



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Elaine Phillips

Senator Phillips Announces Bill To Prevent State Funding From Supporting Efforts To Harm Israel And Other U.S. Allies Through Boycotts Passes State Senate

ELAINE PHILLIPS June 4, 2018

Senator Elaine Phillips announced today that the New York State Senate passed her legislation to expand existing protections against state funding being used to support efforts to harm Israel and other American allies through boycotts and discriminatory economic agendas.

“New York has no business funding an economic war against Israel, or other allied nations, by conducting business with its enemies. It’s an inappropriate and offensive use of taxpayer dollars,” Senator Phillips said. “This measure extends existing state law to combat the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement, which seeks to advance anti-Semitic, anti-freedom and anticapitalistic principles. I urge the Assembly and Governor to take action on this important bill immediately so New York can follow suit with other states and end this practice.”

Current New York State law prohibits the State from directly engaging in an international boycott against American-allied nations. New York City has a similar prohibition as part of its administrative code. However, the state could indirectly support a boycott of American allies by providing state monies to businesses, individuals or organizations that participate

in boycotts like the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement aimed at causing economic harm to Israel and the Israeli people.

The bill, S.2492, would prohibit New York State from doing business with companies that seek to harm Israel and other American allies through actions like the BDS movement, which aims to cripple the Israeli economy in protest of Israel's domestic security policies. This legislation would ensure that state tax dollars are not used to harm Israel and other American allies.

"Senator Phillips is a genuine friend of the State of Israel and the Jewish people. Her successful sponsoring of anti-BDS legislation and her outright clarity on the anti-Semites who support and sponsor BDS activities is inspiring," said Jeffrey Wiesenfeld, former CUNY Trustee, Board Member, Jewish Community Relations Council of NY and Great Neck resident.

Rabbi Shia Markowitz, former Chairman of Agudath Israel of America's Iranian Rescue Committee said, "Elaine Phillips is a great friend of the Jewish community and a strong advocate in Albany for all the issues that are important to our community, including support for non-public schools and legislation opposing BDS. She has traveled to Israel and housed in her home children from north of Israel during the Lebanon war that were being bombed by Hamas." Rabbi Markowitz led the Iranian Rescue Committee for eight years helping Jewish teenagers escape Iran after the Iranian Revolution.

A number of other states adopted similar laws to prevent tax dollars from supporting BDS, including New Jersey, Alabama, Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and South Carolina.