

Testimony in favor, with amendments, of House Joint Resolution 2:

As a resident of Takoma Park, I urge you to immediately pass House Joint Resolution 2, with amendments, to protect families in Gaza, Israel, and the West Bank.

To help unify Maryland residents and our elected officials around this incredibly urgent call for an immediate ceasefire, a surge in aid to relieve the humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza, and the immediate release of all hostages, I suggest, as amendments, adding a "Whereas" clause that specifically and strongly condemns the horrific Oct. 7th assault on the people of Israel by Hamas and the brutal kidnapping of more than 250 hostages, including children and the elderly. This could be inserted at line 14 on page one.

(The current wording in the Whereas preceding that line does make a statement about Oct. 7th, but the language does not seem to be articulated with the clarity and strength as is the language indicating the horrific suffering in Gaza.)

To further unify all who value peace and justice, I urge you to add the word "immediate" in front of the word "release" on line 5 on page one. Also, please add to line on page one, line 24, after ". . . in occupied Palestine" the words "and the immediate release of all hostages;" Also, please add the word "immediate" on line 5, page two, between the words "safe" and "return."

Finally, on p. 2, line 17, please insert the word "brutal" before the words "attack on October 7th "; and on p. 2, line 18, please amend the words "the Israeli military's response on the 2.3 million Palestinian people in Gaza" to "the Israeli military's extreme response, which has so negatively affected the 2.3-million Palestinian people in Gaza . . ."

Thank you. Please prioritize the passage of this resolution, to support relief of the intolerable human suffering occurring at such devastating scale in Gaza.

Sincerely, Colleen Cordes, Takoma Park, MD