SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION
No. 81

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
216th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JUNE 8, 2015

Sponsored by:
Senator PETER J. BARNES, III
District 18 (Middlesex)

Co-Sponsored by:
Senator Weinberg

SYNOPSIS
Condemns Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions movement and increasing incidents of anti-Semitism.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT
As introduced.
SJR81 P.BARNES, III

A JOINT RESOLUTION condemning the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions movement and the increasing incidents of anti-Semitism.

WHEREAS, There has been a disturbing increase in anti-Semitism worldwide, where Jewish populations are facing increased levels of hatred; and

WHEREAS, Prejudice against Jews as a national, ethnic, religious, or racial group has no place in New Jersey or in the United States of America; and

WHEREAS, The United States and Israel have a long relationship and close alliance, each attempting to support the interests of the other; and

WHEREAS, The State of Israel, the only democracy in the Middle East, is the greatest friend and ally of the United States in that region; and

WHEREAS, The elected representatives of New Jersey recognize the importance of demonstrating unwavering support for the Jewish people and for the rights of the State of Israel to exist and defend itself; and

WHEREAS, The international Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement has become a vehicle for spreading anti-Semitism and advocating the elimination and delegitimation of the Jewish State, and represents a strategic threat to the State of Israel; and

WHEREAS, Efforts to pressure Israel via this movement are gaining momentum on university campuses nationwide, wherein a divide is created between Jewish and minority students by developing resentment on the part of disenfranchised minorities toward Jews and generating anti-Semitic sentiment; and

WHEREAS, Leaders of the BDS movement have indicated that one of its goals is to remove Israel as the home of the Jewish people, with participants at rallies repeating the slogan, “From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free,” signifying the absence of the State of Israel between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey’s elected representatives understand that the goals and activities of campaigns such as BDS in New Jersey are harmful to New Jersey’s relationship with its Jewish citizens and with the Jewish homeland, Israel, and have a deleterious impact on the educational environment; and

WHEREAS, The call for academic boycotts by the BDS campaign have been condemned by many of our nation’s largest academic associations, over 250 university presidents, and many other leading scholars as a violation of the bedrock principle of academic freedom; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:
1. The State of New Jersey condemns the international Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement and its activities as being inherently antithetical and damaging to the causes of peace, justice, equality, democracy, and human rights for all peoples in the Middle East, and for seeking to undermine the Jewish people’s right to self-determination, being fulfilled in the State of Israel.

2. The State of New Jersey condemns activities that contribute directly or indirectly to the denial, violation, or delegitimation of any person’s academic freedom, including, but not limited to, promotion of academic boycotts against Israel by the BDS movement.

3. The State of New Jersey opposes all forms of racism and hatred, including anti-Semitism, and opposes attempts to deny the legitimacy of Israel as a sovereign state.

4. Copies of this joint resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State, shall be transmitted by the Secretary of State to the President of the United States, the Secretary of State, each member of Congress elected from this State, and the Israeli Embassy in Washington, D.C., for transmission to the proper authorities in the State of Israel.

5. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This resolution condemns the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement and the increasing incidents of anti-Semitism.

There has been a disturbing increase in anti-Semitism worldwide, where Jewish populations are facing increased levels of hatred. Prejudice against Jews as a national, ethnic, religious, or racial group has no place in New Jersey or in the United States of America. Notably, the United States and Israel have a long relationship and close alliance, each attempting to support the interests of the other, with the State of Israel being the only democracy in the Middle East, and the greatest friend and ally of the United States in that region.

The elected representatives of New Jersey recognize the importance of demonstrating unabridged support for the Jewish people and for the rights of the State of Israel to exist and defend itself. Conversely, the international Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement has become a principal vehicle for spreading anti-Semitism and advocating the elimination and delegitimization of the Jewish State, and represents a strategic threat
to the State of Israel. Efforts to pressure Israel via this movement are gaining momentum on university campuses nationwide, wherein a divide is created between Jewish and minority students by developing resentment on the part of disenfranchised minorities toward Jews and generating anti-Semitic sentiment.

New Jersey’s elected representatives understand that the goals and activities of campaigns such as BDS in New Jersey are harmful to New Jersey’s relationship with its Jewish citizens and the Jewish homeland, Israel, and have a deleterious impact on the educational environment. The call for academic boycotts by the BDS campaign have been condemned by many of our nation’s largest academic associations, over 250 university presidents, and many other leading scholars as a violation of the bedrock principle of academic freedom.

Thus, New Jersey condemns the international Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement and its activities as being inherently antithetical and damaging to the causes of peace, justice, equality, democracy, and human rights for all peoples in the Middle East, and for seeking to undermine the Jewish people’s right to self-determination, being fulfilled in the State of Israel. New Jersey also condemns activities that contribute directly or indirectly to the denial, violation, or delegitimation of any person’s academic freedom, including, but not limited to, promotion of academic boycotts against Israel by the BDS movement. New Jersey opposes all forms of racism and hatred, including anti-Semitism, and opposes attempts to deny the legitimacy of Israel as a sovereign state.