



March 4, 2024
Chair Del. Anne Healey
Maryland House of Delegates
Rules and Executive 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 Jonathan Rochkind and I am a resident of **District 43A**. I thank you for this opportunity to **testify in favor of House Joint Resolution 2** calling for an immediate ceasefire in Palestine. As a member of **Jewish Voice for Peace**, I support an immediate ceasefire, along with growing numbers of Jews who share my values.

We are here in the context of an ongoing genocide. Biden and Congress must take immediate action to prevent genocide against Palestinians

The U.S. must call for a permanent ceasefire to prevent the further loss of life

- 66% of voters and 80% of Democrats support a permanent ceasefire. It is the will of the American people. The U.S. should not send a single additional weapon or funding to the Israeli government as it openly commits war crimes

We support a call for a return of all hostages in Israel and all political prisoners in Gaza — everyone for everyone

- There are currently approximately 2,000 Palestinians being held in “administrative detention” in Israel, meaning they are held indefinitely without charge
- There is no military solution to this. We need to address the root causes: Israeli military occupation and apartheid, and our own government’s role in funding this oppression.

Not in our names - this is not about Jewish safety.

- We recognize that for many, the call to unconditionally support Israel, including sending increased military funding, is coming from a place of deep grief, fear, and anxiety; but we know that more weapons will only bring more harm to everyone.
- We firmly believe that Jews, like all people, have the right to live safely and with dignity. However, do not believe in a version of safety that requires the dispossession and destruction of another group of people.

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.