



# DAVE YOST

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Chris Ronayne  
Cuyahoga County Executive  
2079 East Ninth Street  
Cleveland, Ohio 44115

Re: Potential divestiture of interests in Israeli assets and boycott of the Nation of Israel

Dear Mr. Ronayne,

I write to caution you against pursuing a course of action – the proposed divestiture of assets held in or associated with the Nation of Israel - that would likely place Cuyahoga County in violation of Ohio law. <https://spectrumnews1.com/oh/columbus/news/2024/05/14/cuyahoga-county-council-israel-bonds>

As you are undoubtedly aware, the State of Ohio has expressly prohibited government actors from boycotting, directly or indirectly, any jurisdiction with whom this state can enjoy open trade.<sup>1</sup> This includes the Nation of Israel. The prohibition applies not only to the state itself but to any organized body, office, agency, institution, or other entity established by the laws of the state for the exercise of a function of state government.<sup>2</sup> This is legislative policy meant to bind all Ohio governments.

Cities and counties are not independent sovereigns. They are political subdivisions of the state<sup>3</sup>, component parts “created [by the legislature] as convenient agencies for exercising such of the governmental powers of the State as may be entrusted to them [...]” *Wisconsin Pub. Intervenor v. Mortier*, 501 U.S. 597, 607 (1991) (internal quotation marks, alterations, and citations omitted). Once the state has spoken on an issue, as it has here, cities and counties cannot refuse to follow its direction.

Ohio stands with Israel. Cuyahoga County should do the same.

Yours,

Dave Yost  
Ohio Attorney General

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<sup>1</sup> See RC 9.76.

<sup>2</sup> See RC §9.76(A)(5).

<sup>3</sup> See RC §2744.01(F).