



UNITED STATES CONGRESSWOMAN

**BETTY
McCOLLUM**

Representing Minnesota's 4th District

H.R. 4391, PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS BY ENDING ISRAELI MILITARY DETENTION OF PALESTINIAN CHILDREN ACT

Congresswoman Betty McCollum (DFL-Minn.) has introduced legislation, to promote human rights for Palestinian children by ending abusive Israeli military

detention practices. Her legislation, the Promoting Human Rights by Ending Israeli Military Detention of Palestinian Children Act, H.R. 4391, prevents the use of United States tax dollars for the Israeli military's ongoing detention and mistreatment of Palestinian children.

The Problem

An estimated 10,000 Palestinian children have been detained by Israeli security forces and prosecuted in the Israeli military court system since 2000. Independent monitors such as Human Rights Watch have documented that these children are subject to abuse and, in some cases, torture — specifically citing the use of chokeholds, beatings, and coercive interrogation on children between the ages of 11 and 15.

In addition, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) found that Palestinian children are frequently held for extended periods without access to either their parents or attorneys. The United States Department of State and the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child have also raised serious concerns about the mistreatment of Palestinian children in Israeli military custody.

- B'Tselem: Unprotected: The Detention of Palestinian Teenagers in East Jerusalem (October 2017) https://www.btselem.org/publications/summaries/201710_unprotected
- Human Rights Watch Palestine: Israeli Police Abusing Detained Children (April 2016) <https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/04/11/palestine-israeli-police-abusing-detained-children>
- Defense for Children International - Palestine: No Way to Treat a Child (April 2016) https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/dcipalestine/pages/1527/attachments/original/1460665378/DCIP_NWTTAC_Report_Final_April_2016.pdf?1460665378
- United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF): Children in Israeli Military Detention (February 2013) https://www.unicef.org/oPt/UNICEF_oPt_Children_in_Israeli_Military_Detention_Observations_and_Recommendations_-_6_March_2013.pdf
 - UNICEF: Children in Israeli Military Detention, Bulletin No. 1 (October 2013) https://www.unicef.org/oPt/UNICEF_oPt_Children_in_Military_Detention_Bulletin_No_1_October_2013.pdf
 - UNICEF: Children in Israeli Military Detention, Bulletin No. 2 (February 2015) https://www.unicef.org/oPt/Children_in_Israeli_Military_Detention_-_Observations_and_Recommendations_-_Bulletin_No_2_-_February_2015.pdf
- United Kingdom Delegation: Children in Military Custody (June 2012) http://www.childreninmilitarycustody.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/Children_in_Military_Custody_Full_Report.pdf

The Legislation

Given that the Israeli government receives billions of dollars in assistance from the United States, Congress must work to ensure that American taxpayer dollars never support the Israeli military's detention or abuse of Palestinian children. Congresswoman McCollum's legislation, the Promoting Human Rights by Ending Israeli Military Detention of Palestinian Children Act, requires that the Secretary of State certify that American funds do not support Israel's military detention, interrogation, abuse, or ill-treatment of Palestinian children.

Joining Congresswoman McCollum as original co-sponsors of the Promoting Human Rights by Ending Israeli Military Detention of Palestinian Children Act are Representatives Mark Pocan, Earl

Blumenauer, André Carson, John Conyers, Jr., Danny K. Davis, Peter A. DeFazio, Raul Grijalva, Luis V. Gutiérrez, and Chellie Pingree.

The Promoting Human Rights by Ending Israeli Military Detention of Palestinian Children Act has been endorsed by the American Friends Service Committee, Amnesty International USA, Arab American Institute, Center for Constitutional Rights, Church World Service, Churches for Middle East Peace, Defense for Children International - Palestine, Friends Committee on National Legislation, Global Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and United Church of Christ, Jewish Voice for Peace, Mennonite Central Committee, Presbyterian Church (USA), the U.S. Campaign for Palestinian Rights, United Methodists for Kairos Response (UMKR), and United Methodist General Board of Church and Society.

H.R. 4391, Promoting Human Rights by Ending Israeli Military Detention of Palestinian Children Act

https://mccollum.house.gov/sites/mccollum.house.gov/files/documents/17.1107MCCOLL_005_xml_0.pdf

Previous Actions to Protect Palestinian Children's' Human Rights

The legislation follows letters led by Congresswoman McCollum in 2015 and 2016 to the Obama administration about the human rights of Palestinian children subjected to Israeli military detention.

In 2015, Congresswoman McCollum led 18 colleagues calling on Secretary of State John Kerry to “elevate the human rights of Palestinian children to a priority status in our bilateral relationship with the Government of Israel.” In 2016, Congresswoman McCollum led 19 colleagues urging President Barack Obama to appoint a Special Envoy for Palestinian Youth.

- Letter to Secretary John Kerry (June 2015)
https://mccollum.house.gov/sites/mccollum.house.gov/files/documents/15.0619ltr_FINAL_Sec%20Kerry_Military%20Detention%20Palestinian%20Children.pdf
- Letter to President Barack Obama (June 2016)
https://mccollum.house.gov/sites/mccollum.house.gov/files/documents/16.0620ltr_MOC_Special%20Envoy%20Palestinian%20Children_to%20Pres.%20Obama.pdf