

Say No to this Divisive Pledge in Vermont

We, the undersigned citizens of Vermont, state our procedural and moral opposition to the Apartheid Free Community (AFC) pledge and respectfully request that Vermont leaders not place this divisive, non-binding article on city and town ballots for vote on Town Meeting Day.

Vermont leaders, in more than 40 cities and towns, are being pressured by The Vermont Coalition for Palestinian Liberation, Vermonters for Justice in Palestine, and similar activist groups, to sign a pledge declaring themselves “apartheid-free.”

The pledge we oppose can be found here: <https://www.vermontcpl.org/apartheid-free-community>.

By declaring Israel a genocidal, settler-colonialist, apartheid regime, Vermont communities position themselves as arbiters of a foreign conflict. Our leaders must focus on local Vermont issues such as: property taxes, budget gaps, education, healthcare, crime, poverty, and housing.

Vermont leaders have no influence over international affairs, and such declarations are purely performative, with no effect on foreign policy or the outcome of the conflict. Additionally, under [*Skiff v. South Burlington*](#), [municipalities are not required under state law to present non-binding advisory articles unrelated to municipal business](#), pursuant to [17 V.S.A. §§ 2642–2643](#).

While framed under the language of liberation and justice, the pledge addresses a legally unsettled and controversial international dispute. Locally, this pledge has already undercut the democratic process, with residents who oppose it publicly criticized or accused of supporting crimes against humanity based solely on their political views or nationality. The impact of AFC on communities is predictably divisive which alienates and isolates Jewish residents, further eroding their safety, and the safety of all residents.

Regardless of intent, these ballot initiatives foster hostility and intimidation while undermining Vermont’s tradition of civic pluralism and respectful disagreement.

Such pledges are unrelated to municipal governance and risk importing external political conflicts into local decision-making, where they serve no governing purpose and impose division and hostility on the communities asked to adopt them.

Apartheid-Free Community (AFC) Pledge vs. Clarifications

AFC: "WE AFFIRM our commitment to freedom, justice, and equality for the Palestinian people and all people;" *

Clarification: *The only way to achieve this is through collaboration, not extremism. In Vermont, this should look like respectful dialogue about a famously complicated conflict. One-sided pledges promote division, not peace.

AFC: "WE OPPOSE all forms of racism, bigotry, discrimination, and oppression; and" *

Clarification: *This pledge *promotes* these stated hateful ideologies. Adopting this pledge sanctions Jew-hate, even if that was not the intention. We see this across Vermont as Jewish communities are targeted with hate under the guise of Palestinian liberation.

AFC: "WE DECLARE ourselves an Apartheid-free community and to that end," *

Clarification: *Apartheid is a cruel system of legalized racial domination and enforced separation. Vermont communities *should* be free of such a system, but it is *incorrect and divisive* to invoke this concept using the State of Israel.

AFC: "WE PLEDGE to join others in working to end all support to Israel's Apartheid regime, settler colonialism, and military occupation." *

Clarification: Israel is a multi-ethnic democracy with constitutional protections for every citizen. It is not a perfect country, and it is reasonable to criticize its government, policies, and even its citizens that hold extremist or dangerous beliefs. However, reasonable criticism does *not include* false rhetoric, discrimination based on nationality, or calls for violence.

Full Name	Town of Residence
Abigail Kopelowitz	Burlington
Linda Coulombe	St. Albans
Kim Friedman Landau	Burlington
Caryn Olivetti	Burlington
William D. Simmons	Saint Albans City
Leesette Bengar	Brattleboro
Valerie Lodish	Burlington
Chaim Lodish	Burlington
Nanci Bern	Brattleboro
Karen Shapiro	Putney
David Sokol	Shelburne
Ohad Yavkovski	Reading
Melanie Needle	Burlington
Corinna Dodson	Barnard
Zohar Arama	Townshend
Mark Treinkman	Athens
Bruce Saul	Williamsville (Newfane) VT 05362
Alice Berliner	Norwich
Denise Gebroe	Proctorsville
Suzy Ahn	Athens
Rachel Feldman	Moretown
Sally Herschorn	Burlington
Milton Batalion	Essex Junction
Giselle Aben	Essex Junction
Jeffrey Kahn	Woodstock
Phillip Bellmore	St Albans
Eileen Hayes Arama	West Townshend
Marjorie pivar	East dummerston
Patti Frankel	Brattleboro
Stephen Frankel	Brattleboro
Ethel Goldstein	Westford

roberta goldstein	burlington
Joan schillhammer Briggs	South Burlington
Naomi Zeno	St Albans
Laura Cooper	South Burlington
Dr. Jan Feldman	Northfield, VT
John David Eckerson	Westford
Yaeko Miranda Elmaleb	Whitingham
Eva Wasserman-Margolis	Brattleboro
Bob Pierce	Milton
Stephanie Pierce	Milton
Janice Newhard	Swanton
Nicholas Whitten	Saint Albans
Linda Rinder	Putney
Craig Rinder	Putney
Tobie Weisman	Montpelier
Barbara kohn saxe	Monpelier
Rabbi Ellie Shemtov	Rutland
Pat Mobilio	Cavendish
Monica Schwartzbach	Ludlow
Phyllis Rubenstein	Montpelier
Shira Sternberg	Shaftsbury
Craig Oshkello	Moretown
Shelley Barsanti Cohen	Middlesex
Jessica Nocks	Burlington
Edward Wolfstein	Burlington
Nancy Garfinkel	Rutland
Lisa Rosen Ryan	Burlington
Tim Wessel	Brattleboro
Tehila Marks	Putney
Rosemeryl Harple	Jericho
Deborah Leopold	Burlington

Morris G Harple	Jericho
Mark Leopold	Burlington
Erik Glitman	Jericho
Marv Greenberg	Middlebury
rabbi Jan salzman	Burlington
John Wilder	St. Albans
Daniel J Pattullo	Enosburgh
Stacie Gabert	Winooski
Eli Rogosa	Montpelier
Molly Ritvo	Burlington, VT
Laura S Cooper	South Burlington
Susan Baauchner	Warren
Amanda Levitt	Hamden CT, but daughter at UVM
Bret Chenkin	North Bennington
Heather Weller	Sunderland
Marlene Skunik	Manchester Center
Diana K Lloyd	Stowe, Vermont
Susan Leff	Burlington
Rachel Rosenbaum	Montpelier, VT
Jordan Hershman	Stowe
Sally D. Herschorn	Burlington
Erica DeLorenzo	Brattleboro
Margery Elsberg	Norwich
David Begelfer	Waitsfield
Richard Berger	South Burlington
Bette Ann Libby	Waitsfield
yvonne jones	South Burlington
Daniel Seff	South Burlington, VT
Marcie Scudder	Stowe
Lauren Soloff	Woodstock, VT
Marina Shpaner	Colchester

Ben Novogroski	Richmond, VT
Joseph Michael Hughart	Burlington Vermont
Jennifer Minotti	Barnard, VT
Eric Jacobs	Burlington
Rachel Jacobs	Burlington
Schneur Jacobs	Burlington
Chaya Jacobs	Burlington
Hillel Jacobs	Burlington
Fran Levine	Montpelier
Sharon Kellermann	Warren
David Geddes	Burlington
Sheila Stanton	Burlington
Joseph Ravese	South Royalton
Walter I Weiss	Fayston
Helen M Towers	Fayston
Sarit Werner	Woodstock
vera resnik	Warren
Madeline Holtzman	Warren
Helen M Towers	Warren
Thalia Kolovos	Essex Junction
Lisa Miller Ryan	Quechee
Suzanne Slomin	Waitsfield VT
terry r ulmer	waitsfield
Megan Margulies	Bridgewater
david fried	montpelier
Judith Levine	Collingswood
Michael Sher	Hartland
Joan Siegel	Fayston
Clayton P. Gillette	Woodstock
Daphne Moritz	Hartford
Lawrence Margulies	Bridgewater

Evan L Nocks	Burlington
Jenny Barba	Norwich
Debora Steinerman	Jeffersonville, Town of Cambridge
Joe Greenwald	South Burlington
Adina Kraus	Burlington
Evan Wolf	Beacon
Aaron Pinson	Burlington
Eugene sklar	Chittenden
Norris Barsky	Killington
Michele Clark	Plainfield
Lenore F. Broughton	Burlington
Joan M. Black	Montpelier
Beth LeVine	South Burlington
Stephen LeVine	South Burlington
Karen Simms	Milton
Elizabeth Torak	Pawlet
Jeff Comstock	Burlington
Nancy Comstock	Burlington
William Oetjen	Burlington
William E Dodson Jr	Barnard
Wendy Grant	Burlington
Adam Bornstein	Woodstock, VT
Roger Goldstein	Dorset
Judy Sinsheimer	Warren
Kathleen Myron	Stowe
Jonathan Sigler	Stowe
Lorraine Westcott	Newfane
Richard Westott	Newfane
Renee Snow	Thetford
Gary Sturgis	Essex
Michael Snow	Thetford

Rebecca Griggs	Hartford VT
Linda Kopper	Cambridge
Liz Kenton	Brattleboro
Howard prussack	Westminster
Margaret Herzog	Warren
Brian Rohman	Warren
Lauren Aim	Burlington
Karen Dreiblatt	Manchester Center
Martin Cohn	Springfield
Cina Friend	Newfane
Drew Gradinger	Westminster
Sheyna Hoitsma	Bellows falls
Jeff Morse	Brattleboro
Yaeko Miranda Elmaleh	Whitingham
Jed wyatt	Weathersfield
Neile Eisner	Warren
Steve Eisner	warren
Martha Molnar	Castleton
Nurit	Burlington
Danielle LeVine	South Burlington
Judy Litvack	Stowe
carl ravinsky	Stowe
Leigh Samuels	Williston VT
Gerald Kandestin	Stowe
Janice Kandestin	Stowe
Joy Spontak	Montpelier
Patricia Wilder	St. Albans
Irit librot	Norwich
Ronda Diamond	stowe , Vt
Susan LeDrew	Springfield
Andrew Weinberg	Mendon, Vermont

Dena Moses	Putney
Deb Mager Rickner	Monkton
Aryeh Moskowitz	Burlington
Kathleen Clark	Monkton
Gail wasserman	stowe
Nancy E. Baker	Shelburne
Janice Heft	Stowe
Janice Sheiner	Stowe
Cheryl Greenberg	Stowe
Navah Fried	Burlington
Renée Greenberg	Stowe
Joni AvRutick	5403
Albert Benhaim	Stowe
Brent B LeDrew	Springfield
Joshua Minkin	Montpelier
Rabbi James S. Glazier	South Burlington
Carol Harris-Shapiro	Barre
Nikki Kopelowitz	Davie
Desiree Wyatt	Weathersfield
Diane Rippa	Essex
Cristine White	Newfane
Bodge Jeff	Newfane
Laurie Nigro	Newfane
Sandra Dion	Thetford
Henry Stedman	Thetford
Brian McDonald	St Albans Vt
Karl Coulombe	Fairfax Vt
Robert Etter	Burlington
toni powling	Newfane Vt
Lawrence Boivin	Burlington
Christine Ardell	Burlington

Richard Westcott	Newfane
Karen Heidi Fishman	Norwich
Arthur J Fisher	Burlington
Deborah Feldman	Moretown
Jordan Oakes Coulombe	Saint Albans