

March 4, 2024

Chair Del. Anne Healey
Maryland House of Delegates
Rules and Executives Nominations Committee

Re: Testimony **IN FAVOR OF House Joint Resolution 2 (HJ0002)**, Supporting a Long-Term Ceasefire in Israel and Palestine

Hon. Committee Members:

My name is Sasha Jarvis and I am a resident of **District 40**. I thank you for this opportunity to **testify in favor of House Joint Resolution 2** calling for an immediate ceasefire in Palestine. I am a proud Jewish American and the granddaughter of a Holocaust survivor. Growing up, I regularly heard the stories of Nazi cruelty. Each Passover, my family read the poem “Pysakh Has Come to the Ghetto Again.” Each year, we read about “the helpless, the aged, lie starving, in fear.” I felt it, down to my bones. Now, I read reports of starving Palestinians, forced to eat animal feed to survive. I am appalled to see my own country standing and allow one group of people to strip another of basic human dignity. Palestinians deserve their hospitals, their journalists, their food and their children. Palestinians deserve their lives.

68% of respondents in a recent Reuters/Ipsos poll supported a ceasefire. I am not alone in my feelings. My voice is just one of the hundreds of thousands across the country calling for ceasefire. On February 21, I participated in the Pilgrimage for Peace march calling for a ceasefire. I joined organizers who had been marching from Philadelphia to march to DC to call for a ceasefire. We marched through several towns to get to DC and were marching for hours. As we marched, people cheered and clapped for us. I hadn't realized just how popular ceasefire was until I participated in that march.

But of course the call for a ceasefire is popular. 30,000 Palestinians have been killed. A third of them have been children. Those injured have no place safe to go, as Israel has targeted the health system. Palestinians do not have access to food, water or medicine. Aid is being blocked.

As a US taxpayer, I do not want my money to fund this violence. \$3 billion in American taxes goes to Israel with \$3 billion coming from Maryland. I want to see my tax money going to support the dignity of human life. I do not want my money to be used for murder.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HJ0002. The growing movement for Palestinian rights will only swell until freedom comes. I implore you to vote on the right side of history – and with the will of your constituents – and pass this bill to save precious lives hanging in the balance.

Sincerely,

Sasha Jarvis

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