

March 9, 2026

To: Chair Anne Healey
House Rules Committee
230 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Testimony In Support of HJ 9 Condemning Violence and Violations of Law - Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gaza, and Sudan

Position: FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Healey and Members of the Committee:

I am writing today in the very strongest support of a favorable position for Joint Resolution HJ 9. I unequivocally condemn the violence that the United States Government enacts on people in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Gaza, and Sudan.

The United States of America has a long history of profiting from the destruction of people, their communities, and the environment at every level. Our false goals of 'democracy' have left millions across the global south killed, starved, oppressed, dispossessed, and robbed of resources. Meanwhile, we struggle to uphold the very basic tenants of democracy in our own nation. The consequences of our inability to stop, or at the very least condemn, such egregious forms of violence abroad are mirrored in the way that ICE, CBP, police, and other entities continually escalate violence in our communities. **It must be stopped.**

We spend billions annually to enact this violence, neglecting our own citizens and their needs. Our monetary support of other brutally violent entities like Israel allows their citizens to have universal healthcare, free or subsidized college education, and other social securities that we utterly lack. In the first several days of our recent illegal war campaign in Iran, we could have afforded 1/10th the cost to permanently end homelessness in our country.

Shamefully, this bill had other iterations that were not even brought to a vote by their respective committees in the Maryland State Legislature. I would like to particularly call attention to Delegate Healey, who has shown a callous disregard for and unwillingness to act on behalf of constituents who have begged her to recognize the humanity of their families and community in Gaza and beyond. It is fully understood that this bill is symbolic, which makes it all the more egregious for a lack of action on behalf of Delegate Healey and others.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge a favorable report.

Mary Ella Jourdak
Annapolis, Maryland