

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 5

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By: **Senator Benson**

Introduced and read first time: February 9, 2024

Assigned to: Rules

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

A Senate Joint Resolution concerning

Supporting a Long-Term Ceasefire in Israel and Palestine

FOR the purpose of stating that the General Assembly of Maryland conveys to Maryland's Congressional Delegation its support for an immediate, long-term ceasefire in Israel and occupied Palestine, the return of all hostages, and delivery of adequate humanitarian aid to the Palestinian people; and generally relating to support for a ceasefire in Israel and Palestine.

WHEREAS, All human life is precious, and the targeting of civilians, no matter their faith or ethnicity, is a violation of international humanitarian law; and

WHEREAS, Between October 7, 2023, and January 10, 2024, armed violence claimed the lives of over 23,000 Palestinians (more than 10,000 of whom are children) and over 1,200 Israelis, tens of thousands more have been wounded, and the death toll has included Americans; and

WHEREAS, As of November 1, 2023, the Israeli military admitted to having dropped 10,000 bombs on Gaza, which averages 72 bombs for every square mile of Gaza, and The Wall Street Journal reported at least 45 percent of housing units being destroyed or damaged; and

WHEREAS, Hundreds of thousands of lives are at imminent risk without an immediate, long-term ceasefire, restoration of basic necessities, and delivery of adequate humanitarian aid without delay to the Palestinian people; and

WHEREAS, The United States government and our elected leaders hold immense diplomatic power to save Israeli and Palestinian lives; and

WHEREAS, The majority of the world and the majority of Americans support an immediate, long-term ceasefire in Israel and occupied Palestine, and millions of people worldwide, including thousands of people in Maryland, have joined in peaceful protests since October 7 to amplify this call; and



WHEREAS, The General Assembly of Maryland has the ability to influence Maryland's federal delegation to call for an immediate, long-term ceasefire to stop the violence, the safe return of all hostages, and the delivery of adequate humanitarian aid to the Palestinian people without delay in order to prevent the loss of hundreds of thousands more lives; and

WHEREAS, Antisemitism, Islamophobia, and anti-Palestinian/anti-Arab bigotry have risen significantly in Maryland, across the United States, and around the world in the past 4 months, with direct impacts on our local communities – from synagogues and mosques to schools, homes, offices, and places where communities gather, as well as at protests and rallies; and

WHEREAS, All of these forms of bigotry, violence, and oppression serve to divide our communities and weaken our efforts to achieve collective safety, justice, and true multi-ethnic, multiracial democracy here and everywhere; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the General Assembly of Maryland condemns violations of international law, including both the attack on October 7, 2023, by Hamas, and the Israeli military's response on the 2.3 million Palestinian people living in Gaza (nearly half of whom are children) since then; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the General Assembly of Maryland conveys to Maryland's Congressional Delegation its support for an immediate, long-term ceasefire in Israel and occupied Palestine, the return of all hostages, and delivery of adequate humanitarian aid to the Palestinian people; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the General Assembly of Maryland affirms its commitment to combat antisemitism, Islamophobia, and anti-Palestinian/anti-Arab bigotry, its support for the people of both Israel and Palestine to live in peace and security, and the right of all people to live, learn, work, play, pray, and engage in peaceful protest, all without threats, intimidation, or death; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded by the Department of Legislative Services to the Honorable Wes Moore, Governor of Maryland; the Honorable William C. Ferguson, IV, President of the Senate of Maryland; the Honorable Adrienne A. Jones, Speaker of the House of Delegates; and the Maryland Congressional Delegation.