

House Bill 476 Testimony By Edward Douglas, CUFI State of Ohio Director,  
12/6/16

I want to thank you for the opportunity to speak on supporting House bill 476. Again, my name is Ed Douglas and I am the State of Ohio Director for the organization called "Christians United for Israel", better known as C U F I, and is the largest Christian pro-Israel organization in the U.S. with over 3 million members from every state in the union and having representation in most of the counties in Ohio.

The organization was founded in 2005 by Pastor John Hagee from San Antonio, Texas for the purpose of uniting Christians from all denominations to stand firmly with Israel and the Jewish people primarily for five reasons but there are others.

Reason #1, Biblically and legally the land is theirs, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob gave the land of Israel and the West Bank (which biblically is Judea and Samaria) to Abraham and his descendants as recorded in Biblical history, secular history (the writings of historian Josephus and others), this biblical and secular history is proven to be correct thru archeological evidence being discovered almost daily, and the land is legally theirs by U.N Resolution. Israel wants peace more than anyone and has shown it time and time again by land for peace offerings and even going back to pre-1967 lines, an offer given to Yasser Arafat in 2000 and again by Israel Prime Minister Olmert in 2007, but both offers were refused.

Reason #2, Politically, Israel is the only thriving democracy in the middle east, the only place where the Christian population is increasing and are literally safe from oppression and even death. Where Christian holy sites are guarded and protected. Israel is our number one ally. Like any other country, Israel is not perfect, but it is a country which has the values of the U.S. and is guided by those values to do the best they can in a very tough neighborhood.

Reason #3, Militarily and Defense, it can be summed up in a few words as stated by retired Israeli Ambassador to the United States, Yoram Ettinger, Israel is a United States aircraft carrier/battleship in the middle east.

Reason #4, Christians just want to stand with Israel and pay back or reciprocate the blessings received from Israel, a country one-fifth the size of Ohio, the blessings received in the areas of medical and technological advancements (separate addendum 1), blessings received from humanitarian relief by Israel,

they were the first country to respond in relief to Haiti following the devastating earthquake, relief during the tsunami in Indonesia, and last year's flooding in South Carolina, and even, while Israel is in the state of war, helping neighbors from Syria and Gaza crossing the border with needed medical treatment in their hospitals.

Reason #5, Morally, bottom line, anti-Israel has become synonymous with anti-semitism. Hebrews then Jews have been oppressed for the past 3500 years but have miraculously survived. Starting with the Egyptians to the Assyrians to Babylonians to Persians to Romans to Christians to Muslims and to Germans with extermination of six million Jews. Because of distorted cultural and religious ideologies, because of different truth and values, we have now the Arab/Israeli conflict. We have heard so much of the Christian persecution and anti-semitism thru the centuries, little is said about the Muslim anti-semitism, where Christians were second class citizens and Jews third class and were called dimmies and now more currently called infidels by Muslim extremists.

Well, what does this all have to do with BDS and why I am I having Terry Conant, Christians United For Israel Columbus City Director, read my testimony, well BDS is the continuance of the thread of anti-semitism throughout the ages and is fueling anti-semitism, anti-Israel, and the deligitimazation of Israel, especially on our college campuses and even within some Christian denominations. The Anti-Defamation League has just stated that anti-semitism today in certain parts of the world is at the same height it was before the Second World War.

And this anti-semitism, being fueled by BDS, should have hit home for all of us living in Ohio and especially in Columbus. On February 17, a little less than ten months ago, a terror attack, with the use of a machete, occurred at the Nazareth restaurant right here in Columbus, Ohio. It resulted in four customer injuries, two very serious, and the death of the terrorist. If it wasn't for a nineteen year old employee with a baseball bat leading other customers against the terrorist, there could have been fatalities. Hany Barasani, owner of the restaurant, and not at the restaurant during the attack, has dual U.S./Israeli citizenship and is a Christian Arab living in Columbus for the past 25 years. I had the chance to spend several hours with Hany and he stated that this attack was against him because of his stand as a Christian with and for Israel and the Jewish people.

So please support this bill, and support a safe, secure world for all. Thank you.