

## UMD FACULTY PETITION AGAINST DIVESTMENT

We, the undersigned members of the faculty of the University of Maryland, stand against the upcoming Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) related bill being voted on by the UMD Student Government Association on Wednesday, November 15th, 2017. This resolution would stifle academic freedom and free exchange of ideas on our campus. It would create a campus climate that would divide the student body, impede productive campus discourse, and potentially isolate the Jewish community.

We recognize the value of a vigorous debate about social issues; however we cannot ignore the broad implications of this petition for University policy that calls on the Board of Regents to divest portions of its portfolio. The resolution cannot be separated from a prejudiced condemnation of Israel. While we recognize that achievement of peace has been achingly slow, if peace is to have a chance to succeed with the emergence of a workable democracy for Palestinians as well as Israelis, one-sided attacks directed at Israel are certain to be useless.

This deceptively straightforward resolution is sponsored by a BDS (Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions) movement that supports the de-legitimization of the State of Israel. BDS rejects any legitimate national aspiration for the Jewish people. The BDS movement repeatedly attacks Zionism and has never condemned attacks on Jewish Israeli civilians. This bill de-

legitimizes and promotes misinformation about Israel. This is in line with the broader BDS movement, which singles out the Jewish state - the only liberal democracy in a region beset by some of the world's worst human rights abusers. The BDS movement is hateful, divisive, and ultimately diminishes the chance of peace between Israelis and Palestinians.

This bill comes at a time when we see an escalation in hate bias incidents on our campus. BDS campaigns create a hostile campus atmosphere that singles out Jewish and pro-Israel students and subjects them to intimidation, bullying, and abuse. We know that BDS fosters an environment on campus that can lead to anti-Semitism.

We encourage Legislators of the Student Government Association to oppose this resolution, which punishes both Israelis and Palestinians, reinforces dangerous stereotypes that limit understanding and cooperation, and divides the broader UMD community.