

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 2, 2021

The Honorable James E. Risch
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
423 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Ranking Member Risch:

We write with a great sense of urgency to respectfully request that you release your hold on tens of millions of dollars in appropriated humanitarian aid that is so desperately needed to meet the needs of hundreds of thousands of Palestinian civilians rebuilding their lives in the wake of the fighting between Hamas and Israel earlier this month.

Gaza is experiencing a humanitarian catastrophe. Buildings lie in rubble. Access to clean water and electricity is sporadic or nonexistent. Food insecurity is spreading. COVID-19 is running rampant and thousands of people have been displaced and rendered homeless. The magnitude of the crisis is staggering.

This humanitarian and development aid was passed in FY20 with bipartisan support and signed by the former President.

As the ceasefire takes hold, the United States can help relieve the suffering of countless innocent civilians. The assistance aid notified by the State Department is to be provided in full accordance with U.S. law. It is administered and overseen by our government and by trusted and vetted partners on the ground. Secretary Antony Blinken has made clear that Hamas and other terrorist groups will not benefit from our humanitarian assistance.

Rendering humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian population serves American values as well as our diplomatic and security interests. Please act with dispatch to release these funds. Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jamie Raskin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jamie" and last name "Raskin" clearly legible.

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