

President Ono, members of the Board of Regents, and Executive Officers of the University:

The University of Michigan is in the midst of a crisis. Students have been physically, psychologically, and educationally harmed. The campus community's trust has been broken. The reputation of the university is being continuously damaged. The university's supposed "DEI 2.0" efforts have collapsed into anti-Palestinian and Islamophobic racism, your "Year of Democracy and Civic Engagement" is now a year of violence and repression, and President Ono's focus on mental health and well-being is now forgotten or a joke. You have sacrificed all of these priorities in the name of funding Israel's crimes against humanity.

President Ono and Regents, this is a crisis of your own making. You have violated the basic values of this public university, and betrayed your constituents and your community. And you have refused to take accountability for these actions. **I want to be very clear with you: your actions have created a disaster.**

### **On- and Off-Campus Disruptions Stem from Your Support for Genocide**

The crux of this issue is your support for Israel's genocide of Palestinians. You have repeatedly refused to divest the university's funds from Israel and the companies that profit from Palestinian death, even as Israel has murdered tens of thousands of men, women, and children. According to figures [published](#) by the United Nations' Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs:

- When President Ono failed to meet with students demanding divestment when they [demonstrated](#) at the President's House on October 13, 2023, Israel had killed roughly 1,800 people.
- When President Ono failed to meet with students demanding divestment when they marched to the Ruthven administration building on November 17, 2023, Israel had killed roughly 15,000 people in Gaza.
- When the Faculty Senate [called for divestment](#) at the end of January 2024, Israel had killed roughly 27,000 people in Gaza.
- When you [refused](#) to divest from Israel at your March 28, 2024 meeting, Israel had killed roughly 32,000 people in Gaza.
- When you undemocratically shifted the public regents meeting online, refused to divest, and went so far as to lie about the endowment instead of meeting with your students, Israel had killed over 35,000 people.
- When you sent campus police to violently attack students and community members in the Gaza Solidarity Encampment on May 21, Israel had rejected over 9 ceasefire deals and expanded their slaughter to Rafah.

Note that the undercounting of deaths has become more and more of a problem because Israel has murdered so many essential workers and destroyed so much infrastructure in Gaza.

You have insisted on maintaining UM's financial support for Israel's slaughter. Your main argument for doing so is that you are dedicated to "shield[ing] the endowment from political pressures and bas[ing] our investment decisions on financial factors such as risk and return."

And yet, you have simultaneously made deeply political statements in support of Israel, stating that you “strongly oppose any action involving the boycott, divestment or sanction of Israel.” All of us know that “financial factors such as risk and return” are deeply political. This is categorically reflected in Regent Bernstein’s succinct [reflection](#) on the Board’s decision to shift its investments from fossil fuels to renewable energy sources in 2021:

This is a big and complicated problem, and the University of Michigan is in the business of solving big, complicated, consequential problems. Leaders don’t shy away from hard challenges. We must do this. As President Kennedy once said about a different daunting challenge, ‘We have to do this not because it is easy, but because it is hard.’ If we want to be the leaders and best, then we need to act like leaders and best.

You understood that investment is political then, and you understand it now. Regent Acker [told Politico](#) on May 13, 2024:

Divestment is not something any one of us is considering. We all have our different reasons. For me, I’m a diehard, dedicated two-state solution guy. I want to see a Palestinian state alongside a safe and secure Israel. And I can’t see a situation where divesting from Israel gets us closer to that solution. It’s not really a negotiable one for me.

Your complicity and bare-faced hypocrisy in the face of the US-sponsored genocide of Palestinians is both deeply unethical and cowardly. Although Erik Lundberg may help you clothe your political position in the language of “risk and return,” it is clear that you are intent on maintaining UM’s support for Israel and its mass murder of children, its bombing of hospitals, its use of starvation as a tool of war, its use of white phosphorus, its assassinations of faculty and students, and its destruction of universities.

Even as you maintain your support for genocide, you have also sought to minimize UM’s complicity. You have said, without providing evidence, that UM has no direct investments in Israeli companies and limited indirect investments in Israel—variously quoted as [less than 0.1%](#) or less than [0.04%](#) of the endowment. To be clear, if these claims were true, it would suggest that you already consider the Zionist entity to be a bad investment, in addition to its moral monstrosity. However, as students and learners, we know that it is crucial to analyze empirical evidence to support or refute claims, and the [available evidence](#) does not support yours.

**Your disgusting and unconscionable political position of supporting Israel’s genocide of Palestinians is the fundamental driver of the crisis on campus.** All of the disruptions on and off campus, addressed more fully below, are a result of this political position. The conditions of these disruptions and their consequences are **entirely your responsibility.**

## **Your Position is Anti-Democratic and Counter to the Demands of the Campus Community**

As a representative of the student body, it is my duty to convey our demand that you end UM's support for Israeli apartheid and genocide. To be clear, this is not simply my personal assessment. **Over and over, the campus community has expressed its desire to divest from the Zionist entity. Your refusal to do so is anti-democratic and authoritarian.**

You and other UM leaders have long defied the will of the campus community in maintaining support for Israel's apartheid regime. UM's student government has been calling for divestment for 20 years, with UM-Dearborn's student government passing divestment resolutions in [2004](#), [2005](#), [2006](#), and [2010](#), and Central Student Government doing so in [2017](#) and [this year](#). It took 11 long years for UM to heed calls to fully divest from apartheid South Africa. You have maintained your support for apartheid in Palestine for nearly twice as long. That support has enabled Israel to steadily escalate its violence against Palestinians, which has now reached the level of total eliminationist violence in the full view of the world.

**Since October 7, 2023, the campus community has found myriad ways to express its demand for divestment from Israel.** This has occurred despite your efforts to suppress campus speech. On November 29, 2023, you unilaterally canceled a student body vote on a divestment resolution, despite the fact that the CSG elections code had not been violated, and over the protests of CSG itself. As the CSG Elections Team [wrote](#), "This represents an unprecedented attempt by U-M officials to shut down student voices and their votes." The Faculty Senate later [condemned](#) your "unwarranted interference in the free expression of opinion." This and other acts of repression led the ACLU of Michigan to send you a [letter](#) expressing concern over "the University's escalating pattern of suppressing student expression."

Despite your efforts to subvert democracy, the people continued to speak:

- On January 30, 2024, the Faculty Senate passed a [resolution](#) demanding divestment from Israel—the first such Faculty Senate resolution in the country.
- On February 14, 2024, the TAHRIR Coalition launched the [Divest! Don't Arrest People's Referendum](#), a tri-campus, grassroots initiative for democratic deliberation on U-M's criminalization of protest and support for Israel. Over the course of six weeks, thousands of students, staff, and faculty in Ann Arbor, Dearborn, and Flint talked with each other about the university's investments in Israel. When the referendum closed on March 28, 2024, 3,215 students, staff, and faculty had voted, with 99 percent voting in favor of divestment and decriminalization.
- On March 27, 2024, UM announced a draft "[Disruptive Activity Policy](#)" that would have effectively banned all campus protest. The draft policy was both vague and draconian, with violations potentially resulting in citation, removal from premises, suspension, expulsion, and termination from employment. The [Black Student Union](#), [UM Law's ACLU Chapter](#), [members of the Senate Assembly](#), and [hundreds](#) of students, staff, and faculty members [spoke out against](#) the draft policy, forcing you to send an all-campus email backtracking on the policy on April 2, 2024.

- On April 7, 2024, CSG [announced](#) that our SHUT IT DOWN party had swept the elections on the single issue of divestment from Israel. As we [said](#) then, “this campaign has made it evident that students at the University of Michigan want divestment, and are willing to sacrifice and fight for it.”
- On April 15, 2024, students and workers across the university participated in the national #Strike4Gaza. Students walked out of class to participate in teach-ins on Palestine and the endowment, professors canceled classes or held them on the Diag, and picketers marched through campus demanding divestment. Our first executive order called for all students, staff, and faculty to join the strike.
- On April 20, 2024, CSG passed the “[Defund, Disclose, Divest Act](#)” (AR 14-001), demanding that the university defund campus police in favor of a non-police, unarmed response team; disclose full information on its investments; and divest from Israeli apartheid and genocide.
- On April 22, 2024, students [established](#) the Gaza Solidarity Encampment on the Diag. For 30 days, students, staff, faculty, and community members ate meals together, held teach-ins and reading circles, created art, held Shabbat services and daily Islamic prayers, screened films, conducted de-escalation and medic trainings, and much more. The camp was a beautiful example of intentional, inclusive, and care-based community-building that nurtured relationships between people of countless different backgrounds. These people put their safety and well-being on the line in order to fight for divestment. Despite constant surveillance, harassment, and intimidation from Zionists and police, campers and allies created a space of individual and collective growth and transformation, oriented around foundational principles of liberation and self-determination, and with the common goal of divestment from Israeli apartheid and genocide.

Although this overview is incomplete, it still shows how thousands of people have taken concrete action to demand that you divest from Israel. You have tried to prevent the people from speaking, and you have failed. Over the past 8 months, and over the past 20 years, students, workers, and the broader UM community have articulated a powerful democratic mandate for divestment.

### **You Have Responded With Violence Instead of Good-Faith Dialogue**

Rather than engaging with the campus community in good faith, you have used intimidation, criminalization, and violence to avoid accountability to your own students, workers, and community. The list of the harms is long, but the following events show how your consistent and escalating use of violence against the campus community:

- On November 17, 2023, protestors—including both Palestinian and Jewish students—[marched](#) to the Ruthven administration building during normal business hours in hopes of meeting with President Ono about divestment. You responded by calling in police from 10 different agencies who arrested and brutalized students, including [body-slamming](#) one student and ripping off her hijab. Afterward, you asked the county prosecutor to issue warrants for dozens of students, including for felony charges.

Although the prosecutor recognized most of those requests to be frivolous, you continue to press felony charges against four people over their attempt to meet with the president of their public university during normal business hours.

- At a protest at your February 15, 2024 regents meeting, campus and state police again [assaulted students](#). As protestors stood and chanted, police officers without warning lifted a bike rack that they had used as a barricade and pushed it into the crowd, knocking at least one student to the ground.
- On May 5, Regents Acker, Brown, and Hubbard attended an event at UMMA, located next door to the Gaza Solidarity Encampment where students had been waiting for weeks to speak with you about divestment. Instead of engaging in dialogue, you called the police, who again brutalized students—this time [using a bicycle](#)—pepper-sprayed many more, and arrested four. Regent Hubbard was seen recording and laughing.
- On May 21, after refusing to engage with protestors at the encampment for a month, you sent campus police to [violently raid](#) the camp. Police gave campers 10 minutes to leave, but after six minutes began to shove, pepper-spray, and arrest them. President Ono claimed that this was done in the name of fire safety, an obvious and cowardly lie. Your May 31 [statement](#) betrayed a complete lack of care for your students, suggesting that your lack of knowledge of serious injuries meant none had occurred, acknowledging students went to the emergency room but claiming that “no one was hospitalized,” and boasting that your officers had used “mild” pepper spray despite the fact that [Deep Freeze](#) is marketed as “the most intense, incapacitating agent available today.”

President Ono and Regents, your willingness to deploy violence against those you are elected to serve, and your insensitivity to the harms that violence has caused, make you a danger to the campus community. The fact that you are using this violence to escape accountability for your support for Israel's violence against Palestinians is contrary to all the values of this university, and is deeply destructive to students, staff, faculty, alums, and community members. Your campaign of violent suppression has created a climate of fear, anti-intellectualism, and alienation on campus. And you have done all of this so that Israel can murder students and their families, destroy schools and universities, and exterminate an entire people, history, and culture.

President Ono and Regents, as representatives of the student body, we would like to tell you something that you have missed: the movement you are trying to break is exactly what the University of Michigan aspires to be. We are Palestinians and Jews, cis and trans, queer and straight, rich and poor, students and community members, from all around the globe. What binds us together is a belief in the value and dignity of human life, and the right of all people and peoples to liberty and self-determination. You can break our bones, spray chemicals in our eyes, and throw us into the machine of mass incarceration. But we will not stop, because we believe that it is possible to live in a world without genocide, without apartheid, and without oppression—and we have taken responsibility for creating it.

President Ono and Regents, this does not have to be us against you. It is not too late to stand on the right side of history, You can be part of the making of a world and a University that is for, with and by the people.

Divest now.

Free Palestine.

In Solidarity,

Alifa Chowdhury, LSA, CSG President  
Elias Atkinson, LSA, CSG Vice President

The Student Government of  
the University of Michigan - Dearborn



July 2024 Regents Report

President Ono, Members of the Board of Regents, and Executive Officers of the University, it is our honor to submit the following report to you on behalf of the administration of University of Michigan-Dearborn's Student Government (SG). We look forward to updating you on our initiatives and sharing all on which we have worked.

***Brief Introductions:***

- **President Rupinder Singh (he/him):** I am a rising junior majoring in both Mechanical Engineering and Manufacturing at the College of Engineering and Computer Science. Within Student Government, I served as the Director of Technology last year, where I enhanced our outreach and social media presence. I am excited about this new role and the challenges it will bring, and I look forward to updating you on the successes of our administration throughout the year.
- **Vice President Zahra Patni (she/her):** I am a rising senior pursuing a major in Health and Human Services in the College of Education, Health & Human Services. Within Student Government, I have served as secretary for the past two years, making significant strides in organizing operations.

***Beginning of the Singh-Patni Administration:***

We are both excited as we step into this new term and the challenges it will bring. We are honored that our peers at the University of Michigan-Dearborn believe in our capabilities to serve them. We aim to bolster student-facing initiatives, build on the Rida-Dakhlallah administration's work, increase graduate exam opportunities, and enhance student engagement with Student Government.

***Executive Board***

In our initial weeks, we hired the executive board with unanimous Senate approval. At our last meeting, Sean Casey was unanimously elected as Senate Speaker. We believe all selected individuals will excel and significantly enhance the student experience.

***Conclusion***

With our term underway, Zahra and I could not be more excited for what lies ahead. If you need help or want to know more about us, we'd be honored to meet with you. We look forward to working with Chancellor Grasso, Provost Scarlatta, Dean Finley, their team, faculty, and staff this academic year.

GO BLUE! GO DEARBORN!

Rupinder Singh

Student Body President, University of Michigan-Dearborn

Zahra Patni

Student Body Vice President, University of Michigan-Dearborn



# STUDENT GOVERNMENT

President Ono, members of the Board of Regents, and Executive Officers of the University, I am pleased to submit the following report on behalf of the University of Michigan-Flint Student Government. This report serves as an update from the LaPeen-Dabaja Administration.

## **New Student and Transfer Student Orientations:**

Student Government has had the opportunity to continue attending New Student and Transfer Student Orientation to build new relationships and advertise how Student Government will serve them this upcoming year. These orientations have served specifically important to Vice President Dabaja as he works diligently to recruit for the Senate of the Student Body, which serves as a vital representation of our Student Body.

## **Upcoming Events:**

As the month of June marks Pride Month for the LGBTQ+ community, Student Government is thrilled to be part of the celebrations. We are a sponsoring unit for the Pride events happening on campus, including the annual Pride Outside Cookout in Wilson Park on June 22nd. The LaPeen-Dabaja administration is also deeply involved in the planning stages of the yearly Wolverine Homecoming, and we are particularly excited about leading the planning of the Wolverine Homecoming Dance on September 12th. We can't wait for these events to unfold, and we invite you, President Ono, senior officers, and the UM Board of Regents to the festivities.

## **Meetings with University Administration:**

During the Spring and throughout the Summer, the LaPeen-Dabaja administration has and will continue to meet with the University Administration regarding our platform and opportunities for collaboration. We are specifically optimistic about the recent announcement of the appointment of Dr. Laurence Alexander as our new Chancellor of the University of Michigan-Flint. We are hopeful of the positive changes his leadership will bring and eagerly look forward to meeting with him regularly after his term starts on July 1st.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Logan LaPeen".

Logan LaPeen  
Student Body President  
University of Michigan - Flint