

# Dickenson, Texas Residents Told No Hurricane Harvey Relief Funds If You're Against Israel

By [Stephen Lendman](#)

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*Featured image: Governor Greg Abbott (Source: Wikimedia Commons)*

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*Israel's sinister influence over US policy extends to tiny Dickenson, TX, population around 19,000, ravaged by Hurricane Harvey, residents needing help.*

Getting any requires certifying in writing the following on signed applications:

“(T)he Applicant verifies that the Applicant:

- (1) does not boycott Israel; and
- (2) will not boycott Israel during the term of this Agreement.”

Recently passed Texas law requires state contractors to certify no opposition to Israel. At a signing ceremony, Governor Greg Abbott called Texas Israel's “No. 1 trading partner in the United States,” adding:

“Texas is proud to reaffirm its support for the people of Israel and we will continue to build on our historic partnership...Anti-Israel policies are anti-Texas policies, and we will not tolerate such actions against an important ally.”

Earlier Supreme Court decisions affirmed the right of free expression, including political speech and protests, protected by the First Amendment.

Federal, state and local governments are prohibited from requiring individuals to certify political beliefs for employment, contracts or other benefits.

ACLU Texas legal director Andre Segura explained

“(t)he First Amendment protects Americans’ right to boycott, and the government cannot condition hurricane relief or any other public benefit on a commitment to refrain from protected political expression.”

“Dickinson’s requirement is an egregious violation of the First Amendment, reminiscent of McCarthy-era loyalty oaths, requiring Americans to disavow membership in the Communist party and other forms of ‘subversive’ activity.”

On October 11, the ACLU filed suit in federal court, challenging a Kansas law on behalf of math teacher Esther Koontz – denied the right to train other teachers for supporting BDS, her constitutional right.

Last July, the ACLU wrote congressional members, opposing legislation criminalizing boycotts of companies doing business in illegal Israeli settlements.

The unconstitutional House and Senate Israel Anti-Boycott Act aims to silence criticism of Israel. The Center for Constitutional Rights earlier called criminalizing criticism of Israel “the Palestinian Exception” to fundamental First Amendment rights.

House and Senate versions of the Israel Anti-Boycott Act call for stiff fines and imprisonment for up to 20 years – the measure not yet passed, subject to revisions.

The ACLU said its letter to congressional members got Senate sponsors of the bill to consider changes.

If passed and signed into law by Trump, a judicial challenge could get it overturned – though anything supporting Israel won’t be easily changed, perhaps not even by the Supreme Court.

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