

**STAFF REPORT  
REGULAR MEETING**

**AGENDA DATE:** July 16, 2024

**DEPARTMENT:** City Commission  
Brought forth by Commissioner McVoy

**TITLE:**

Resolution No. XX-2024 declaring support for immediate de-escalation in Gaza, a permanent ceasefire, immediate return of all hostages; prompt entry of all needed humanitarian assistance into Gaza; federal acknowledgement of UN Resolution 194; and conditioning of lethal arms sales to Israel on full and objective application of the federal Leahy Law.

**SUMMARY:**

A resolution voicing our support for human rights, security and peace for all in Israel and Gaza; recognition of the urgent need for humanitarian aid; and sharing of these hopes with Lake Worth Beach's Congressional Delegation and the President of the United States.

**BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION:**

Lake Worth Beach has a long and noble tradition of celebrating its diverse population and for speaking up for those in need of support. We have declared ourselves a sanctuary city for the LGBTQ+ community, we have spoken up for our community of recent immigrants, for victims of gun violence and for victims of domestic violence.

For some time, we have been aware of a dire situation in Gaza, with millions displaced, many homes destroyed, tens of thousands killed and many more injured. Aid organizations have warned of widespread malnutrition and risk of actual starvation.

A group of Lake Worth Beach residents, deeply and morally concerned about the human rights and humanitarian crisis in Gaza, has worked for months to inform themselves about the history behind the conflict and the current situation on the ground. They, with support from Commissioner McVoy, submit this Resolution, and urge the Commission to reach deep into their hearts to pass it.

Recently, a group of very prominent Israelis, including a former Prime Minister, a former head of a national intelligent agency, a Nobel Prize winner, and others, have shown us that not only is it not anti-semitic to criticize the ongoing Israeli war on Gaza; in their highly informed eyes, it is in fact speaking out in support of Israel (Attachment 1). This group, along with high ranked members of the Israeli military, are raising concerns that continuation of the war on Gaza is actively threatening the security of Israel.

In Washington, DC, a number of former highly placed U.S. Government officials have resigned their positions over "grave concerns with current U.S. policy towards the crisis in Gaza." The resignations were independent, but these former officials spoke out jointly

during the week of our country's independence, explain their concerns and imploring others to join them (Attachment 2). Concern for the endangered Palestinian population in Gaza certainly weighs heavily on these officials, but so does concern for the long term security of the state of Israel, and in fact national security of the U.S. These subject matter experts urge the U.S. government, their former employer, to observe the Leahy Laws; to bring about an immediate ceasefire accompanied by return of all hostages; to greatly expand humanitarian assistance to Gaza; and to clarify U.S. support for self-determination for the Palestinian people.

These subject matter experts also urge us, similarly to the statement of the highly placed Israelis, to "keep pushing," "to use our positions to amplify calls for peace." These former officials, who felt strongly enough to sacrifice their jobs, quote from Dr. Martin Luther King, who wrote that "the calling to speak is often a voice of agony, but we must speak... for we are deeply in need of a new way beyond the darkness that seems so close around us." These officials, still dedicated to their oath to protect and defend the Constitution, close by requesting that, "we all have the moral courage to speak and push for a better world, for a better America."

#### **ATTACHMENTS:**

- 1) "We Are Israelis Calling on Congress to Disinvite Netanyahu," New York Times, June 26, 2024.
- 2) Joint Statement of U.S. Government Officials who have Resigned over U.S. policy towards Gaza, Palestine, and Israel, Week of July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024.