

## **LA Jews for Peace Letter, August 30, 2016**

### **Demanding Governor Brown veto anti-BDS bill AB-2844**

Honorable Governor Brown

LA Jews for Peace urges you to veto AB-2844.

LA Jews for Peace is a group of concerned Jewish and non-Jewish Angelenos committed to peace in the greater Middle East. We recognize Israel's right to exist, but work to end Israel's blockade of the Gaza Strip and occupation of the West Bank and East Jerusalem. We support a negotiated agreement that assures Palestinians national, civil, and human rights equivalent to those of Jewish Israelis.

AB 2844 will penalize companies and other entities that may discriminate if they boycott Israel. If a company violates a California anti-discrimination law, it will be barred from contracting with the state of California.

But anti-discrimination laws already exist making AB-2844 redundant, yet AB-2844 will incur a significant amount of tax money to implement and enforce.

In fact, AB-2844 is aimed at punishing those that use their First Amendment rights to engage in economic actions in support of their customers' dedication to human rights and social justice. The bill focuses on boycotts that protest Israeli government policies and actions, while ignoring Israel's own discriminatory violations of international law that are well-documented by B'Tselem and other Israeli and international human rights organizations. Violations include a 49-year occupation with illegal, Jewish-only settlements, the demolition of thousands of Palestinian homes, and the denial of Palestinian human, economic, and civic rights.

The state of Illinois is now facing lawsuits from businesses due to similar legislation in that state because it criminalizes the right to boycott. AB-2844 will surely trigger similar litigation that might cost California taxpayers millions of dollars in defense costs.

AB-2844 is part of a well-financed, national effort to suppress any discussion of the Israeli government's abuses. It is a blatant attempt to silence California citizens, including many Jewish Californians, like us, who support using non-violent financial pressure to end Israel's occupation and violations of Palestinian rights.

Contrary to the claims of AB-2844's author, Assembly member Richard Bloom, boycotts are NOT being used to "attack Jews" or "destroy the state of Israel." Rather they are employed to end Israel's occupation and abuses of Palestinians.

AB-2844 should be vetoed.