

Taylor, Laura

From: Sam Ruback <sam.ruback@gmail.com>
Sent: October 22, 2020 1:30 PM
Subject: URGENT: Oppose Bill 168

Dear Standing Committee on Justice Policy Member,

I am writing this urgent letter to you calling on you to vote against 'Bill 168: the Combating Antisemitism Act'. If passed, this bill could have serious consequences for freedom of expression and human rights advocacy in Ontario. While Antisemitism is undoubtedly an issue that needs to be addressed, valid criticism of the settler-colonial state of Isreal should not be defined as such. I am worried about the consequences of this bill, mainly that it might suppress people who are rightfully addressing the problems with the apartheid state--critiques which are fair and protected speech.

I urge you to vote against Bill 168, or to amend the Bill to remove the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's eleven examples, as even Kenneth Stern, the original author of the IHRA definition, has strongly opposed its use as a legal or administrative definition of antisemitism, warning that such use will be a threat to both academic freedom and freedom of expression in general.

I know that I am not alone in this concern. It is your duty to protect both Jewish people who are victims of Antisemitism and also Palestinians who are victims of the state of Isreal.

Respectfully,
Sam Ruback