

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0551

February 26, 2013

Ms. Meggie Le
President, UCSD Associated Student Council
Associated Students Department
9500 Gilman Drive, Mail Code 0077
La Jolla, CA 92093-0077

Dear President Le:


It has come to my attention that the University of California San Diego (UCSD) Associated Student Council is considering a resolution to divest in companies doing business with Israel due to the allegation that the country of Israel is an "apartheid" state.

As a Member of Congress who sits on the Foreign Affairs Committee, there has been no credible proof that defines Israel as an "apartheid" state. In fact, Israel is the only country in the Middle East with protections for free speech, free press, religious freedom, women's rights and gay rights. Israel remains the only country in the Middle East with a true and functional democratic government, including four recently-elected members of Knesset (Israel's parliament) who are members of the United Arab List Party and an Israeli-Arab Supreme Court justice.

With some of the strictest military rules of engagement, Israel's model has been studied and implemented by other military forces worldwide. Additionally, Israel had a female prime minister over 40 years ago while some of its neighboring countries still do not allow women to attend school or operate vehicles.

When considering this resolution to divest from companies doing business in Israel, it is my sincerest hope that you are able to look beyond the inflammatory rhetoric and see that Israel continues to remain a true Democracy.

Sincerely,


JUAN VARGAS
Member of Congress

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