

Key points on Representative McCollum's latest anti-Israel bill

April 15, 2021

Sadly, it's no surprise that Representative Betty McCollum, who regularly seeks to delegitimize Israel, is introducing yet another in a series of one-sided, demagogic anti-Israel bills—this one putting civilians at risk. A contrived effort to stir up hostility toward Israel, the bill refuses to acknowledge seven key facts:

- U.S. military assistance to Israel, which is spent in the U.S. and supports American workers and jobs, is designed to help Israel deter, and defend itself against, very real threats. Hezbollah has over 120,000 missiles in Lebanon—more than all our European NATO allies combined—and every single one is pointed at Israel. Hamas has fired 15,000 rockets at Israel from Gaza. The only reason thousands have not been killed is the Iron Dome system, which Israel developed with the U.S., and which is financed, in part, by U.S. assistance. This bill intends to leave Israelis vulnerable to those attacks.
- U.S. military aid cannot legally or practically be used for the rights violations McCollum alleges. Both U.S. law and the Obama-Biden Memorandum of Understanding require use for 'self- defense' and have the same transparency and other provisions that apply to all U.S. military aid. Moreover, suggesting that F-35s and Iron Dome anti-missile systems are used to deprive Palestinians of their rights is simply ludicrous. Rather, they are used to protect all Israelis from missile attacks against them.
- The bill, and the heated rhetoric surrounding it, ignores the fact that every sale of U.S. military equipment to Israel (and every other country) must be approved by the State Department. In addition, Congress already has the authority to stop any such sale, with no need for additional legislation.
- Talk of annexation, which DMFI opposed, is simply a red herring as Israel's government formally took annexation off the table as part of the Abraham Accords with the U.S. and the UAE.
- The Palestinian Authority itself arrests three and a half times more juveniles in the territories than Israel does, and is regularly accused of torture, but this one-sided bill is silent on that point.
- The McCollum bill criticizes Israel for the number of juvenile arrests it makes in the disputed territories without acknowledging that her home

state of Minnesota incarcerates 2.3 times more juveniles per capita than Israel does in the territories, while the U.S. as a whole holds 2.7 times more juveniles per capita than Israel does in the territories.

- President Biden rightly called earlier proposals that, like this one, would put additional conditions on U.S. military assistance to Israel, 'outrageous' and a 'gigantic mistake.' The President was right.