



**Maryland General Assembly  
House Rules and Executive Nominations Committee  
March 9, 2026**

Testimony of Tali Cohen  
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ADL (the Anti-Defamation League) is pleased to submit this written testimony to express concerns with *House Joint Resolution 9, Condemning Violence and Violations of Law – Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gaza, and Sudan*.

As a leading anti-hate organization committed to stopping the defamation of the Jewish people and securing justice and fair treatment for all, we would like to highlight concerns about and the impact of this resolution.

On October 7, 2023, Hamas, a US-designated terrorist organization, conducted an assault on Israel, resulting in the deadliest day for Jews since the Holocaust. Terrorists systemically killed over 1,200 Israelis, including entire families, children and elderly civilians and kidnapped 251 hostages. Hamas repeatedly violated multiple ceasefire agreements, and Israel was engaged in military operations in Gaza aimed at securing the release of hostages and dismantling Hamas.

While we understand the intent of this resolution to condemn violence and violations of international law, this resolution as drafted raises multiple concerns. The resolution references “over 70,000 civilians” killed in Gaza without acknowledging Hamas’s role in initiating the October 7 attack, the ongoing threat Hamas poses to Israeli civilians, or Hamas’s systematic use of civilian infrastructure for military purposes. This is similar to other problematic ceasefire resolutions across the country that place the entire onus of blame for the current crisis on Israel. Further, it includes false language about Israel, without acknowledging Hamas’s role.

We have unfortunately seen that hearings and public comment on similar resolutions across the country have included antisemitic rhetoric including the demonization of Israel, Zionists and Jews. This comes at a time when Jews in the United States are confronting unprecedented levels of antisemitic attacks. Recent tensions with Iran contribute to an already elevated threat environment, and ADL has documented an immediate surge of antisemitic, anti-Zionist and conspiratorial commentary following the strikes. At a time of rising antisemitism across the country and here in Maryland, this resolution is not constructive, nor aligned with the role of this legislature.

In light of our mission and decades of work to counter antisemitism, we are deeply familiar with the complex issues underlying the Israel-Hamas conflict, and we are fierce advocates for pathways to peace, including a two-state solution. We are extremely concerned that this resolution does not advance that goal and would instead only serve to divide Marylanders and distract from the important issues we face in our state every day. The State of Maryland is not empowered to make foreign policy decisions; these debates and resolutions are therefore declaratory in nature. We encourage this Committee, as leaders in Maryland, to instead focus on measures that bring communities together, rather than sow divisions at a time of rising hate.

**We accordingly urge the House Rules and Executive Nominations Committee to give HJ9 an unfavorable report.**