

House Bill 476 Testimony By Edward Douglas, CUFI State of Ohio Director,
4/26/16

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 or CUUFI, and is the largest Christian pro-Israel group in the U.S. with over 2.9 million members from every state in the union and represented in most 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 for many reasons but primarily five.

Reason #1, Biblically, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob gave the land of Israel today and the West Bank (biblical Judea and Samaria) to Abraham and his descendants as shown and inhabited that land in Biblical history, secular history (writings of historian Josephus and others), history proven thru archeological evidence uncovered almost daily, and legally 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, both 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. Israel is not perfect like any other country, but a country which has the values of the U.S. and that is what guides them to do the best they can under all the circumstances.

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

Reason #4, Christian just wanting to stand with Israel and reciprocate the blessings received from Israel, a country one-fifth the size of Ohio, in the areas of medical and technological advancements (separate addendum 1), blessings received from humanitarian relief, the first to respond in relief to the earthquake

that devastated Haiti, even before the U.S., 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 medically in hospitals neighbors from Syria and Gaza crossing the border.

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. Started by Egyptians to 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 called dimmies and now more currently called infidels by Muslim extremists. (Hold up book of Muslim anti-semitism).

Well what does this all have to do with BDS and why I am here, well BDS is the continuance of the thread of anti-semitism throughout the ages and is fueling anti-semitism, anti-Israel, deligitimization 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 height of what 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. On February 17, a little more than two months ago, a terror attack with the use of a machete, was made 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 says 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. Addendum 2 of my testimony is a more complete study of BDS. Thank you.

