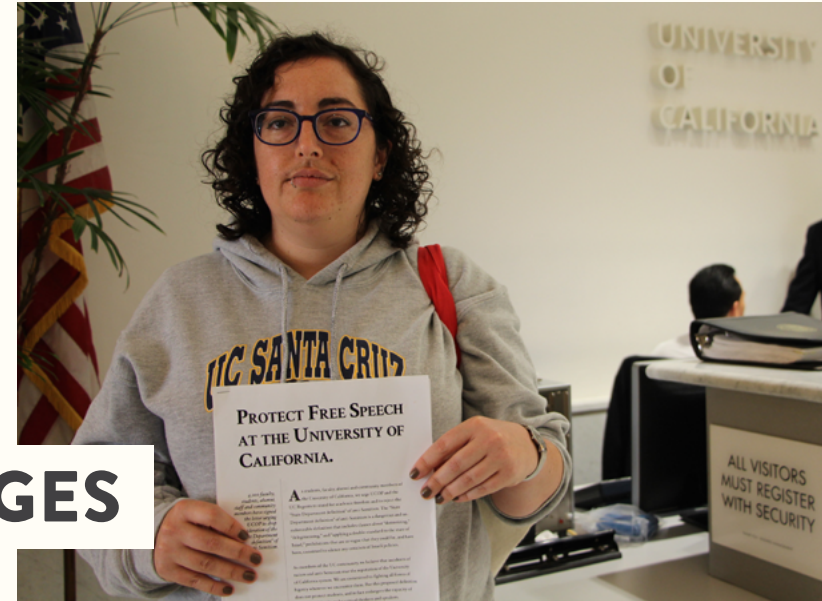
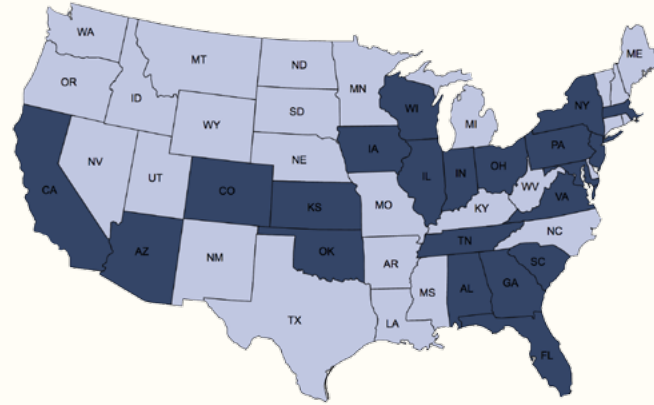


Map showing states considering anti-speech legislation, 2016  
RIGHTTOBOYCOTT.ORG

JVP's Academic Advisory Council Coordinator Tallie Ben Daniel delivers petitions asking the UC Regents not to conflate antisemitism and criticism of Israel, summer 2016



# MISUSING ANTI-SEMITISM CHARGES TO SILENCE FREE SPEECH

FOR DECADES, critics of Israeli policies, including Jewish ones, have been falsely slandered as “anti-Semitic” or “self-hating.” But over the last two years, organizations and individuals defending the status quo have elevated this charge to the top of their strategy to discredit the growing movement for equality and justice in Israel and Palestine.

Funded by right-wing billionaires like Sheldon Adelson, and working in close coordination with Israeli government officials and think tanks, a multi-million dollar campaign has been launched, focused especially on college campuses as well as state legislative bodies.

This strategy includes:

- Advocacy campaigns to convince university systems to adopt official definitions of antisemitism that include criticism of Israeli government policies;
- Media strategies to forward a narrative that activism for Palestinian human rights poses a threat Jews, especially on college campuses;
- Legislation to discourage and penalize the use of boycott and other non-violent forms of political protest;
- Monitoring and harassment of academics that voice criticism of Israeli policy in scholarship or teaching.

The intent of these silencing tactics is to shut down the conversation about Palestinian human rights and limit the range of political inquiry, expression and debate on campuses. No longer able to defend increasingly egregious Israeli policies, they’re trying to silence the conversation completely.

We believe the way forward requires us to clearly distinguish antisemitism from criticism of Israeli policy and to passionately defend free speech in media, the academy, Jewish communities, and society at large.

## BY THE NUMBERS

### 21 states and the Federal government

have or will consider legislation this year to condemn the BDS movement, or ban companies that pull out of investments in Israel/Palestine from working with the state.

### 25 student leaders from 11 campuses

trained at JVP's first-ever Alternative Winter Break leadership retreat in December 2015.

### Over 60 unique media stories

from a year long campaign to protect speech critical of Israel on UC campuses—including the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, the *Sacramento Bee*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, *LA Times*, Associated Press, and Reuters.

### 250 UC faculty

signed open letter opposed to new UC definition of antisemitism.

### 5,283 emails to legislators

in 6 states over a two-week push to stop anti-boycott legislation.

### 16,250 people signed petition

to the state department asking them to clarify that criticism of Israel is not anti-semitic, State Dept replied and we are still in conversation with them about how to ensure that criticism of Israel remains protected free speech.



## FRAMING THE DEBATE

NO LONGER ABLE TO DENY that Israeli policies have led to a moral crisis, supporters of Israel have essentially given up denying and defending the occupation directly, and instead are working to silence conversation about how to act to end it. But our media team advanced our voice in this debate. Key Interventions include:

### Campus

#### Anti-Zionism Isn't a 'Form of Discrimination,' and It's Not anti-Semitism

Rabbi Brant Rosen, Co-Founder of JVP's Rabbinic Council. Haaretz March 2016

#### Suppressing criticism of Zionism on campus is catastrophic censorship

Saree Makdisi and Judith Butler (JVP Advisory Board and Academic Advisory Council Member). Los Angeles Times, March 2016

#### UC Regents need a history lesson

David N. Myers (JVP Academic Advisory Board Member). LA Jewish Journal, March 2016.

### Legislation

#### Don't Blacklist Me: Banning the Boycott of US Allies would keep us from using a powerful tool to fight for justice for Palestinians

Rebecca Vilkomerson, JVP Executive Director. Salon. January 2016

#### The Intercept: Greatest Threat to Free Speech in the West: Criminalizing Activism Against Israeli Occupation (February 16, 2016)

Jewish Telegraphic Agency: Anti-BDS laws gain momentum across US, but some say they go too far (February 23, 2016)

### Jewish Community

#### Discriminatory policies risk Israel's longtime bipartisan U.S. support

Rebecca Vilkomerson, JVP Executive Director. LA Times. December 2015

#### Open the Gates

Rabbi Cantor Michael Davis, JVP Rabbinic Council. Huffington Post, August 2015.

### Further Resources

For further resource on efforts to defend free speech and distinguish antisemitism from criticism of Israeli policy, please see:

#### Stifling Dissent

[jewishvoiceforpeace.org/stifling-dissent](http://jewishvoiceforpeace.org/stifling-dissent)

#### Palestine Exception

[palestinelegal.org/the-palestine-exception/](http://palestinelegal.org/the-palestine-exception/) (by Palestine Legal)

#### Right To Boycott

[RightToBoycott.org](http://RightToBoycott.org) (A project of JVP, Palestine Legal, and the US Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation)