



## ISRAELI OCCUPATION-FREE ZONES

Israeli Occupation–Free Cities is a strategy that harkens back to the procurement boycotts and divestment in the fight against apartheid South Africa. Our local governments put millions of dollars from our taxes into contracts with and investments in companies that oppress communities around the globe and at home. Our call to realize a more just world means we need to leverage our local political power to withdraw resources and legitimacy from these companies. As residents of a city, township, or county, we have a right to say how our collective resources are used.

**Procurement:** Buying of goods and services by government organizations. Typically handled separately from the investment assets of the city.

**Divestment:** The opposite of an investment—getting rid of stocks, bonds, or investment funds.

### Objectives

1. Setting up a human rights screen for the municipality’s vendors and investment portfolio. For example: in Portland, Oregon, a resolution was passed that created a Socially Responsible Investment Committee, which reviews companies brought forward by the community. If the company does not meet the committee’s standards, it is added to a “do not buy” list.
2. Ending current contracts and investments with companies that fail the screen.
3. Raising awareness of the ways these companies are complicit in human rights abuses through media, coalition, and community outreach.
4. Building local political power and creating grassroots power by mobilizing a broad coalition.



# Research and Power-Mapping Phase

Look on your local .gov website for a socially responsible investment policy or a list requirements for approved vendors for the city: How are they implemented? Determine what your city is invested in: Is there an annual report of the city's funds? Who manages the city's investments and procurement? Set a Google Alert for your municipality and the target companies.

Examine the voting record of your decision makers. See if there are unlikely votes or interests that could sway a decision maker. Examine your connections: Who do you know who supports the cause and has personal connections with decision makers?

## Organizing Phase

Organizing the campaign will involve several key steps. First is reaching out to ally groups, to build coalitions built on authentic mutual support. Immigrant rights groups, unions, environmental groups, and groups fighting private prisons have worked in coalition to win in a way that builds power across the multiple important progressive struggles. Each constituency will bring their own framing and places of accountability, which should be respected and seen as a campaign strength. Strong relationships, good communication, and clear shared principles lead to a powerful coalition.

Next is working the back channels. Somewhere in your network is a connection to a local decision maker. Often the way our resolutions are defeated is through back-channel pressure, so we need to shore up our allies among the decision makers and neutralize our opposition.

### How we can help:

Please contact us for assistance with your campaign. We can help guide and digest your research; provide tools for power mapping your municipality; connect you with similar campaign organizers; set up online petitions to help you mobilize support; and provide you with potential coalition partners, resources, and more.

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Occupation-Free Portland: <http://occupationfreepdx.org/>

Finally, we need to turn out a large group of folks to support the lead-up to the hearings and give multiple reasons why implementing this policy is a good idea. Turnout is crucial to getting it passed: It provides political cover for decision makers who want to stand with us but need to show a solid constituency interest.

