

LA Jews for Peace Calls on Congress to Restore Funding for Gaza Aid

Reply to: info@LAJewsforPeace.org, August 21, 2018

LA Jews for Peace endorses the July 30, 2018 letter signed by 70 Democratic members of Congress demanding that the Trump Administration immediately restore Gaza aid funding “to alleviate the growing humanitarian crisis in the Gaza strip.”¹ Those Congresspersons say that improving conditions in Gaza “is a critical first step to improving the security and safety of both Palestinians and Israelis.”

The letter was written by Representatives Mark Pocan (D-WI-2), Barbara Lee (D-CA-13), Jan Schakowsky (D-IL-9), and John Yarmuth (D-KY-3), and signed by a total of 70 Representatives, all Democrats, including six from Southern California: Karen Bass (D-CA-37), Alan Lowenthal (D-CA-47), Ted Lieu (D-CA-33), Judy Chu (D-CA-27), Pete Aguilar (D-CA-31), and Linda Sanchez (D-CA-38). This letter follows a similar letter written on May 11, 2018 by Senator Bernie Sanders (I-VT) and signed by a total of 13 Democratic Senators.

The letter makes clear that the terrible deprivation in Gaza, where most residents lack adequate power, clean water, medical care, and many other basic necessities, constitutes a humanitarian and security disaster. It cites the concerns and recommendations of Israel’s security establishment, which has consistently warned that the humanitarian disaster in Gaza could increase the likelihood of violence and endanger Israelis — warnings that have clearly and disturbingly been borne out in recent months.

The July 30 Pocan - Lee - Schakowsky - Yarmuth letter quotes the May 11 Sanders letter that partially blames Hamas for the situation in Gaza, "due to its ongoing repression, corruption and insistence on pursuing a violent struggle against Israel," and despite Israel's withdrawal from Gaza in 2005, "its continuing control of Gaza’s air, sea, and northern, southern, and eastern borders, and its restrictions on the freedom of movement of people, legitimate goods and equipment in and out of Gaza, have made the humanitarian situation worse."

All that is true, but cutting aid meant to relieve the humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip where half the population are children is not a proper response. Cutting aid will allow the economic and humanitarian crisis in Gaza to continue — leading to people dying and others turning to violence.

LA Jews for Peace urges all Southern California Democrats who did not sign the July 30 Pocan - Lee - Schakowsky - Yarmuth letter demanding that the Trump Administration restore Gaza aid funding, to endorse it immediately.

¹ July 30, 2018 Congressional letter to Mike Pompeo and John Bolton.
<https://pocan.house.gov/sites/pocan.house.gov/files/Gaza-Humanitarian-Aid-Letter-7-30-18.pdf>