

Rep. Clancy: Releases legislation to restore the right to boycott in Wisconsin

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Madison, WI – Today, Rep. Ryan Clancy (D-19) released legislation (LRB-0750) to restore the right to boycott in Wisconsin, reversing a 2018 law that restricts government and private actors' ability to base decisions on the political actions of one specific foreign government.

Boycott campaigns were an integral part of the successful historic effort to end apartheid in South Africa. They are a broadly protected act of speech for individuals in the state of Wisconsin, but not for local governments or businesses doing business with them.

The 2018 law (2017 Wisconsin Act 248) specifically forbids state and local government actors from boycotting only the state of Israel and from working with large vendors who do so. It does not apply to any other nation-states or government actors.

Rep. Ryan Clancy released the following statement:

“We’re in the midst of a violent authoritarian clampdown, one that accelerated at the start of President Trump’s second term but did not start there. 2017 Wisconsin Act 248 is an asset to those trying to repress free speech and free expression in Wisconsin. It arbitrarily limits businesses’ freedom to decide where to do business. It should be reversed.

People standing up for their immigrant neighbors in Minnesota and people opposing the ongoing genocide in Palestine have much in common. They’re demonized, with

violence against them regularly excused or even cheered by people in power. They embody the beauty of collective action, the bravery in struggling against state violence, and the essence of protecting free speech and free expression to have any hope of a just, democratic future.

Boycotts are key tools for people fighting against human rights abuses abroad and are among the few tools available to normal people witnessing atrocities from afar. These tools were key to stopping apartheid in South Africa: they should be available to those opposing Israel's actions now."