

To the Members of the Rules Committee:

It is my great wish that HR0002 be passed as soon as possible. The horror that Gazans have been experiencing for the past 5 months is eclipsed only by the horror of knowing that it has been happening with American support and American dollars. It's incumbent upon every Marylander of conscience to stand up and insist that people should not be made to starve with our money; that they should not be maimed, orphaned, disabled with our consent; that what we've been witnessing and what the women, men, and children of Gaza have been living for more than 140 days is unsupportable and must end.

I had the great privilege of participating in a reading of the Gaza Monologues in DC earlier this month – a collection of essays written by children who survived the Gaza war of 2008-2009. The children who survived are adults now. This is testimony from Anas Abu Eitah, who was 15 when he wrote this in 2010:

I was a goalkeeper, and my friend Mohammed kept telling me: "I'm going to get a goal," but always stopped his goals.

On the 7th January 2009, a day in the war, I was sitting at the door of our house and it was foggy, and someone came to tell me your friend Mohammed was martyred; of course I didn't believe it. I went looking for my friend and I was really scared of the idea of death.

I got to the mosque and saw the closest friend in my life Mohammed wrapped in the flag of Palestine and torn into pieces. I cried a lot, a lot, and I was sad because I couldn't hug or kiss him, and I started holding him. We took him to the cemetery and buried him, and I kept sitting there, telling him I loved him and I was really upset because he left me alone in this world.

Anas is in his 20s now. There are children living this and worse than this now each day. Generations of death, disability, and trauma have been created, are still being created, with our consent. It needs to end.

Sincerely,

Nora Achrafi, mother of 2

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