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Contact: Meredith McNamee

Assemblymember Richard Bloom Releases Statement on UCLA student government endorsement of divestment policy

SACRAMENTO – In response to the UCLA student government passing a resolution supporting the divestment of University funds from American companies doing businesses in the Israeli-controlled West Bank, Assemblymember Richard Bloom released the following statement:

“I am outraged by the decision of the UCLA student government to pass a resolution supporting the divestment of University funds from American companies lawfully doing business in the Israeli-controlled West Bank. Ironically, this vote – targeting only Jews and Israelis - takes place while Palestinians have been openly celebrating the vicious murder of five innocent individuals in Jerusalem.

The supporters of the UCLA student government measure claim it is in the interest of promoting human rights. Yet, there are no human rights concerns voiced about the indiscriminate shelling of Israeli civilians by Hamas this past summer. Nor is there thought given to human rights violated by the premeditated, Hamas-led murders of three young men that preceded that shelling. The hypocrisy is undeniable.

Fortunately, a vote of eight student leaders does not represent, in any way, the majority of UCLA students, 2,000 of whom were brave enough to sign a petition opposing the short-sighted and polarizing resolution. I am gratified by Chancellor Block’s statement that “The Board of Regents does not support divestment in companies that engage in business with Israel and UCLA agrees with that position.”

This action is contradictory to U.S. and California economic policy. In fact, just this year, Governor Jerry Brown signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to increase business between California and Israeli-based companies. This MOU recognizes that Israel and California house many top environmental and technology businesses specializing in areas like water efficiency and renewable energy.

Sadly, this action only increases the already hostile campus climate for Jewish students at UCLA and directs undue anger towards the Jewish community as a whole. Instead of focusing on promoting conflict, the student government should be enacting on constructive policies that have real objective and positive goals and that don’t endorse vitriol and alienate their fellow students.”

*Richard Bloom chairs the Assembly Budget Subcommittee on Natural Resources and Transportation. He represents California’s 50th Assembly District, which comprises the communities of Agoura Hills, Bel Air, Beverly Hills, Brentwood, Hollywood, Malibu, Pacific Palisades, Santa Monica, Topanga, West Hollywood, and West Los Angeles.*