

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 20th, 2024

Dear President Biden,

We are writing to urge you to use every tool at your disposal to de-escalate and bring an end to the conflict in the Middle East and a ceasefire in the Israel-Hamas conflict. In the wake of last week's unprecedented air strike on Israel by Iran on April 13th, 2024, and retaliatory strikes by Israel on April 19th, we are concerned by the potential of a widening conflict across the Middle East and the dangers it poses for regional and global security, American service-members on the front lines, and for securing a lasting peace, and the safety, security, and self-determination of the Israeli and Palestinian people.

We strongly support and stand with Israel and the Palestinian people, which is why we voted to support an emergency aid package to provide \$9 billion in humanitarian aid for Gaza and other regions experiencing crisis and to resupply the defensive systems that have enabled Israel to respond to airstrikes by Iran, Hamas, Hezbollah, and other Iranian-backed militias. We have been grateful for the opportunity to engage with the Administration on this issue and understand that the funding provided in the supplemental is defensive in nature and will not be used to support offensive weapons in Gaza. We believe Israel has a right to defend itself and that Hamas must return all remaining hostages. Prior to voting on H.R. 8034, the Israel Security Supplemental Appropriations Act, the Administration provided Members of Congress with assurances that funding for Israel will be used for defensive purposes and will not be used for further incursions into Gaza that could harm civilians. We expect that your Administration will uphold these assurances.

We are gravely concerned by the devastating civilian death toll and humanitarian crisis unfolding in Gaza and the recent killing of international aid workers, in addition to journalists, who have been killed or disappeared during the conflict. Over the last six months over 34,000 people have died in Gaza, in addition to the more than 1,400 Israelis who were brutally executed and kidnapped by Hamas. Over a million people are currently facing extreme food insecurity and famine. We appreciate your sustained efforts to increase aid and secure additional humanitarian corridors into Gaza, but remain deeply concerned by reports that hundreds of thousands of people still do not have sufficient access to food, water, shelter, and medicine. Let us be clear, Israel must do more to protect civilians and allow humanitarian aid to reach the innocent civilians in Gaza.

As the death toll and looming famine continue to mount, we believe the U.S. must do everything it can to secure humanitarian aid and an end to the conflict. This includes the rigorous enforcement of all U.S. laws regarding the transfer and sale of weapons. We support the resupply of defensive weapons like David's Sling and Iron Dome to protect the Israeli people, but are opposed to the transfer of offensive weapons that may be used in Gaza and result in civilian harm. The U.S. must fully investigate credible concerns raised by international bodies, human rights, governmental and non-governmental organizations regarding civilian harm and

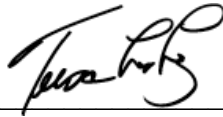
restrictions of humanitarian aid. We urge you to exercise your full authority under the Leahy Laws, the National Security Memorandum on Safeguards and Accountability with Respect to Transferred Defense Articles and Defense Services (NSM-20), and civilian harm authorities with respect to the investigation, compliance, and restriction of military transfers to ensure that weapons of U.S. origin are used in accordance with U.S., international, and humanitarian law.

We must act to de-escalate this conflict and secure a lasting peace. The time is now.

Sincerely,



Melanie A. Stansbury
Member of Congress



Teresa Leger Fernández
Member of Congress



Gabe Vasquez
Member of Congress

CC: The Honorable Antony Blinken, Secretary of State,
The Honorable Lloyd J. Austin III, Secretary of Defense,
Avril Haines, Director of National Intelligence