

Testimony for the Rules and Executive Nominations Committee

RE: HJ0002 Supporting a Long-Term Ceasefire in Israel and Palestine

Dear Chair Healey, Vice Chair Holmes, and committee members,

On behalf of the Southern Maryland Democratic Socialists of America, I am here to speak in favor of Delegate Acevero's resolution "Supporting a Long-Term Ceasefire in Israel and Palestine."

As of Thursday, February 29, the Israeli Defense Forces have killed at least 30,035 people, including more than 12,300 children, in Gaza - ostensibly to pressure the return of 100 hostages.

An oft-cited reason for this collective punishment is that the people of Gaza elected Hamas 18 years ago and, by not overthrowing them, are collectively responsible for Hamas' actions. So the state of Israel has killed 30,035 people, including more than 12,300 children, ostensibly to pressure them to overthrow Hamas.

Terrorism refers to the use of violence to instill fear in a population to pressure them to do what you want. By this definition, Israel's campaign in Gaza is a campaign of terrorism. They intend to terrorize a population into submitting to their will. This leaves us to face the fact that the United States is currently a sponsor of terrorism. Why? To secure US hegemony in the middle east. To maintain a western Capitalist proxy who can be counted on to act in our economic interests.

When President Biden said, "if there were not an Israel, we'd have to invent one," he was talking about having a proxy nation that helps to maintain US military and economic dominance. He was talking about an ace-in-the-hole for American petrodollar gambling.

And to maintain this dominance the US government has - in our name - aided in the murder of 30,035 people, including more than 12,300 children.

None of this is self-defense. You do not eradicate entire populations in self-defense. That's terrorism. That's genocide. The US, starting with the state of Maryland, has a responsibility to demand a ceasefire and to stop sponsoring, aiding, and abetting terrorism and genocide. For this reason, we are urging a favorable report on HJ002.

Sincerely,

Jacob T. Lang
Interim Secretary
Southern Maryland Democratic Socialists of America