

My name is Rama ,

I Support Resolution HJ0002 for Supporting Long-Term Ceasefire in Israel and Palestine. I'm sending my written testimony because I have faith in the American people. I genuinely believe and have faith in our elected officials. Just like all of the American people, our elected officials are humans with hearts and empathy. They also have brains, and they are intelligent enough to recognize injustices, human rights, violations, and war crimes. No matter who is committing these war crimes or where they are committed. The majority of the people of Maryland are united and calling for one demand and that is a permanent ceasefire in Gaza to end the genocide that is committed by apartheid Israel against Palestinians.. I'm a Palestinian American, who has a big family in Gaza. A big number of my family members have been killed by the Israeli occupation forces. My family members are not numbers. They are beautiful human beings with hearts, hopes, and dreams. One of my family members I will be talking about today is my 14 years old cousin , Assem. Assem was killed by an air strike. His dream was to be a car dealership owner, just like his dad. Assem was on his way to fill water for his family from the nearby school, which was supposed to be a safe zone and was not supposed to be bombed. The Israeli occupation forces bombed the school where Assem was filling water to bring back to his family who didn't have any water. His family was waiting for him to move to the south because they were forced to be displaced by the Israeli occupation forces. Assem is no longer with his family, but I am here today to tell his story. This story is just one story of many stories of my family members who were killed in Gaza by the Israeli occupation forces. How do you feel when your tax money is used to kill your family members? I don't think you will feel good about that. The amount of guilt and shame I feel and every American feels is beyond describing. There is no doubt in my mind that our elected officials are not supporting this genocide committed against Palestinians. I think our elected officials need to see that there are so many American people that are going to support them if they call for a permanent ceasefire. The majority of the people of Maryland is calling for a permanent ceasefire and urging our elected officials to represent us, the people of Maryland. Communities across the State Muslim, Arab, Black, Brown, Jewish, and Christian communities are united in their call for ceasefire. Over 40 cities across the U.S have passed resolutions for a ceasefire. This resolution HJ002 is just another voice for a ceasefire. Passing this resolution will make us feel that our elected officials got our message and heard our voices. We are all with you and we are supporting you. Call for a permanent ceasefire in Gaza to stop the genocide and save lives. Support Resolution HJ0002 for ceasefire in Gaza

Thank you

Rama Thaher-Sawalhi