



HOUSE RULES AND EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

MARCH 9, 2026

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 9

CONDEMNING VIOLENCE AND VIOLATIONS OF LAW - DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO, GAZA, AND SUDAN

OPPOSE

Agudath Israel of Maryland, the Mid-Atlantic regional office for Agudath Israel of America – a renowned national Jewish advocacy organization with chapters across the country, speaks on behalf of the Orthodox Jewish communities across Maryland. Thousands of the members of our community have visited Israel, have lived in Israel, and/or have family members who live in Israel. We submit this testimony today, on their behalf, in opposition to House Joint Resolution 9.

It is extremely disheartening to note that this proposed resolution makes no mention of the gleeful slaughter of Israeli and immigrant civilians done by Hamas and other similarly aligned individuals, for whom hatred of Israel trumped all considerations of human decency and self-preservation. It makes no mention of the diverse communities in Maryland with deep personal, cultural, and familial ties to Israel, and how they are directly affected by the suffering occurring there. It does not issue a single demand that a terrorist group which intentionally targets civilians, employs women and children as foot soldiers and suicide bombers, and embeds itself inside the civilian population intentionally in order to maximize the suffering of their fellow Palestinians (as a perverse attempt to garner sympathy), stop these tactics immediately.

On October 7th, 2023, in middle of the Jewish religious holiday of Simchat Torah, Hamas and similarly aligned groups and individuals engaged in an orgy of wholesale rape, murder, and torture. Had Israel so chosen, it could have responded without care for civilian life, in which case the casualties of the conflict would have been far greater. In similar cases of urban conflict, such as the Battle of Berlin, a far greater amount of civilians were killed within a far shorter period of time. Of course, due to the refusal of Hamas and the other terrorist groups to disclose their membership or to don uniforms (as required by the rules of war), there is no way to know exactly how many of the dead were in fact combatants. It can, however, be safely deduced that Hamas members and similarly aligned militants do indeed comprise a significant portion of the total. The tragic deaths of the many innocents can be laid directly at the door of Hamas and their decision to continue embedding themselves in the civilian population. Had Hamas chosen to spend the past two decades governing Gaza, rather than pursuing their stated genocidal goal of throwing all Israel into the sea, thousands of people would still be alive today.

Thankfully, there is no genocide in Gaza. We should indeed urge Hamas to lay down its weapons, which would allow almost all the current suffering in that region to end. We ask for an unfavorable report on Resolution HJ0009.