

## Thank you for your message

Senator Gary Peters <Senator@peters.senate.gov>

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To: Kelly Hocquard <kelly.hocquard@elps.us>

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August 7, 2024

Dear Kelly,

Thank you for contacting me about the war between Israel and Hamas. I appreciate you taking the time to express your views. Hearing directly from Michiganders like you helps inform me of the issues that matter to our state. I am so grateful for your input.

As your Senator and a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, I am closely monitoring the situation in the Middle East. I was horrified by the vicious, coordinated terrorist attacks by Hamas on innocent Israeli citizens. I condemn this terrorism in the strongest terms. Furthermore, I am horrified by the deaths of civilians in Gaza resulting from the conflict and the lack of access to basic resources.

I support Israel's right to defend itself and its citizens from the indiscriminate violence perpetrated by Hamas. Israel also has the authority and responsibility to rescue hostages being held by Hamas. While engaged in rescue efforts, the Israeli government must make every effort to ensure innocent civilians in Gaza and the West Bank are not targeted by the Israeli military. That is why I am a proud cosponsor of a resolution reaffirming Congressional support of Israel as well as a resolution calling for the safe return of all hostages. Furthermore, I joined all my Senate colleagues in passing Leader Schumer and Leader McConnell's bipartisan resolution condemning the Hamas terrorist attack. I also voted in favor of advancing national security supplemental funding to provide critical aid to both Israel and Ukraine which was signed into law on April 20, 2024 with strong bipartisan support. In addition to security assistance, this package included emergency funding for humanitarian efforts in Gaza, the West Bank, Ukraine, and other conflict zones.

As this conflict continues, innocent civilians, including American citizens in Gaza, are desperately in need of lifesaving humanitarian aid. In order to support efforts to provide aid to the civilians of Gaza, I joined dozens of my fellow senators in sending a letter to Secretary Blinken calling on the administration to provide additional humanitarian support. I am deeply troubled by the allegations that twelve employees from the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) were involved in the October 7th terrorist attacks. The United States has paused funding in response to the allegations. The UN must hold those involved accountable and strengthen oversight of UNRWA operations in order to restore donor trust. It is imperative that the UNRWA is able to continue serving the millions of Palestinian civilians who depend on its services.

In addition to the needs of those in Gaza, Palestinian civilians abroad know returning home remains unsafe. That is why my colleagues and I sent a bicameral letter to President Biden calling on the administration to designate the Palestinian territories for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) and/or authorize Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) for Palestinians present in the United States. Since sending this letter, the Biden Administration has authorized Deferred Enforced Departure for Palestinians. In addition to supporting Israeli efforts to root out Hamas, preventing civilian deaths must remain a top priority in order to build a lasting stable peace in the region.

As we look ahead to the future, I remain hopeful that a two-state solution can be achieved and that there is a more peaceful and prosperous future for both Israelis and Palestinians. I have joined 49 of my Democratic colleagues in cosponsoring an amendment led by Senator Schatz that was filed on the national security supplemental package reaffirming that a two-state solution is the policy of the United States. A two-state solution remains the best option for lasting stability in the region and U.S. diplomacy will continue to play a critical role in establishing a lasting peace. As the Senate considers policies related to Palestine and Israel, I will be sure to keep your views in mind.

Thank you again for contacting me. I always appreciate hearing from you and hope that you take the time to contact me again soon. For more information, please feel free to visit my website, <http://www.peters.senate.gov>, or find me on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram @SenGaryPeters.

Sincerely,



Gary C. Peters  
United States Senator

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