

Honorable Committee,

My name is Shaul Weisband and am an American-born Israeli. I moved to Israel at the age of 7 with my family where I grew up. I graduated high school, was a commander in a combat unit in the Intelligence Brigade and got my BA in Political Science and Marketing.

After spending a few years in the Israeli Homeland Security Office, I founded a technology company in Israel named 'Jifiti' that offers a software solution for retailers. We have raised over seven million dollars in funding, including from strategic retail investors in Columbus and the mid-west.

Israel has more tech startups and venture capital funding per head of population than anywhere in the world. While innovation and technology is part of the Israeli DNA, the market for those cutting edge solutions remains the United States. When it was time for myself and my business partner to relocate to the US from Israel to spearhead our business development, it was expected that as a funded startup we would find ourselves in the Bay Area or New York City.

That wasn't the case for us. We carefully examined our options only to realize that we wanted to be located as close as possible to the heartbeat of the US retail. We wanted to go to Starbucks in the morning and meet the executives that set the tone for the retail world and work with them on how we can improve the online retail experience together.

We found an outstanding quality of life for our families, including affordable housing, a warm community and a supportive tech eco-system. My wife is now finishing her PhD studies in The Ohio State University in epidemiology.

I sit here today because I truly believe that the State of Ohio is an incredible home for Israeli companies looking to expand to the US.

Especially in times like these, Israelis recognize the importance in having true friends that stand by the State of Israel. This bill is not only crucial for taking a stance against boycotting Israel, but will also encourage and support Israeli companies like mine to see Ohio as their home in the US. It will strengthen the local economy by bringing innovative companies that can flourish locally while securing the unique bond between the State of Ohio and the State of Israel.

Thank you.