



HOWARD COUNTY OFFICE OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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The White House
Attn: President Joe Biden
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden,

As our top United States officials continue efforts to broker peace in the Middle East, we strongly implore you to negotiate a bilateral ceasefire in the Israel-Gaza war and the release of all remaining hostages. More than 25,000 Palestinians have died in Gaza and the West Bank, and more than 1,200 Israelis died as a result of this conflict since October 7th, 2023. More than half of these deaths were women and children. It is our duty as elected leaders and as Americans to stand up to call for this brutal cycle of violence and human suffering to end and begin the process of rebuilding. We call for peace now.

While the scale of this ongoing crisis is immense, the humanitarian assistance that is entering Gaza is a mere fraction of what is needed to save the lives of innocent civilians in Gaza and Israel. We strongly urge your administration to call for a global humanitarian surge of food, water, medical supplies and equipment, and power to the besieged Gazan civilian population and to press Israeli and Palestinian officials to ensure the delivery of this lifesaving assistance to those in need.

Recently, Howard County, Maryland, established our first-ever Interfaith Advisory Council, tasking its members with confronting intolerance, ending hate, and enhancing the quality of life for all our residents. Just as hate has no place here in Howard County, Maryland, hate has no place in our world. We believe in building bridges among faiths and fostering open and respectful discourse. We believe that no matter your faith or where you reside, everyone should be able to worship freely and safely. This past November, Howard County established a Nonprofit and Faith-Based Security Grant Program to ensure that our local nonprofits, houses of worship, and all our residents are not only safe, but feel safe and respected. Following the attacks on October 7th, 2023, we have seen a shocking increase in islamophobia, antisemitism, and racism across our county and nationally.

Now is the time to take bold actions to ensure all people across our globe are safe and supported. The ongoing suffering of the Palestinian and Israeli people has gone on long enough. This extreme violence and growing humanitarian crisis must end now. We thank you for your attention and collaboration on this critical issue.

Sincerely,