

**Council File Number:** 24-0656

**Comments for Public Posting:**

Dear L.A. City Councilmembers,

Please OPPOSE council file # 24-0656 which is the resolution requesting a ceasefire in Israel. This is an anti-semitic motion brought forward by 3 members of the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) and should serve as a reminder of how antisemitism is cultivated and legislated into widespread acceptance. As a national leader, the city of Los Angeles must stand with the Jewish community and condemn the false, hateful rhetoric contained in this resolution. To be clear: Councilmembers Hernandez, Raman, and Soto are members of an organization (DSA) that on Oct. 8th, hosted nationwide celebrations in honor of the rape, mutilation, torture, burning alive and mass murder of innocent civilians in Israel. They have justified rape and sexual torture as "resistance". The group they're asking the city to support, Hamas, still has 116 hostages who were taken captive on Oct. 7th - eight of them are Americans. It is unknown how many are still alive. Many of the victims on Oct. 7th, were peace activists who lived close to the border so they could provide transportation for people living in Gaza to receive medical care provided to them in Israel BY Israel. Why aren't these DSA members asking for a ceasefire in Russia where they've sustained a reported 500,000 deaths due to the response from the war they declared on Ukraine? Other than a perfunctory reference to the attack by Hamas on October 7, the text of the resolution is a diatribe against the Jewish state. Using Hamas-run Gaza Ministry of Health figures, the resolution authors conveniently ignore the fact that on May 8 the United Nations dramatically revised the number of women and children in the death toll. The text places the blame for civilian deaths on the Israeli military rather than on Hamas, who broke a ceasefire, declared war on Israel and uses their civilians as human shields. Any resolution on the Israel-Hamas War should incorporate all the following points: 1. The October 7 attack was the largest massacre of Jewish people since the Holocaust. Hamas wiped out entire families. Israel has the right and moral obligation to defend itself. 2. Hamas is a U.S.- designated terrorist organization that uses human shields and operates from civilian areas. 3. Hamas committed rape and sexual torture on October 7 – and subsequently later in Gaza. We believe women, ALL WOMEN, when they say they've been sexually assaulted. We acknowledge the widespread failure to honor this commitment, has caused immeasurable grief for the victims and for Jewish women globally. 4. Hamas rejected and continues to reject Israeli ceasefire offers. On June 3, 2024, State Department Spokesperson Matthew Miller said, "The roadblock right now to a ceasefire is not Israel – the roadblock to a ceasefire is Hamas." 5. We acknowledge there was a ceasefire in place on October 6, 2023 which was broken by Hamas. It has been confirmed that many of the civilian population of Gaza have been complicit in war crimes by holding hostages in their homes, and that Hamas has said it plans to carry out attacks like October 7 "again and again".

For all these reasons, it's clear that the elimination of the governing and military capabilities of Hamas is absolute necessary to have a lasting ceasefire.

It is important to understand that Israel wants peace, not only in Israel but with their neighbors. If the people of Gaza are to ever be free, they must be free of Hamas.

Thank you,

Susan Collins