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#UMDivest's resolution — for the first time in the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor's history — passed in Central Student Government early Wednesday morning with 23 voting in favor, 17 against, and 5 abstained.

“We feel like we finally were given a voice on this campus,” a SAFE student tearily said to the audience.

The divestment movement calls for the University's Board of Regents to create a committee to investigate three companies operating in Israel and involved in alleged human rights violations against Palestinians. The resolution this year was embroiled in controversy within the Central Student Government executive board, prompting CSG to create its own investigative committee.

The meeting Tuesday night differed from previous years in several ways. Unlike last year, a secret ballot was approved, with 28 in favor, 7 against, 9 abstained. Many argued this was beneficial for the safety of pro-Palestinian students from damaging blacklists.

Another was the outpouring of support: CSG Vice President Nadine Jawad, a Public Policy senior, took the floor to describe her own experiences as an Arab and Muslim student. She stated her support of

the resolution, empathizing with the feelings Jewish students have experienced because she has faced marginalization herself.

She urged CSG members to support divestment, standing in front of the assembly despite the possibility of personal repercussions.

"We have to continue talking about this but we also have to recognize if we want equitable footing on this, we need to give all people an opportunity and a voice," Jawad said.

Public Health graduate student Dana Greene Jr., who knelt on the Diag for 21 hours earlier this semester in protest of anti-Black racism, also showed his support for divestment. He clarified he did not see the resolution as anti-Israel, and also said he could not ignore his moral values.

"I do not ask you to pass this resolution as a sentiment against Israel ... all that I ask is that you support all people, including Palestinians," he said. "If one of us suffers all of us suffer. ... When I knelt on that Diag in pain, I watched thousands of students walk past me. I ask you today to not be one of those people that walked past."

Tuesday morning, the Black Student Union tweeted their endorsement of divestment. Members of the BSU executive board attended the meeting, following many other social-justice oriented organizations in supporting Students Allied for Freedom and Equality, the group that first brought the resolution to CSG.

This year, History professor Victor Lieberman was not approved to join the list of speakers after objection from representatives, prompting cheers from pro-divest students. Lieberman teaches on the Arab-Israeli conflict, and spoke last year heavily against divestment. Then-LSA

senior Devin Jones criticized Lieberman, stating Lieberman's rhetoric victim-blamed Palestinians.

Public Policy senior Samuel Lawrence spoke on Lieberman's behalf Tuesday night, reading from his notes on how BDS aims to bring Israel down. Former CSG Rep. Gaby Roth, an LSA senior, followed, urging current CSG members to vote against divestment as she did last year—calling the movement anti-Semitic.

Former CSG Rep. Farah Erzouki, a University alum, spoke in favor of divestment as a guest speaker, highlighting that the vote isn't to sanction a country, but rather specific companies that are tied to allegations of human rights violations. Erzouki also emphasized the weeks divestment is discussed are consistently very well-attended by students, as they use the meetings as a platform to express their views.

"I've seen at this point thousands of students rally over leaders in support of divestment this issue and this request does not exist in a vacuum," she said. "There is long standing and diverse support on this issue as you have seen."

She went on to list several institutions whose student governing bodies pass similar divestment issues.

"As a former member of student government and as someone who has been on our campus community since 2010, this is by far the concern that brings the highest number of students attending these meetings time and time again and every single year," she continued. "It's important for representatives to really grasp what they're deciding — whether they're deciding to amplify the voices of the students coming back time and time again."

LSA senior Ari Spellman opposed the resolution, noting the extreme divisiveness divestment brings to the University.

“I believe that people should have an appropriate place to share their opinions; nonetheless there is a limit to everything and I felt my line was crossed,” Spellman said. “The concerns of other divestment students are acknowledged and respected by other universities, so why aren't they respected here?”

Following community concerns — where speakers each expressed their opinions on the divestment and shared stories on the challenges their families face due to the conflict — the assembly moved into representative reports, with nine CSG representatives sharing their perspectives on the resolution.

When re-introducing their resolution, two SAFE authors explained their case.

“More and more people come together to talk about it and more and more dialogue about the Israel-Palestine conflict comes up,” a SAFE member said. “We’re here to speak up for the voices that have been shut down and told we don’t belong here.”

“I am not trying to tell how the Jewish community should feel about this. I was trying to explain what SAFE does,” another SAFE member added. “You can’t say just because we referenced history in our resolution that it’s about the entire conflict. We’re talking about how history affects the students on this campus.”

When asked how they would justify this resolution to students who feel victimized by it, Hafsa Tout, LSA rep. and senior, explained students wouldn’t be choosing between two groups on campus, but would

rather be giving an underrepresented group of students a platform to express their views.

“I understand the very deep connection many, many students have with Israel,” Tout said. “I want to emphasize over and over again that this resolution emphasizes the voices of Palestinian students ... and to give this community a voice for the first time in CSG history is to not take away from any other community.”

Elle Shwer, Information rep. and senior, argued through tears the detriment the resolution might cause to the University’s relationship with Boeing for engineering internships.

“I have never spoken out about any of my beliefs before,” she said. “This resolution is a direct attack to Israel... to me, Israel’s strengths outweigh their weaknesses, and I cannot be quiet any longer.”

Yara Gayar, LSA rep. and senior, responded, noting the resolution would not require direct action be taken by administration and the Board of Regents, but would instead create a committee to bring concerns to these administrative figures.

“This resolution is only calling for a committee to be created,” she said. “We’re not voting on divestment and we’re not making political claims about what side is at fault. We are just saying there are companies who are involved in human rights violations.”

A SAFE author finished their statements in front of the assembly after the vote with teary remarks.

"While a lot of people are celebrating here tonight, because we feel like we've finally been given a voice on this campus...we're not here to say others' voices don't matter," she said. "We'll be celebrating when

Palestinians are given real human rights. And this is the first step we can take."