaul of student government event funding procedures to prevent events like El-Kurd's from taking place in the future. In April, Jonathan Greenblatt, CEO of the ADL, published a dossier on El-Kurd as part of an effort to get Georgetown Law to condemn a campus event featuring the poet.

At multiple stops on his tour, El-Kurd received violent threats, including a bomb threat, while student and faculty event organizers faced pressure to cancel the events or withdraw their sponsorship.

Despite efforts to block the tour, El-Kurd successfully shared his poetry and his experiences with large, enthusiastic crowds across the country.



PHOTO CREDIT: AL-MAYADEEN

Israel advocacy groups similarly targeted a speaking tour by Human Rights Watch Israel and Palestine country director Omar Shakir. In October, Shakir spoke at the University of Chicago about a 2021 Human Rights Watch report that found that Israeli authorities were committing the crime against humanity of apartheid against Palestinians. The event, jointly hosted by the UChicago's International Law Society, Human Rights Law Society, and Southwest Asian and North African Law Students Association, listed club sponsor law firms Latham & Watkins and White & Case on its flyers. Israel advocacy groups pressured the law firms to withdraw their funding. White & Case chillingly told reporters that while the firm funds international law societies across the country and does not play a role in the clubs' programming decisions, it had responded to the anti-Palestinian pressure by contacting the UChicago International Law Society to let them know that if the firm had known about the Human Rights Watch event in advance, it would have insisted that the firm not be associated with the event in any way.



OMAR SHAKIR

PHOTO CREDIT: UNIVERSITY NETWORK FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

That same month, Israel advocacy groups questioned the American Branch of the International Law Association (ABILA) and its sponsors, including White & Case, for hosting a panel that included Shakir. The panel, titled “Racism and the Crime of Apartheid in International Law,” was not focused on Israel or Palestine. White & Case once again told a right-wing paper that they were not involved in programming decisions, but that they expected events they support to be “non-extremist and overall balanced” and that they had informed ABILA that the panel did not live up to these standards. Two additional speakers were added to the event, seemingly as a result of this pressure.

Efforts to smear Shakir’s reputation and intimidate event organizers were unsuccessful as Shakir continued to speak to packed audiences about the report into 2023.

YESHIVA UNIVERSITY

In February, Yeshiva University President Ari Berman canceled a campus event at Cardozo School of Law featuring San Francisco State University professor Rabab Abdulhadi. A student group at the law school, Cardozo on Israel and Palestine, had invited Abdulhadi to speak about her professional experiences teaching about and advocating for Palestinian rights. One week before the lecture was to take place, the university cancelled the event, the catering, and the room reservation without communicating with the student organizers who had planned the event. President Berman attempted to justify the cancelation by falsely accusing Abdulhadi of hate and antisemitism and trying to paint her as violent.



SFSU PROTESTORS WITH PROFESSOR RABAB ABDULHADI
PHOTO CREDIT: SFSU GUPS

The US Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (USACBI) protested this censorship, pointing out that this was a violation of academic freedom and that students have a right to invite and to hear any person of their own choosing.

Though the university prevented them from holding the event with Abdulhadi, CIP used the censorship to draw more attention to the issue of Palestine through a media and letter-writing campaign and through a panel discussion on “Academic Censorship of Palestine Discussions.”

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

In April, the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign’s Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) office issued a statement ahead of a campus talk by Rutgers University professor Noura Erakat in the university’s Transitional Justice Speaker Series. The DEI statement mischaracterized the event, called it exclusionary and

unrepresentative of university values, and incorrectly denied that the DEI office had sponsored the talk. A week later, the office issued another statement apologizing for the misleading statement regarding its sponsorship of the talk, but once again called the title of the talk, “Unfinished Business: Zionism as Racism and Racial Discrimination,” offensive. The event went ahead as scheduled. Even after it took place, the title of the talk remained conspicuously absent on the page listing the events in the speaker series.

dents had followed all the same steps they regularly follow for campus events, John Jay administrators made vague claims that students had not followed the proper protocols, without providing an explanation of the specific protocols that had not been followed. Ignoring the significance of the timing of the event, administrators told students who complained about the censorship of their event that it simply had to be rescheduled for a later date. As of March 2023, the event still had not taken place.

JOHN JAY COLLEGE

In May, SJP at John Jay College of Criminal Justice partnered with student government to host a Palestine Lives Conference. The conference was scheduled for May 14, the day before Nakba Day, a holiday that commemorates the forced expulsion and ethnic cleansing of nearly 800,000 indigenous Palestinians from their land during the establishment of Israel in 1948. After weeks of planning and submitting the necessary paperwork, students were informed days before the event was scheduled to take place that it would be indefinitely postponed. Though stu-

MANUFACTURED ACCUSATIONS OF ANTISEMITISM

Under pressure from Israel advocacy groups, several universities conducted campus climate assessments and used the findings to equate Palestine activism with antisemitism. This was a result of a broad offensive by Israel advocacy groups, which use false allegations of antisemitism to encourage universities, as well as other institutions, to adopt the anti-Palestinian IHRA definition, which conflates criticism of Israel and anti-Zionism with antisemitism. Palestine Legal has documented how endorsements of IHRA and similar connotations increasingly create anti-Palestinian climates and exacerbate the “Palestine exception” to free speech.

TUFTS

After years of pressure by Israel advocacy groups to silence Palestine activists on campus, in January 2022, Tufts University President Anthony Monaco released a statement describing the results of a campus wide assessment of antisemitism done in partnership with Hillel. In the statement, Monaco said that “faculty and staff noted that the climate related to antisemitism, which often revolves around issues related to Israel-Palestine, has become more challenging in recent years” and that “[t]he line between political speech and antisemitic speech can be difficult to find and isn’t the same for everyone.” Monaco’s amplification of claims that Palestine activism is the source of campus antisemitism and his implied condemnation of SJP’s organizing efforts contributed to an anti-Palestinian climate on the Tufts campus that has been building for years.

USC

Due in part to complaints about student social media posts criticizing Zionism, University of Southern California President Carol Folt convened a committee whose mandate specifically included proposing actions to “tangibly support” Zionist students, faculty, and staff. In a report released in August, the committee stated that “[f]or many Jewish students, their experiences of antisemitism are directly connected with their Zionist identities and Israel advocacy, and they view anti-Zionism in American higher education as a manifestation of antisemitism on campus.” The report recommended that the president issue a statement that “anti-Zionism can sometimes be experienced as antisemitism.” The report, which never used the word “Palestine” and seemed to have been drafted without any consultation with Palestinians, also called on Folt to issue a statement condemning BDS.



JVP BAY AREA PROTESTORS PHOTO CREDIT: MATTHEW BRIDGES

SFSU

San Francisco State University, which has long faced pressure from Israel advocacy groups due to its bold history of Palestine activism, also conducted a campus climate assessment in partnership with Hillel and the Academic Engagement Network, a group that despite its neutral sounding name, focuses on undermining Palestine advocacy on campus. The SFSU report, issued in October, falsely characterized a number of incidents that previously took place at SFSU as antisemitic, such as the 2016 protest of Jerusalem Mayor Nir Barkat. Robust investigations into these incidents at the time cleared students of charges of antisemitism.

The report rewrote this history to justify policy recommendations such as making identification with Zionism a protected category in the school's antidiscrimination policy, in effect defining opposition to Zionism as a form of discrimination.

The report also quoted an administrator as claiming that “antisemitic incidents seem to increase on campus whenever incidents about Israel and/or Palestine appear in the news,” seemingly blaming Palestinians and their allies for speaking out against the numerous Israeli atrocities that have taken place in recent years.

CAL STATE, NORTHRIDGE

Throughout the year, students continued to face doxing and false accusations of antisemitism from off campus groups such as the anti-Palestinian blacklisting sites Canary Mission and Stop Antisemitism in an effort to discourage them from campus activism. For example, in September, students at California State University, Northridge were recruiting members to form an SJP club at their school. Stop Antisemitism tweeted a photo of the SJP table at a club fair, falsely accusing SJP of promoting murderers of Jews. Later that day SJP received a message from an unknown individual telling them to hide their names and threatening to have them expelled from the university. The same individual then wrote to a member of the campus faculty and, in the guise of a journalistic inquiry, obtained the name and personal contact information for a leader of their SJP. Though students were chilled by this incident, they continued their campus organizing.

UNIVERSITIES FALL SHORT IN PROTECTING ACADEMIC FREEDOM



MODIFIED FROM PHOTO BY MAX.POD, CC BY-SA 4.0

As academics pursued bold scholarship and advocacy efforts on Palestine, Israel-aligned groups on and off campuses pressured universities to censor them. Universities at times cowed to this pressure, illustrating a fundamental disregard for academic freedom.

U OF WASHINGTON

In February, the University of Washington returned a \$5 million endowment for its Israel Studies program to a donor who disagreed with the politics of Liora Halperin, a professor who had held a chair funded by the endowment. The donor had opposed Halperin's decision in 2021 to sign on to a statement condemning Israeli violence. The loss of funding left the program's future uncertain, but the university was able to arrange alternative funding. UW's unnecessary and unprecedented decision to return the endowment drew widespread condemnation because of the threat it posed to academic freedom.

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I

In March, as organizers of the *Arab Studies Quarterly* conference prepared for their 2022 conference at the University of Hawai'i, Manoa, a professor at the university attempted to derail the conference by demanding confirmation from organizers that the *Quarterly* and other sponsoring parties were not engaged in an academic boycott of Israel. The professor claimed that since 2013, the university had "prohibit[ed] the participation of those subscribing to the boycott." When organizers asked for more information about the policy, which would have been unconstitutional had it existed, the professor quickly backtracked, saying that the policy was either being ignored or was no longer relevant. The conference proceeded without further obstacles.



GRADUATES AT GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY HOLD PHOTOS OF SHIREEN ABU AKLEH
PHOTO CREDIT: KANNITHI TRAITONWONG

In May, journalist Shireen Abu Akleh was murdered by the Israeli army while reporting on a military raid at the Jenin refugee camp in the occupied West Bank.

That month the North Orange County Community College District's South West Asian and North African (SWANA) Faculty and Staff Association released a statement mourning her loss. The statement closed by calling for action to prevent murders like Abu Akleh's from taking place, demanding an end to U.S. complicity in Israel's oppression of Palestinians and encouraging people to join the BDS movement. The SWANA Facul-

ty and Staff Association shared the statement via email and on the district's website, like other statements about injustice and current events that continue to be highlighted on the district's Diversity and Compliance page. After backlash from Israel advocacy groups, the district removed the statement. District Chancellor Byron Breland sent an email apologizing for the statement and claiming that it was posted in violation of district policy. Ar-

turo Ocampo, the director of the Diversity and Compliance Office, who had initially approved the SWANA statement, resigned after the chancellor's email, telling the *Electronic Intifada*, "I will not be associated with institutions that do not have a true commitment to diversity, equity and anti-racism." Palestine Legal wrote to the district explaining that its censorship was a blatant violation of faculty rights. The Council on American-Islamic Relations and the Arab American Civic Council also spoke out against the censorship and mobilized community members to fight back.

HARVARD

In July, after months of talks with the Carr Center for Human Rights Policy at the Harvard Kennedy School about joining the center as a senior fellow, Kenneth Roth, former head of Human Rights Watch, accepted a formal offer for the position. Two weeks later Roth was blocked from joining the center by Kennedy School Dean Douglas Elmendorf. Elmendorf reportedly told faculty affiliated with the Carr Center that he would not approve the fellowship because of an alleged anti-Israel

bias at Human Rights Watch under Roth's leadership. After Roth went public with the story in January 2023, generating a wave of community support, including over a thousand Harvard affiliates demanding Elmendorf's resignation, the dean reversed his position without acknowledging wrongdoing.

After the reversal, many in the Harvard community continued to demand more concrete action by the university to address its longstanding exclusion of Palestine from its curriculum and its hostility toward Palestinians and Palestine activists on campus.

INDIANA UNIVERSITY

In August, after Indiana University hired Taurean Webb as associate director of the Center for the Study of Global Change, *Stop Antisemitism* posted a profile of Webb, falsely accusing him of antisemitism because of a peer-reviewed article from 2019 analyzing how Afro-Christianity relates to Palestinian justice and a congregational study guide he helped draft in 2016 on the Bible and the experiences of Black Americans and Palestinians. *Stop Antisemitism* also accused Webb of being affiliated with terror groups because he spoke out in 2018 against the injustice of the Holy Land Five trial.

The Holy Land Five trial, in which five Palestinian-American charity workers were prosecuted for providing humanitarian aid to Gazans, is infamous for its dubious reliance on anonymous, hearsay, and secret evidence that is typically not admissible in court because of constitutional protections.

Stop Antisemitism called for its supporters to contact the university and demand that Webb be investigated and punished for his scholarship and activism, which would be a violation of both the First Amendment and academic freedom. Efforts to silence Webb failed, as he retained his position and continues to publish scholarship on Palestine.

CORNELL

In September Cornell University professor Samia Henni found her office in disarray with a window open and sensitive materials missing. Henni, who is an outspoken supporter of Palestinian rights, suspected that she had been targeted because of her political views, given the pressure to cancel a lecture she organized on Palestine in 2020. When Henni reported the break-in to authorities, the university did not send a campuswide alert about the incident in line with its usual protocols. After supporters mobilized to demand that campus police take the incident seriously and investigate, police conducted an investigation but quickly closed it, pointing to an improbable finding for the disarray and ignoring Henni's concerns for her safety. As of March 2023, supporters—including over a thousand academics from around the world—continued to demand that the university apologize to Henni and properly investigate the incident.

In November, a group of scholars whose manuscript had been accepted for publication by a journal of the American Psychological Association (APA) was informed that the paper could not be published because it did not conform with an APA policy on Palestine. When asked for details on the policy, the editor and others within APA did not provide the policy or an explanation beyond stating that Israel-Palestine is too sensitive an issue.

**CORNELL PROFESSOR SAMIA HENNI**

ISRAEL GROUPS TARGET K-12 STUDENTS, EDUCATORS, AND BOARD MEMBERS



PHOTO CREDIT: AROC

As in other contexts, students, teachers, and community advocates in the K-12 educational arena were outspoken in their support for Palestinian rights in 2022.

Mirroring organized right-wing efforts to target and shut down efforts to teach, learn, and discuss racism in schools by claiming such efforts damage white children, Israel advocacy groups have attacked individuals and groups working to raise awareness about Palestine, often making claims of antisemitism.

NEW JERSEY

In May 2021, Fahim Abedrabbo and Feras Awwad, both members of the Clifton Board of Education in New Jersey, spoke during the comment period of a school board meeting about Israel's attacks on Palestinians, which were capturing headlines around the world. Months later, a woman with no apparent affiliation with the district filed an ethics complaint against Abedrabbo

and Awwad over their comments, smearing their names and using absurd guilt by association tactics to try to place blame on Abedrabbo and Awwad's 2021 comments for the 2015 killing of her nephew in Israel. In January 2022 the complaint was dismissed by the School Ethics Commission, which found that the complaint did not adequately allege any violation of the law. The complainant, backed by the Zionist Organization of America, appealed the decision to the New Jersey Superior Court, Appellate Division. The American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) filed an amicus brief in support of the board members in August, affirming their right to speak freely about what was taking place in Palestine and arguing that the lawsuit was an attempt to use state ethics laws to impose viewpoint discrimination. In November, just days before an

election in which Abedrabbo was running for Clifton City Council, a local paper resurfaced the smear campaign against him in an apparent effort to derail his campaign. As of February 2023, the appeal of the ethics complaint was still pending.

OHIO

In January 2022, students at the Maumee Valley Country Day School in Ohio planned to host an event titled, “Palestine: The Cradle of Faiths,” which was to feature speakers from Christian, Jewish, and Muslim communities, in an effort to foster interfaith dialogue about Palestine within the school. The Muslim Student Association, which was hosting the event, took all the necessary steps and received all the appropriate signatures required for club events. However, one week before the event, administrators called the student organizers into a meeting to express concerns about the anti-Zionist views of one of the speakers. Administrators also falsely claimed that the students had not followed the required guidelines for event planning. Administrators unilaterally moved to cancel the event. They also took down the flyer for the event and

sent a vague email to parents falsely claiming that neither the scheduled speakers nor event flyers had been properly vetted. The student organizers then attempted to secure a space for the event at the University of Toledo. After the students received confirmation of the venue, the university abruptly canceled the event, saying they needed more time to vet the speakers.

Despite these administrative hurdles and censorship, the students persisted and moved the event to a local church, the Monroe Street United Methodist Church, where it took place successfully.

NEW JERSEY

In March, a New Jersey high school student faced censorship in the school paper after publishing an article that referenced Palestine activism. The article, which included interviews with teachers at the school, was taken down from the website of the school paper while administrators considered removing language from the article describing a teacher's off-campus Palestine activism. After the teacher pushed back against this illegal censorship with Palestine Legal's support and rallied community groups to contact the high school on his behalf, the article was reposted to the site.

LOS ANGELES

In May, the Deborah Project, an Israel advocacy group helmed by former Trump attorney Jerome Marcus, filed a frivolous lawsuit on behalf of unnamed parents and teachers against the Liberated Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum Consortium (LESMCC) and the LA teachers' union. LESMCC is a group of ethnic studies scholars that provides support to school districts developing their ethnic studies curriculum to help them comply with a state law that requires California high schools to provide ethnic studies courses by the 2025-2026 school year. Ethnic studies education has long been a target of Israel advocacy groups, which have attempted to exclude Pal-



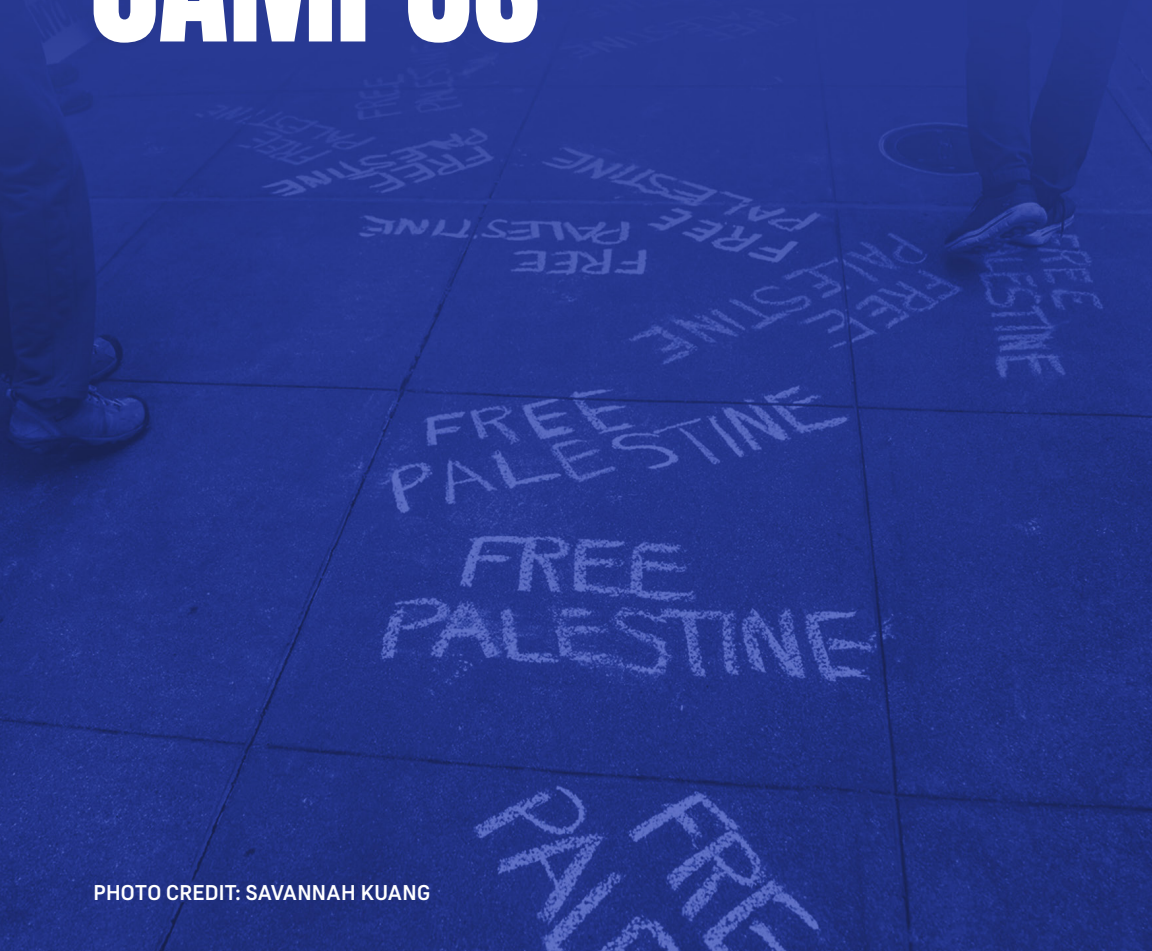
SUPPORTERS OF ETHNIC STUDIES AT A 2018 RALLY IN SACRAMENTO
PHOTO CREDIT: LUIS ALEJO

estonian experiences from study in ethnic studies courses. The lawsuit accuses LESMCC of discrimination because the group's website linked to an external resource that criticizes Zionism. The complaint asks the court to block the Los Angeles Unified School District from working with LESMCC or any other group that uses any educational materials that do not conform with the Deborah Project's views on Israel, such as materials that reference the extensively documented and now widely held position that Israel is committing the crime of apartheid. As of March 2023, the lawsuit was still under way.

ILLINOIS

Also in May 2022, Jill Manrique, a member of the Niles Township High Schools District 219 school board in Illinois, wore a keffiyeh to the Niles West High School graduation to show her support for marginalized Palestinian students. Manrique was accused of antisemitism and being insensitive to the school's large Jewish population and even received death threats, for simply wearing a Palestinian scarf. Palestinian students, parents, and activists from the district rallied around Manrique at a press conference hosted by the US Palestine Community Network to defend her against the false accusations.

DISCRIMINATORY TREATMENT OFF CAMPUS



While the majority of backlash reported to Palestine Legal in 2022 related to campus activism, the other 30 percent of incidents took place off campus, where advocates also faced smear campaigns and discriminatory treatment.

DISCRIMINATION AT WORK

In June, college student Anna Rajagopal was targeted by the blacklisting site *Stop Antisemitism* as its “Antisemite of the Week” because of Rajagopal’s outspoken advocacy for Palestinian freedom. The posting, which questioned the legitimacy of Rajagopal and her parents’ Jewish identity, called for followers of *Stop Antisemitism* to contact Rajagopal’s employer and demand that they be fired. Within days, Rajagopal’s employer, Avodah, fired them, but insisted that the decision had nothing to do with the *Stop Antisemitism* profile. Rajagopal continued to face harassment after the firing, including sexually harassing messages sent to their family. Undeterred by this backlash, Rajagopal continues to speak out in support of Palestinian rights.

In September, journalist Katie Halper was fired after she recorded a segment for Hill TV’s morning show “Rising”, defending Rep. Rashida Tlaib (D-Mich.), who was under attack for referring to Israel as an “apartheid government.” Halper’s segment cited reports from leading human rights organizations, such as Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International,



PALESTINE BILLBOARD IN SOUTH AFRICA
 PHOTO CREDIT: MADELENE CRONJE

which have documented the apartheid policies of the Israeli government. Halper was first told that her segment would not run and was then dropped from the program entirely. Rather than being silenced, Halper widely publicized the segment through other outlets, exposed the censorship she experienced, and reaffirmed her support for Palestinian rights.

In December, a Palestinian employee at a health care company in New York received a visit from law enforcement questioning him about his activities at work in retaliation for his efforts to address discrimination he had faced. The employee had attempted to launch a Southwest Asia and North Africa affinity group at his workplace, modeled on the affinity groups that already existed for employees of other ethnicities.

After administrators repeatedly canceled and rescheduled meetings about launching the affinity group, the employee reached out to the human resources department several times but received no response. Three weeks after he contacted human resources, FBI agents came to the employee's home. They questioned him about the group he was trying to start. They also asked him about his trips to Palestine, noting on several occasions that there was a complaint by his employer. The employee contacted the head of human resources for an explanation. As of March 2023, the employee, who was continuing to advocate for his rights, was still awaiting a response after multiple follow-up attempts over the course of several months.

CENSORSHIP ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media companies repeatedly censored Palestine solidarity organizers in 2022, but backed down after supporters mobilized against this censorship.



In March, Instagram suspended the account of New York-based organization Within Our Lifetime-United for Palestine. The account was restored after a mass mobilization demanding that Instagram stop censoring Palestinians. Announcing this update, the group explained, “Our account was kept offline for four days, but we were never really gone because we are not an Instagram page, we are a grassroots Palestinian-led community organization. Our online presence is secondary to base building in our communities.”

Instagram also suspended the account of the Palestinian Youth Movement in August. PYM similarly succeeded in rallying its supporters to get its account restored. An independent report released in September found that Instagram parent company Meta had violated the fundamental rights of Palestinians through its censorship while Palestine was under assault in May 2021.

Twitter censored the news outlet *Mondoweiss* in April after it posted the trailer of a new documentary *Inside Israeli Apartheid*. Tweets featuring the trailer were replaced with the message “This Tweet is unavailable.” After *Mondoweiss* went public with the censorship, the tweets were quickly restored.

Palestine Legal received two separate reports from users of the dating app Feeld who described themselves as anti-Zionist in their biographies and had their accounts blocked. The app, which brands itself as an inclusive and open-minded space, contains many profiles that express political views or that oppose the political views of others. Both users were notified by administrators of the app that because other users had flagged their references to being anti-Zionist as offensive content, they would be permanently banned from the app if they did not remove the label from their accounts.

CENSORSHIP, SMEARS, AND DISCRIMINATION OFFLINE

NEVADA

Activists in Nevada reported in January 2022 that their attempts to purchase billboards with the messages “Free Palestine,” “Palestinian Lives Matter,” and “From the River to the Sea, Palestine Will Be Free” were being categorically rejected by a billboard company.

ILLINOIS AND OHIO

In March, activists in both Illinois and Ohio reported that their attempts to purchase advertising space in local newspapers were rejected as too political or controversial or rejected with no explanation at all. In Illinois, the ad had initially been approved, but then the publication raised vague concerns about the messaging and simply stopped responding to the activists. The ads all included messages of support for Amnesty International, which had just released a report documenting Israeli apartheid.




PALESTINE BILLBOARD IN NEVADA
PHOTO CREDIT: NEVADANS FOR PALESTINIAN LIBERATION

In May, ADL CEO Jonathan Greenblatt devoted his remarks at the group's National Leadership Summit primarily to smearing Palestine advocacy groups, such as Students for Justice in Palestine, Jewish Voice for Peace, and Within Our Lifetime, and allies, such as the Council on American-Islamic Relations, as violent extremists.

As the #DropTheADL campaign has documented, while the ADL holds itself out as a civil rights leader, the organization has a long history of “attacking social justice movements led by communities of color, queer people, immigrants, Muslims, Arabs, and other marginalized groups, while aligning itself with police, right-wing leaders, and perpetrators of state violence.”

Palestine solidarity groups responded to the ADL’s bullying campaign with a powerful statement reaffirming their “unwavering support of the Palestinian cause for justice and liberation,” unequivocally condemning the ADL’s baseless smears, and expressing concern that the “ADL’s attacks will distract from the real threat of white supremacy faced by all our communities.”



Jewish Voice for Peace 
@jvplive

To the @ADL, we say: The movement is ready. Our commitment to the right of Palestinians to live in freedom and dignity is resolute. We are not intimidated, and the movement for Palestinian rights will not be silenced.

@CAIRNational @NationalSJP



jewishvoiceforpeace.org

The movement for Palestinian rights will not be silenced

JVP, SJP and CAIR respond to ADL attack: We are ready, our people are ready, the movement is ready. Our commitment to the right of Palestinians to live in ...

CHICAGO

In June, queer Palestinian activists and allies protested a performance at Chicago PrideFest by Netta, a singer once described by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu as the “best ambassador of Israel.” When activists began reading a statement at the performance, they were violently attacked by counterprotestors. None of the Palestinian activists responded to this violence. Nonetheless, police arrested a Palestinian protestor and allowed their attackers to go free. Police also told another protestor with a Palestinian flag that they were only allowed to have Palestinian flags in a designated protest zone, while others were freely allowed to display Israeli flags wherever they wanted. No charges were filed.

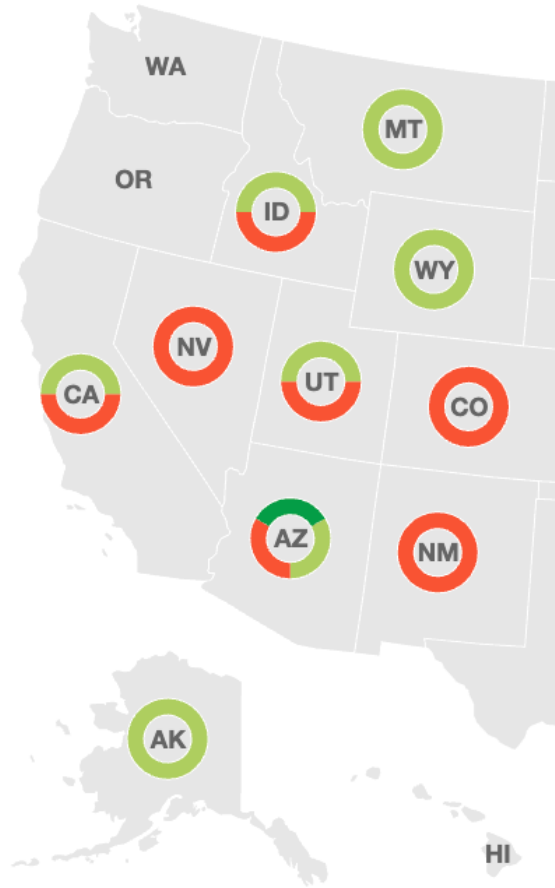
POLITICIANS CONTINUE TO PUSH ANTI- PALESTINIAN MEASURES

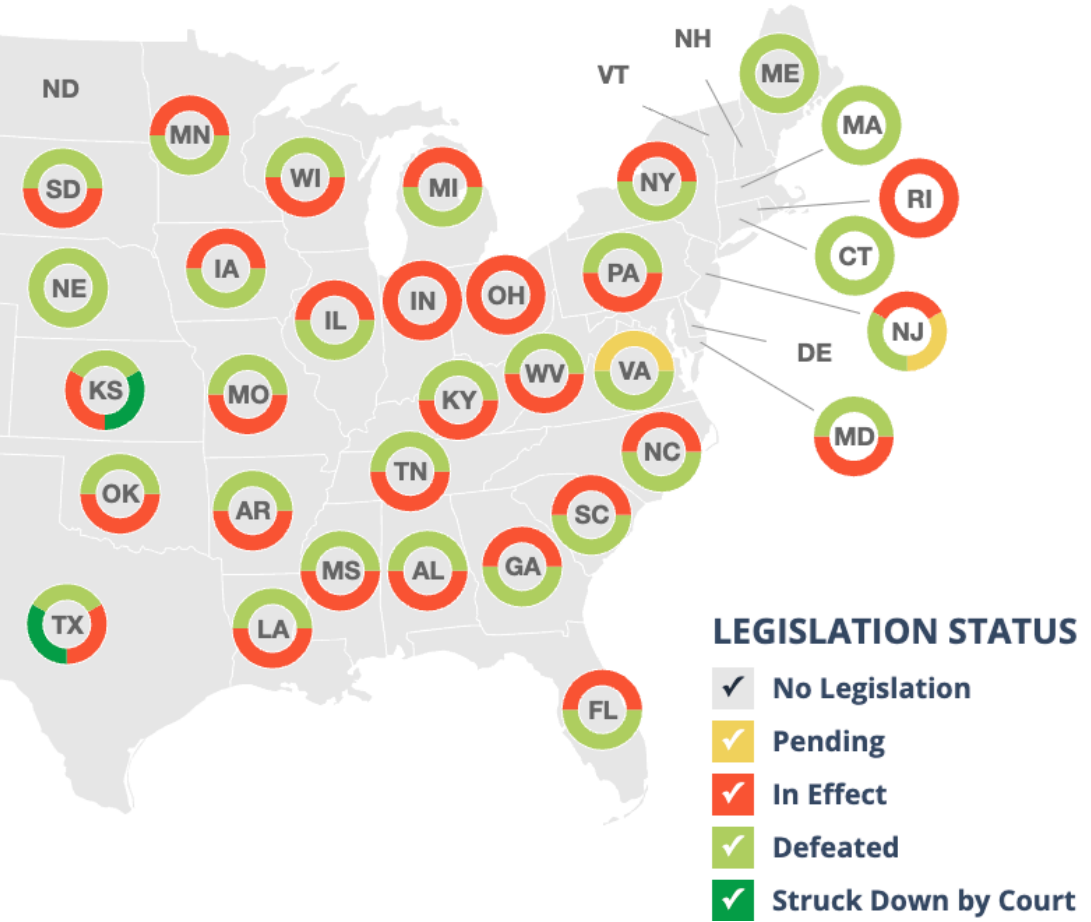


PHOTO CREDIT: MD2PALESTINE

At least 24 anti-Palestinian bills were introduced at the state and federal level. Coalitions organized to oppose such measures in many states and succeeded in defeating legislation in at least four states.

As in previous years, legislation targeting advocacy for Palestinian rights generally fell into two primary categories in 2022: anti-BDS legislation and antisemitism redefinition measures. In addition to bills introduced at the state and federal level, several non-binding resolutions were introduced and adopted to chill Palestine advocacy, and a number of cities and counties also adopted the controversial IHRA definition of antisemitism. Lawmakers also proposed and enacted legislation modeled on anti-Palestinian measures to target other movements for justice, including anti-boycott bills targeting environmental justice and gun safety efforts.





ANTI-BDS LEGISLATION

In 2022, members of the U.S. Congress once again introduced the Israel Anti-Boycott Act, a bill that would have criminalized participation in boycotts of Israel, singling out international efforts to hold Israel accountable for its illegal settlements. The bill failed to pass, as had similar bills in the three previous congressional sessions, dating back to 2016.

In 2022, there were also at least 11 bills introduced at the state level to create new anti-BDS laws or expand the scope of existing anti-BDS laws.

Of these bills, four were signed into law. Tennessee adopted an anti-BDS law. Arizona and Ohio expanded their existing anti-BDS laws to prohibit universities from contracting with companies that boycott Israel. Iowa expanded its anti-BDS law to cover parent companies and subsidiaries—a provision specifically enacted to require the state to divest from Unilever after subsidiary Ben & Jerry's announced it

would no longer do business in illegal Israeli settlements. Georgia also adopted a bill that had been introduced in 2021, reviving its anti-BDS law after it was struck down in court as unconstitutional. Anti-BDS bills proposed in Virginia, Nebraska, and Alaska were defeated, due in part to state-level advocates mobilizing to call attention to the bills' constitutional deficiencies.

IMPACT OF ANTI-BDS LAWS

Individuals and organizations continued to experience the harmful impact of anti-BDS laws in 2022. Palestine Legal received a report of a public contract with a community organization in the City of Houston which included anti-boycott clauses going beyond the scope of the Texas anti-BDS law. With Palestine Legal's support, the organization was able to get the contract revised to acknowledge the inapplicability of the provision. In Nevada, the parents of a Palestinian child who needed counseling support were told that ser-

vice providers would have to sign a contract including an anti-BDS clause in order for the school district to pay them for their work.

After a years' long campaign by Israel advocacy groups, Morningstar, a company that conducts investment research, including analysis of companies' performance on environmental, social, and corporate governance factors, changed its methodology to avoid labeling companies involved in Israel's violations of international law as risky investments. Alongside efforts to publicly brand the company as antisemitic, the campaign against

Morningstar included pressure from over a dozen states, including Illinois and Arizona, which threatened to blacklist the financial services firm under their anti-BDS laws. Morningstar's capitulation to this pressure undermines broader efforts to encourage ethical investments that avoid complicity in human rights violations and environmental destruction. By shielding Israel from critical assessments of its treatment of Palestinians in its research products, the company has provided a blueprint for other industries and human rights violators to circumvent investment screens.



BDS ARTWORK AT HARVARD

PHOTO CREDIT: HARVARD PALESTINE SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE

CHALLENGES TO ANTI-BDS LAWS

Lawsuits challenging the constitutionality of anti-BDS laws continued to work their way through the courts in 2022. In July, the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals, sitting en banc, vacated a February 2021 ruling in *Arkansas Times LP v. Waldrip*, which had found Arkansas's anti-BDS law unconstitutional. The ACLU, which represents the *Arkansas Times*, filed a petition asking the Supreme Court to strike down the law. In February 2023, the Supreme Court denied the petition.

GEORGIA

In Georgia, a challenge to the state's anti-BDS law, *Martin v. Wrigley*, was dismissed as moot after the legislature amended the law to no longer apply to individuals. Plaintiff Abby Martin, represented by the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) and the Partnership for Civil Justice Fund, appealed the dismissal to the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals.

TEXAS

In Texas, a federal district court blocked enforcement of the state's anti-BDS law against the plaintiff in *A & R Engineering and Testing v. Houston* in January, but the state appealed the decision to the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals. The appeal was still pending as of March 2023. A & R Engineering and Testing was represented by CAIR. In June, Palestine Legal and the Center for Constitutional Rights filed an amicus brief in the Fifth Circuit in support of the lawsuit, situating the Texas law in the context of a broader effort to suppress advocacy for Palestinian rights and illustrating its unconstitutional intent and effect.

SPREAD OF OTHER ANTI-BOYCOTT LAWS

States continued to introduce bills targeting boycotts by other social justice movements. Both Kentucky and West Virginia adopted laws in 2022 blacklisting companies that boycott energy companies, joining Texas and Oklahoma which adopted similar laws in 2021. At least seven other states proposed legislation targeting oil and gas company boycotts in 2022. At least seven states and the federal government introduced bills targeting firearm industry boycotts. All of these measures were defeated. Shifting away from this piecemeal attack on the right to boycott, the right-wing lobbying group American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) proposed model legislation in 2022 aimed at eliminating all political boycotts.

ANTISEMITISM REDEFINITION BILLS

At least eight bills were introduced in state legislatures in 2022 to adopt the controversial IHRA definition of antisemitism, which paints virtually all criticism of Israel as potential antisemitism.

In Georgia, activists successfully mobilized to prevent the adoption of an IHRA bill. Arizona enacted a law that requires the state to employ the IHRA definition when collecting hate crime statistics and could result in courts considering criticism of Israel as an

aggravating factor in criminal sentencing. Iowa enacted a law amending its Civil Rights Act to require consideration of the IHRA definition when investigating discrimination complaints. As a result, political speech supportive of Palestinian rights could be deemed unlawful discrimination in the workplace, in public accommodations, and in educational institutions in Iowa. Tennessee enacted a law that requires state agencies and public educational institutions to consider the IHRA definition in assessing discrimination allegations in Tennessee's public schools and universities. The governor of New Mexico also issued an executive order calling on state agencies to employ the IHRA definition when assessing discrimination complaints.



ANTI-IHRA PROTEST IN MONTGOMERY
PHOTO CREDIT: MD2PALESTINE

City and county councils adopted the IHRA definition in Los Angeles, Manhattan Beach, and West Hollywood, Calif., Washington, D.C., Wichita, Kan., Montgomery County, Md., Arlington County, Va., and Bellevue, Tacoma, and Snohomish County, Wash., in many cases over the objections of local activists. The D.C. Council resolution excluded some of the more problematic language from the definition, dropping the reference to calling Israel a racist endeavor as an example of antisemitism.

In March, the American Association of University Professors Committee A on Academic Freedom and Tenure issued a report opposing IHRA legislation and comparing this legislation to right-wing efforts to ban Critical Race Theory and teaching about racism in general. The report, titled “Legislative Threats to Academic Freedom: Redefinitions of Antisemitism and Racism,” explained that it was evident that the “purpose of such legislation is to protect Israel or the United States from critical examination of their history and policies.”

incidents described earlier in this report, such as the Berkeley law students’ bylaw campaign and the anti-Zionist posters at George Washington University, as well as CUNY Law School’s choice of Palestinian activist and long-time target of Zionist smear campaigns Nerdeen Kiswani as a commencement speaker.

Also in December, the Nevada System of Higher Education announced that it was adopting the IHRA definition for use in its anti-bias and anti-discrimination education.

STATE AGENCIES EMPLOY IHRA

In December, state commissions in Texas and Virginia issued reports that relied on IHRA to dangerously conflate Palestine activism with antisemitism. Ironically, the Texas report cited as an example of antisemitism a campaign by the Palestine Solidarity Committee at the University of Texas, Austin, to repeal the adoption of the IHRA definition by their student government. The Virginia report cited as examples of antisemitism

DEPT. OF ED. REBUFFS IHRA DEFINITION

Israel advocacy groups and members of Congress pressured the Department of Education Office for Civil Rights (OCR) to adopt regulations reinforcing a Trump-era executive order that requires agencies to consider the IHRA definition when investigating claims of antisemitism. After an educational campaign that included letters from civil rights groups and academic associations highlighting the dangers posed by the IHRA definition, OCR delayed its proposed rulemaking to December 2023 and instead issued a fact sheet that described protections that cover students who are Jewish, Christian, Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, Buddhist, or of another religious group, without relying on the IHRA definition.



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