



Legislation Text

File #: RES 24-386, **Version:** 1

Calling for an immediate and permanent mutual ceasefire in Israel and Gaza.

WHEREAS, when we speak as the City Council, we must speak to unify our city and not divide it; and

WHEREAS, in this moment we are especially concerned for the health and welfare of our Palestinian, Israeli, Muslim, and Jewish inhabitants, who are deeply hurting; and

WHEREAS, the killing of Palestinian and Israeli civilians, and the targeting of civilians, no matter their faith or ethnicity, is a violation of international humanitarian law and a violation of Geneva Conventions; and

WHEREAS, our community mourned the horrific attacks of October 7th, 2023, perpetuated by Hamas that resulted in the death over 1,100 Israelis, with more than 200 Israeli civilians taken hostage; and

WHEREAS, between October 7th, 2023, and March 5th, 2024, the government of Israel's response through ongoing bombing and military strikes in Gaza has now killed at least 30,000 Palestinians - who are overwhelmingly civilian men, women and children - and severely wounded countless more; and

WHEREAS, on October 26th, 2023, the United Nations General Assembly, in a near unanimous vote, called for an immediate and sustained humanitarian ceasefire; and

WHEREAS, on December 12, 2023, the United Nations General Assembly passed with 153 countries in favor of a resolution calling for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire in Gaza, the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages, and ensuring humanitarian access; and

WHEREAS, on March 4, 2024, the United Nations Office of The Special Representative of the Secretary-General On Sexual Violence in Conflict verified credible claims of sexual violence on October 7, 2023, against Israeli civilians and hostages and is urging a formal investigation; and

WHEREAS, The United Nations Agency for Palestinian Refugees (UNRWA) has estimated that 70-percent of civilian infrastructure in Gaza has been destroyed or severely damaged, including hospitals, schools, and homes; and

WHEREAS, hundreds of thousands of lives are at imminent risk of death by continued violence, starvation, lack of medical treatment, or lack of public health and sanitation, if a mutual ceasefire is not achieved, basic needs and infrastructure are not restored, and humanitarian aid is not delivered without delay; and

WHEREAS, an immediate and permanent mutual ceasefire creates the safest conditions for all parties involved - including the return of remaining Israeli hostages - and ensures humanitarian aid can be delivered to Palestinians at the rate needed, preventing further loss of life; and

WHEREAS, all forms of bigotry, violence, and oppression serve to divide our communities and weaken our efforts to achieve collective safety, justice, and true multi-ethnic, multi-racial democracy here and everywhere; and

WHEREAS, the continued violence is being felt by our Jewish and Palestinian neighbors here in Saint Paul,

many with direct personal connections to the region and people at risk, and our Council and City leadership are united in protecting our residents against acts of anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, or hate crimes towards our Arab, Israeli Jewish, and Muslim neighbors; and

WHEREAS, we join over 70 municipalities in the United States - including Hastings, Columbia Heights, and Minneapolis here in Minnesota - in taking a stand in the interest of humanity and the wellbeing of our constituents; and

WHEREAS, we recognize the right of peace and safety for both the Israeli and Palestinian people as well as for our residents here in Saint Paul; Now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the City of Saint Paul calls upon our U.S. Congressional delegation, both in the Senate and House of Representatives, to join us in -

- 1) urging the Biden administration to immediately call for and facilitate de-escalation and a permanent mutual ceasefire to urgently end the current violence; and
- 2) urging the Biden administration to promptly facilitate the entry of humanitarian assistance our Administration has promised - at the scale needed - into north and south Gaza; and
- 3) ensuring the immediate release of all Israeli hostages taken by Hamas and the release of thousands of Palestinians unjustly imprisoned or held by Israel; and
- 4) condemning the use of murder, kidnapping, and rape by Hamas on October 7, 2023, and since; and
- 5) urging the Biden administration to uphold international law and the January 26, 2024, order of the International Court of Justice by discontinuing unconditional U.S. military aid to Israel without clear guarantees for civilian safety; and be it further

RESOLVED, we, the Saint Paul City Council, as local leaders are using our voices in the cause for Peace, and to stand firmly against the rise of and all acts of racially motivated violence and hate crimes perpetrated against our Arab, Jewish, Muslim, and Palestinian constituents here in Saint Paul and around the United States; and be it finally

RESOLVED, we, the Saint Paul City Council, ask that the Office of the City Clerk forward a copy of this resolution to our United States House Representative Congresswoman Betty McCollum, our United States Senators Tina Smith and Amy Klobuchar, and our United States President Joseph Biden as Saint Paul's federal elected officials with the most direct and primary responsibility to our constituents on this issue.