

September 21, 2024

How Times Have Changed

My how the times have changed since we first started as a congregation in 2011.

Local governments play a crucial role in shaping our communities and making decisions that directly impact our daily lives. One of the most important tools they use to govern effectively is the resolution.

A resolution is a formal statement or decision made by a local government body, such as a city council or county board. It serves as an official expression of the governing body's will or intent on a particular matter. Resolutions can cover a wide range of issues, including adopting policies, approving budgets, establishing regulations, and authorizing specific actions.

There are several types of resolutions...

Policy-making: Resolutions establish policies and guidelines that govern specific activities within the jurisdiction of the local government. They provide a legal framework for decision-making and provide consistency in administrative processes.

2. **Allocating Resources:** Resolutions are used to approve budgets and allocate resources for public projects, services, and programs. They determine funding priorities and ensure transparency in the use of public funds.

3. **Regulation and Enforcement:** Resolutions are instrumental in creating and enforcing local regulations. They can address zoning issues, building codes, and other regulatory matters to maintain order and protect public safety.

4. **Authorization:** Resolutions authorize specific actions or agreements on behalf of the local government. For example, they may authorize the execution of contracts, agreements with other government entities, or the acquisition of property.

5. **Public Expression:** Resolutions can also serve as a means for expressing the will of the local government on matters of public concern. They can be used to support or oppose state or federal legislation, convey support for community initiatives, or express condolences or congratulations.

Some resolutions might combine aspects of each specific type of resolution thus

RESOLUTION CALLING FOR THE CITY OF PORTLAND TO DIVEST ANY AND ALL PUBLIC MONIES FROM ENTITIES COMPLICIT IN THE CURRENT AND ONGOING HUMANITARIAN CRISIS IN GAZA, INCLUDING ALL ENTITIES ASSISTING ISRAEL IN THE OPPRESSION OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

WHEREAS, the Mayor and the City Council of the City of Portland Maine recognize the importance of peace and security for all communities and nations around the world regardless of national, ethnic or religious affiliations, and advocate for the safety, dignity, freedom, and equality of all people; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and the City Council of the City of Portland recognize that all human life is precious; and

WHEREAS, since October 7, 2023, over 37,000 Palestinians, including 14,000 children, have been killed by Israeli attacks on Gaza, with thousands estimated to be buried under the wreckage or missing; and

WHEREAS, 1.1 million Palestinians in Gaza face imminent famine, with the region's Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) now designated as "Catastrophic"— the most severe level of food insecurity possible; and

WHEREAS, over 79,000 Palestinians in Gaza have been wounded, while less than a fourth of Gaza's hospitals remain and are only partially functional; and

WHEREAS, on January 3, 2024, by Resolve 7-23/24, the Mayor and the City Council of the City of Portland called for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza and Israel; and

WHEREAS, the entities on the attached Divestment List are complicit in Israel's violation of international law as these corporations, as investigated by the United Nations and multiple humanitarian aid organizations, are known to a) provide Israel with weapons and other military equipment used in Gaza, b) operate in and contribute to the expansion of Israel's illegal settlements, c) enable or profit from the ongoing Israeli occupation and oppression of the Palestinian people when it is feasible and carries no financial penalty to the City; and

WHEREAS, the City of Portland recognizes the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Gaza and seeks to avoid economically supporting this crisis through the City's financial investments; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and City Council of the City of Portland advocate for the city's finances to align with residents' values.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council urges that the City Manager divest the City of Portland from all entities complicit in the current and ongoing humanitarian crisis in Gaza and occupation of Palestine, including, without limitation, all entities on the Divestment List when it is feasible and carries no financial penalty to the City; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, regardless of current investments, that the City Council urges the City Manager to not make any future directly held general fund investment in any entities complicit in the humanitarian crisis in Gaza and occupation of Palestine, including, without limitation, the entities on the Divestment List or make any investments in the Israeli military in the form of Israel Bonds; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolve will remain in effect as long as the occupation of the Palestinian Territories and the violations of human rights and international law, such as those described above, continue.

Response to the City Council...

To hear about the decision of the Portland City council to embrace the anti semitic trope of Boycott, Divest and Sanction (BDS) the state of Israel for what amounts to lies and falsehoods, is quite disappointing.

Do you truly believe that a people who have experienced true genocide throughout their existence would actually resort to inflict such?

In reading many of the letters posted in support of divestiture of funds from anything related to Israel, I was struck by the level of ignorance being displayed. Many seem to have embraced the source of Hamas Health System for their source of information. A terrorist group, who uses civilians as human shields and sets up command posts in hospitals and schools is forming the narrative.

Do they even remember what transpired on October 7th, 2023?

An unprovoked attack by terrorists, Hamas, against a nation that their supporter, Iran, has vowed to wipe off the face of the earth? The anti semitic trope of "from the river to the sea" on the lips of Palestinian supporters further amplifies the sheer hatred for a people.

Without Israel and their contributions to the world you would not have such things as your cell phones, various medications, and your many computers that run on the Windows operating system to name a few.

God established Israel as a nation and their presence was to bless the nations.

Gen 12:1 Now Adonai said to Avram, "Get yourself out of your country, away from your kinsmen and away from your father's house, and go to the land that I will show you.

Gen 12:2 I will make of you a great nation, I will bless you, and I will make your name great; and you are to be a blessing.

Gen 12:3 I will bless those who bless you, but I will curse anyone who curses you; and by you all the families of the earth will be blessed."

Their blessings are numerous to the world. Yet they are seen as a threat, a burden

In association with this promise was the promise of land. The very land where the Jewish people reside today.

Gen 15:13 Adonai said to Avram, "Know this for certain: your descendants will be foreigners in a land that is not theirs. They will be slaves and held in oppression there four hundred years.

Gen 15:14 But I will also judge that nation, the one that makes them slaves. Afterwards, they will leave with many possessions.

Gen 15:15 As for you, you will join your ancestors in peace and be buried at a good old age.

Gen 15:16 Only in the fourth generation will your descendants come back here, because only then will the Emori be ripe for punishment."

Do they know that Israel has had to defend itself 9 times since 1948 and their declaration of Statehood? Each war provoked by others, not Israel.

Are you aware that during the War with Gaza, is a response to an unprovoked attack, intent on destroying the people and the nation, sponsored by Iran? Yet, Israel is the guilty party? The nation, who delayed any actions where civilian lives were at risk, warning them they would be responding, waiting up to three weeks prior to a response.

Are you aware that the 126th Maine Legislature passed a resolution in support of the state of Israel, for which your resolution violates.

https://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/bills/bills_126th/billtexts/HP111201.asp
https://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/bills/display_ps.asp?paper=HP1112&PID=undefined&snum=126

Not only does your resolution address the war and its false narrative, but your resolution questions the validity of Israel's existence. An existence with enormous documentation whereas the claim of a people identified as Palestinian, yet does not exist, has no such provenance. No one can establish a "Palestinian" origin for the people who live there now.

- Prophesied in Isaiah 66:8 - Who ever heard of such a thing? Who has ever seen such things? Is a country born in one day? Is a nation brought forth all at once? For as soon as Tziyon went into labor, she brought forth her children.
- The Balfour Declaration - November 9, 1917 (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Balfour_Declaration)
- “*San Remo Resolution*” was internationally ratified on July 24, 1922 by the League of Nation
- Independence Declared May 14, 1948
- Affirmed May 15, 1948 by the United States and President Harry S. Truman.

The errors of the City Council of Portland are numerous, grievous and based on ignorance. You have place a curse on the city of Portland through this resolution because you have chosen to come against Israel and thus the God of Israel.

Now consider a time not too long ago in relation to time. 12 years, more than a decade but not a generation. Look at what has occurred in less than a generation.

A resolution drafted by Renee Fortin and Doug Hershey.

Back then our paths had not really crossed yet but were soon to be woven together...

JOINT RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL

WHEREAS, the Charter of the United Nations recognizes the continued validity of rights granted by the League of Nations in 1922 to states or peoples that already existed under international instruments and this action was affirmed by both Houses of the United States Congress; and

WHEREAS, the State of Israel declared its independence and statehood on May 14, 1948 and the

United States immediately recognized the State of Israel's independence and was the first country to do so; and

WHEREAS, the establishment of the State of Israel as a modern homeland for the Jewish people followed the extermination of more than 6 million European Jews during the Holocaust; and

WHEREAS, since the country's establishment, the Israeli people have built one of the world's most dynamic cultural, economic, agricultural and intellectual societies while confronting constant terrorism, the immense pressures of imminent war, constant missile barrages, economic boycotts and ostracism from much of the international community; and

WHEREAS, in spite of these adversities, the State of Israel has established a strong democratic political system that guarantees its people freedom of speech, freedom of the press, fair and open elections and respect for the rule of law for Jews and Arabs alike; and

WHEREAS, at great financial and social cost, the State of Israel has welcomed millions of immigrants from around the world and has made great strides in assimilating these immigrants into Israeli life and society; and

WHEREAS, the United States and the citizens of Maine share democratic values, common strategic interests and bonds of friendship and mutual respect with the State of Israel, which is our greatest friend and only true ally in the Middle East; and

WHEREAS, Maine has had connections with the State of Israel since 1866, when families from Jonesport, Maine established a colony in Jaffa, and in 2004 the houses built by the colonists from Jonesport, Maine were restored to commemorate this historic colony and, for those efforts, a couple from Maine was awarded the Maine Preservation Award; and

WHEREAS, Maine has economic ties to the State of Israel, had nearly \$11 million in exports of goods and services to the State of Israel in 2011 and over \$207 million since 1996 and there exists a potential for many more research and business ties through available Israeli grants; and

WHEREAS, the 4,000-year history of the Jewish people and their land is documented in great detail in the Jewish Torah and throughout the Christian Bible; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That We, the Members of the One Hundred and Twenty-sixth Legislature now assembled in the First Regular Session, on behalf of the people we represent, take this opportunity to:

RESOLVED: 1. Reaffirm the strong bonds that have connected the people of Maine and of the United States to the people and State of Israel;

RESOLVED: 2. Commend the people of the State of Israel for their remarkable achievements in building a successful democratic nation and strong economy despite constant opposition and adversity;

RESOLVED: 3. Express our outrage regarding all terrorist acts perpetrated against the Israeli people, especially the bold and blatant declaration by the enemies of the State of Israel to destroy the small country, the same enemies who declare they will destroy the United States; and

RESOLVED: 4. Express strong support and a steadfast commitment to the security, welfare and survival of the sovereign State of Israel and recognize its right to secure its borders and to act in self-defense to protect its citizens from acts of terrorism.

Read and Adopted, May 21, 2013