



OFFICE OF THE
ARIZONA STATE TREASURER

KIMBERLY YEE
TREASURER



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Arizona Treasurer Kimberly Yee Divests State Funds from Ben & Jerry's for Boycotting Israel

PHOENIX, AZ– Arizona Treasurer Kimberly Yee announced today that the state will divest all public funds from Ben & Jerry's for violating Arizona law by boycotting Israel.

Arizona law (Arizona Revised Statutes §35-393 et seq.) states that public state entities may not invest moneys with an entity that boycotts Israel. On August 3, 2021, the Arizona Treasurer's Office informed Unilever PLC that it was actively boycotting Israel due to the actions of Ben & Jerry's, a subsidiary of Unilever, announcing that it will withdraw sales from Israel. These actions would be in direct violation of Arizona statutes.

"I gave Unilever PLC, the parent company of Ben & Jerry's, an ultimatum: reverse the action of Ben & Jerry's or divest itself of Ben & Jerry's to come into compliance with Arizona law or face the consequences. They chose the latter," said Arizona Treasurer Kimberly Yee. "It does not matter how much investment Unilever PLC has in Israel, with Ben & Jerry's decision to no longer sell its product in the West Bank, the companies are in violation of the law in Arizona. Arizona will not do business with companies that are attempting to undermine Israel's economy and blatantly disregarding Arizona's law."

The State of Arizona's investments in Unilever have been reduced from \$143 million as of June 30, 2021, to \$50 million today and will be zero by September 21, 2021, after the last investment in Unilever matures.

"Israel is and will continue to be a major trade partner of Arizona. As Arizona's Chief Banking and Investment Officer, I stand with Israel, and I will not allow taxpayer dollars to go towards anti-Semitic, discriminatory efforts against Israel," said Arizona Treasurer Kimberly Yee.

The State Treasurer's office has been a longtime investor in Israel Bonds since 2013, investing more than \$30 million including Treasurer Yee's increase in the bond investments to \$15 million in current holdings.

Read Treasurer Yee's full notification letter to Unilever [here](#).

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REGISTERED MAIL and EMAIL

September 2, 2021

Mr. Richard Williams
Unilever PLC
Investor Relations
100 Victoria Embankment
London EC4Y 0DY
United Kingdom

Dear Mr. Williams:

Thank you for taking time to speak to my investment management team last week on the issue of Unilever PLC and its business activities in Israel as it relates to Arizona Revised Statutes §35-393, et seq. Arizona law states that a public entity or public fund may not enter a contract or directly invest moneys with a person or company that is engaged in boycotting Israel. On August 3, 2021, our office wrote to Unilever PLC, informing your firm that it has been identified as actively boycotting Israel due to the actions of Ben & Jerry's, a subsidiary of Unilever, announcing that it will withdraw sales from the West Bank and other territories in Israel at the end of 2022. This would be in direct violation of Arizona Statutes §35-393 which states:

1. "Boycott" means engaging in a refusal to deal, terminating business activities, or performing other actions that are intended to limit commercial relations with entities doing business in Israel or in territories controlled by Israel, if those actions are taken either:
 - (a) Based in part on the fact that the entity does business in Israel or in territories controlled by Israel.
 - (b) In a manner that discriminates on the basis of nationality, national origin, or religion and that is not based on a valid business reason.

I appreciated that response from Unilever on August 5, 2021, stating Unilever is not boycotting Israel and the follow up on the conference call today with my investment management team. While I understand the circumstances where the acquisition of Ben & Jerry's in 2000 allowed them to retain its independent board and ability to make decisions in direct opposition to Unilever, the fact remains that Ben & Jerry's is a legal subsidiary of Unilever and due to the decision by Ben & Jerry's, continues to be in violation of Arizona law.

Therefore, our office has no choice but to place Unilever PLC on the list of firms that are participating in a boycott of the State of Israel until such time as Ben & Jerry's reverses its boycott decision or Unilever divests itself of Ben & Jerry's. Our investments in Unilever have been reduced

from \$143 million as of June 30, 2021, to \$50 million today and will be zero by September 21, 2021 after our last investment in Unilever matures.

Finally, we are required to publicly disclose on our website those companies we have been forced to sell, redeem, divest or withdrawn from pursuant to a finding the company is participating in a boycott.

Please feel free to contact our office once Unilever has decided to divest from its holding Ben & Jerry's or if your subsidiary has reversed its decision of July 21, 2021.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kimberly Yee', with a long, sweeping horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kimberly Yee
Arizona State Treasurer