

The Stealth Campaign to Use U.S. Law to Support Settlements: In Congress

Beginning in 2014, opponents of boycotts, divestment, and sanctions (BDS) against Israel began promoting legislation in various U.S. states denouncing the BDS movement. In 2015, these efforts shifted/expanded to efforts in the U.S. Congress (as well as at the state level) to hijack concerns about BDS against Israel in order to pass legislation giving unprecedented legitimacy and recognition to Israeli settlements by, in effect, making it U.S. policy to treat them as part of Israel. These efforts continue through the present day. This table – which will be updated regularly – is intended to help people understand and follow what is happening in Congress.

(Last updated: Monday, July 17, 2023)

To follow what is happening at the state level, see here: <http://fmep.org/resource/stealth-campaign-use-u-s-law-support-settlements-taking-battle-states-updatedexpanded-table/>

Bill/Resolution	Status	Content
HR 4564 - “Countering Hate Against Israel by Federal Contractors Act”	Introduced 7/11/23	Per Tenney (R-NY) press release, to ““prevent the federal government from entering into contracts with entities that support the radical, anti-Semitic BDS movement targeting Israel.””
S. 1637 : Combating BDS Act of 2023	Introduced 5/17/23	Latest edition of previously intro'd bill which seeks to give cover/legitimacy to state laws making contracts with the state conditional on the contractor promising not to boycott Israel or settlements.
HR 3016 - the “IGO Anti-Boycott Act” [new iteration of the IABA]	Introduced 4/28/23	While the bill doesn't mention Israel, HR 3016 is the latest iteration of legislation the “Israel Anti-Boycott Act” [see: S. 720/HR 1697 (2017); HR 5595 (202), HR 6940 (2022)]. Making this crystal clear, the lead sponsor of the bill told Jewish Insider: “I'm proud to introduce this bipartisan piece of legislation aimed at preventing international governmental organizations from discriminating against our allies...This has been spurred on by bad actors that have sought to embargo Israel using BDS, which is an absurd and antisemitic policy.” Also: “AIPAC spokesperson Marshall Wittmann told JI that the group supports the bill “to combat international attempts to isolate and delegitimize America's ally, Israel.”
S. 2489 : Anti-BDS Labeling Act	Introduced 7/27/2021	To mark the country of origin of goods made in the West Bank and Gaza Strip as made in Israel, for the purposes of import to the US.
S. 2119 : Combating BDS Act of 2021	Introduced 6/17/21	Latest edition of previously intro'd bill which seeks to give cover/legitimacy to state laws making contracts with the state conditional on the contractor promising not to boycott Israel or settlements.

<u>S. 1260</u> : The Endless Frontiers Act (aka, US Innovation & Competition Act of 2021)	Passed by the Senate 6/8/21	This bill has nothing to do with Israel/Palestine BUT Cruz (R-TX) added a provision (during consideration in the Commerce Committee) ostensibly targeting countries that boycott Israel, but in actual fact targeting countries that differentiate between Israel and settlements. Cruz's text achieves this by invoking trade legislation signed into law by President Obama in 2015 (see HR 644 & HR 2146, below). That provision was included in the final version passed by the full Senate.
<u>HR 5595</u> : the 2020 version of the Israel Anti-Boycott Act	Introduced 1/13/2020	Full analysis is here
<u>Mast (R-FL) amendment</u> to HR 397 (via motion to recommit)	7/24/19, Failed by vote of <u>200-232</u> (3 Dems voting YES)	Motion to recommit seeking to amend the "Rehabilitation for Multiemployer Pensions Act of 2019" to include language targeting boycotts of Israel and settlements.
<u>H. Res. 246</u> : "Opposing efforts to delegitimize the State of Israel and the Global Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions Movement targeting Israel."	Passed by the House 7/23/19 by a vote of <u>398-17</u>	Non-binding resolution BUT possible there may be pressure to use passage of H Res 246 & HR 1837 to go to conference on S. 1 (S. 1 combines the CBA, a version of HR 1837, and a few other things)
<u>Zeldin (R-NY) amendment</u> to HR 2740	6/11/19, Motion in Rules Committee to make the amendment in order was <u>defeated</u> by a party-line vote of 4-7.	Amendment from Zeldin (R-NY) and Barr (R-KY) stating that " <i>None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available by this Act may be made available to any nongovernmental organization, contractor, or grantee that participates in a Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions campaign against Israel.</i> " [background here]
<u>McHenry (R-NC) amendment</u> to HR 1994 (via motion to recommit)	Defeated 5/23/19 by a vote of <u>200-222</u> (12 Dems voting YES)	Motion to recommit seeking to amend the " <i>Setting Every Community Up for Retirement Enhancement Act of 2019</i> ," McHenry (R-NC) took to the House floor to offer a motion to recommit to require the bill to be amended before passage by adding a new section entitled " Reports by Taxpayers Engaged in Boycotts Etc. Affecting Israel " (targeting boycotts of both Israel and settlements)
<u>Graves (R-GA) amendment</u> to FY2020 Legislative Branch Appropriations Bill, FY 2020 & the Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, & Related Agencies	Defeated 5/9/19 in committee by a party-line vote of <u>22-30</u>	An amendment to have the Department of Defense restrict the U.S. government from doing business with any entities that boycott Israel or settlements.

<p><u>H. Res. 314</u> (“<i>Providing for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 336) to make improvements to certain defense and security assistance provisions and to authorize the appropriation of funds to Israel, to reauthorize the United States-Jordan Defense Cooperation Act of 2015, and to halt the wholesale slaughter of the Syrian people, and for other purposes.</i>”)</p>	<p>Introduced 4/10/19 by Zeldin (R-NY) and Kustoff (R-TN), in an effort to compel House leaders to bring HR 336 to a vote (on 7/24 Zeldin <u>claimed</u> the discharge petition had “almost 200 signatures on it”</p>	<p>As explained in a press release (and also in this here), the plan is as follows: “<i>Today, Rep. Kustoff and Rep. Zeldin will introduce a rule providing for floor consideration of H.R. 336, the McCaul anti-BDS bill. In May, upon the rule ripening, Whip Scalise will file a discharge petition and corral signatures on the Kustoff/Zeldin rule. Upon receiving 218 signatures, the McCaul bill will receive floor consideration</i>”</p>
<p>McCaul (R-TX) amendment to <u>S. J. Res. 7</u> (<i>A joint resolution to direct the removal of United States Armed Forces from hostilities in the Republic of Yemen that have not been authorized by Congress.</i>)</p>	<p>Defeated 4/4/19 by a vote of <u>194-228</u> (with 5 Dems voting YES)</p>	<p>Sought to add to a bill about Yemen: “It is in the national security interest of the United States to condemn and oppose— (A) the Global Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions Movement (BDS Movement) targeting Israel, including efforts to target United States companies that are engaged in commercial activities that are legal under United States law; and (B) all efforts to delegitimize the State of Israel.” [written to target boycotts of both Israel & settlements]</p>
<p><u>S. Res. 120</u> (“<i>A resolution opposing efforts to delegitimize the State of Israel and the Global Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions Movement targeting Israel.</i>”)</p>	<p>Introduced by Cardin (D-MD), as of 7/29/19 having 68 cosponsors, referred to SFRC.</p>	<p>Senate companion to <u>H. Res. 246</u> (7/23/19 for details)</p>
<p><u>Kustoff (R-TN) amendment to H. J. Res. 37</u> (“<i>Directing the removal of United States Armed Forces from hostilities in the Republic of Yemen that have not been authorized by Congress.</i>”)</p>	<p>Passed 2/13/19 by a vote of <u>424-0</u></p>	<p>Added to a bill on Yemen (in addition to language slamming antisemitism): “It is in the national security interest of the United States to oppose restrictive trade practices or boycotts fostered or imposed by any foreign country against other countries friendly to the United States or against any United States person.”</p>
<p>S 1 and HR 336: (<i>includes the Combating BDS Act</i>)</p>	<p>S. 1 - Passed the Senate 2/5/19 by a vote of <u>77-33</u> (with 23 Dems voting YES) HR 336 - intro’d 1/8/19</p>	<p>Both include the Combating BDS Act, which seeks to give cover/legitimacy to state laws making contracts with the state conditional on the contractor promising not to boycott Israel or settlements.</p>
<p><u>H. Res. 72</u> (“<i>Rejecting anti-Israel and anti-Semitic hatred in the United States and around the world.</i>”)</p>	<p>Introduced by Zeldin (R-NY) 1/23/19, referred to Committee on Foreign Affairs, and Judiciary</p>	<p>Includes: “Whereas it is the policy of the United States to oppose restrictive trade practices or boycotts fostered or imposed by any foreign country against other countries friendly to the United States or against any United States person”</p>

<p>HR 1697 and S. 720: <i>The Israel Anti-Boycott Act.</i>"</p>	<p>Died at end of 115th Congress (after 11th hour effort to add the text to a year-end omnibus - failed because there was no omnibus)</p>	<p>Seeks to extend legislation barring US companies from complying with Arab League boycott of Israel to have it apply to companies voluntarily choosing to differentiate between Israel and settlements, if that choice is in any way linked to the EU differentiation policy or the UN database.</p> <p>Conflates Israel and settlements.</p>
<p>H. Rept. 115-xxx, accompanying HR XXXX, the <i>"Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2019"</i></p>	<p>June 20, 2018: HAC marked up/adopted FY19 SFOP bill. Committee Report includes new Mexico City-style policy (also known as the "Global Gag Rule") aimed at forcing non-US actors to adopt US-dictated policy vis-a-vis boycotts of Israel/settlements.</p>	<p>The report language accompanying the bill states: <i>"...The Committee is concerned about international efforts to stigmatize and isolate Israel through the boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS) movement. The Committee directs, as part of the annual report to Congress on the Arab League Boycott of Israel, that the President add information about the BDS campaign, covering companies, international organizations, countries, and other organizations, including state investment vehicles, that are involved in promoting the movement, as well as specific steps the Department of State has taken and expects to take to discourage or end politically-motivated efforts to boycott, divest from, or sanction Israel or Israeli entities. <u>The Committee further directs the Secretary of State and USAID Administrator to strengthen policies and procedures to ensure organizations supported through funding are not participants in such efforts.</u> **** (underlined text is new)</i></p> <p>As with other legislation ostensibly taking on BDS, the primary target here is likely NGOs that differentiate – consistent with international law, EU policy, UN policy, and broad international consensus – between Israel and settlements.</p> <p>Report language is not binding but is generally treated by the Executive as binding.</p> <p>Implications: Take, for example, a USAID partner NGO that, consistent with international law, doesn't work in settlements, but does critical work in Rohingya refugee camps. They could be barred from U.S. funding.</p>
<p>H.R.6095 - To prohibit the boycotting of countries friendly to the United States, and for other purposes.</p>	<p>Introduced June 13, 2018</p>	

<p>H. Rept. 115-253, accompanying HR 3362, the “Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2018”</p>	<p>Report includes stipulation in effect extending US policy (and related reporting requirements) vis-à-vis the Arab League Boycott of Israel to BDS and boycotts of settlements. NOTE: Report language is technically advisory only, but is general treated by the State Dept. as binding.</p>	<p>The report language accompanying the bill states: “...The Committee is concerned about international efforts to stigmatize and isolate Israel through the boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS) movement. The Committee directs, as part of the annual report to Congress on the Arab League Boycott of Israel, that the President add information about the BDS campaign, covering companies, international organizations, countries, and other organizations, including state investment vehicles, that are involved in promoting the movement, as well as specific steps the Department of State has taken and expects to take to discourage or end politically-motivated efforts to boycott, divest from, or sanction Israel or Israeli entities.”</p>
<p>HR 2856: To provide for nonpreemption of measures by State and local governments to divest from entities that engage in commerce-related or investment-related boycott, divestment, or sanctions activity targeting Israel, and for other purposes</p>	<p>Introduced 6/8/17 by McHenry (R-NC) and 7 bipartisan cosponsors</p>	<p>This is a House companion to S. 170</p>
<p>S. 170: the Combating BDS Act</p>	<p>Introduced 1/17 by Rubio (R-FL) and having a total of 38 cosponsors as of 6/14/17</p>	<p>This bill appears to be a new version for the new Congress of S. 2531 (in the House HR 4514).</p>
<p>S 3465 – “A bill to amend the Export Administration Act of 1979 to include in the prohibitions on boycotts against allies of the United States boycotts fostered by international governmental organizations against Israel and to direct the Export-Import Bank of the United States to oppose boycotts against Israel, and for other purposes.”</p>	<p>Introduced 9/29/16 by Cardin (D-MD) and Portman (R-OH).</p>	<p>Having virtually nothing to do with BDS against Israel but entirely about protecting and legitimizing Israeli settlements. This bill seeks to do so by fundamentally changing U.S. law to make it illegal (and punishable with large fines) for Americans to take part in or comply with any boycott of settlements linked to action by the UN or any other body (including, for example, the EU). The bill in effect seeks to treat boycotts of settlements backed by the UN or the EU the same way US law treats the Arab League boycott of Israel.</p>
<p>S 3117 – FY17 ForOps</p>	<p>Introduced 6/29/16 Placed on the Senate Calendar</p>	<p>On 6/29, the full Senate Appropriations Committee marked up the FY17 ForOps bill, adopted an amendment from Kirk (R-IL) adding to the bill his anti-BDS/pro-settlements legislation (S. 2531 - giving a green light for states to adopt unconstitutional laws).</p>

<p>H. Con. Res. 128 & S. Con. Res. 35 - <i>Expressing the sense of Congress that the United States should continue to exercise its veto in the United Nations Security Council on resolutions regarding the Israeli-Palestinian peace process</i></p>	<p>Introduced in the House 4/15/16 and in the Senate 4/19/16</p>	<p>Includes (among other things) a Sense of Congress expressing: <i>“the United States Government should continue to uphold its practice of vetoing any United Nations Security Council resolution that inserts the Council into the peace process, unilaterally recognizes a Palestinian state, makes declarations concerning <u>Israeli-controlled territories</u>, or dictates terms and a timeline for the Israeli-Palestinian peace process.”</i></p>
<p>HR 4555 - <i>Non-Discrimination of Israel in Labeling Act</i></p>	<p>Introduced 2/12/16, Referred to Ways & Means Committee’s Subcommittee on Trade</p>	<p>Seeks to retroactively make it U.S. policy that settlement goods are labeled as <i>“made in Israel.”</i></p>
<p>S. 2531 - <i>Combating BDS Act of 2016</i></p>	<p>Introduced 2/10/16, Referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.</p>	<p>Giving the green light and federal cover to state-level legislation targeting BDS (<u>and defining BDS to include activities targeting occupied territories</u>).</p>
<p>HR 4514 - <i>Combating BDS Act of 2016</i></p>	<p>Introduced 2/10/16 Referred to the House Committee on Financial Services</p>	<p>Giving the green light and federal cover to state-level legislation targeting BDS (<u>and defining BDS to include activities targeting occupied territories</u>).</p>

<p>H. Res. 318 - <i>Condemning resolutions calling for or instituting Israeli academic institutions or institutions of higher learning and associations.</i></p>	<p>Introduced 6/16/15 Referred to the House Committee on Education and the Workforce</p>	<p>Focus solely on anti-Israel BDS, nothing to do with settlements.</p>
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Bill/Resolution	Status	Content
HR 2645 - <i>To amend title 5, United States Code, to prevent the Thrift Savings Plan from investing in any company that has a significant presence in the State of Israel</i>	Introduced 6/4/15 Referred to the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform	Explicitly conflates Israel and settlements, by defining meaning “ <i>engaging in actions that are politically motivated to penalize, inflict economic harm on, or otherwise link with the State of Israel or companies based in the State territories controlled by the State of Israel.</i> ”
S. 1269/HR 1907/HR 644 - the Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act of 2015 bill (aka the Customs bill)	Introduced late Spring 2015 Signed into law as HR 644 (aka the Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act of 2015) Obama issued signing statement rejecting conflation.	Pro-settlements provision similar to HR 825/S. 619 including lengthy history in Legislative Round-Ups. Strongly lobbied by AIPAC
S. 995/HR 1890/HR 1314/HR 2146 - Trade Promotion Authority bill (aka the TPA & CETA bill) NOTE: For technical reasons, actual measure moved to HR 1314	Introduced Spring 2015 Signed into law as HR 2146 (aka the Trade Promotion Authority Act of 2015) 6/29/15. Obama Admin made statement rejecting conflation.	Pro-settlements provision similar to HR 825/S 619 including lengthy history in Legislative Round-Ups. Strongly lobbied by AIPAC
S. 619 - United States-Israel Trade and Investment Enhancement Act of 2015	Introduced 3/2/15 by Cardin and Portman (R-OH) <i>[in part folded into TPA & CETA bills]</i>	Senate version of HR 825 (not identical). Primary purpose is to discourage economic pressure targeting settlements and the occupation and lay groundwork for imposing sanctions against those who engage in such actions. Strongly lobbied by AIPAC (Cardin announced plans to announce during the 2015 AIPAC policy conference).
HR 825 - United States-Israel Trade and Investment Commercial Enhancement Act	Introduced 2/10/15 by Ros-DeSoto and Vargas (D-CA) <i>[in part folded into TPA & CETA bills]</i>	Primary purpose is to discourage economic pressure targeting settlements and the occupation (and lay groundwork for imposing sanctions against those who engage in such actions. Strongly lobbied by AIPAC)