



Sarah Parady

At-Large Council Member

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Dear Members of the Colorado Democratic Congressional Delegation,

I am writing again, over one year after my first letter to you, to ask that you support and advocate for a permanent ceasefire in Israel and Gaza, fund UNRWA to stave off famine and epidemics, and block any further arms sales to Israel until it complies with international law—including the \$8 billion transfer slated to occur as soon as this week.

After more than a year, the facts convey horrors that are hard for the human mind to comprehend. Yet we must accept the truth of what has come to pass with our permission and support. Nearly [two thirds](#) of *all* of the built environment in Gaza has been damaged, putting the bombing of Gaza [among](#) the most intense civilian punishment campaigns in human history. In May, a UN agency [estimated](#) that over 10,000 bodies are decomposing under the rubble and that it may take years even to recover the dead. At least 42,000 Palestinians have been killed according to the Gaza Health Ministry, but a [Lancet study](#) estimated that deaths may have reached 186,000 given that it has become impossible even to count the dead.

One might ask whether international law, and American laws that rely on it to guide our decisions about arms transfers, could have prevented the carnage if followed. We cannot continue to deny that the answer is “yes.”

- Tens of thousands of these deaths have resulted from airstrikes conducted by dropping massive American-made bombs on targets (in plain English: residential apartment buildings) that are [known to Israel](#) to be outside the bounds of international law. Well over a thousand children have been left as amputees in the bombing. Yet we intend to transfer many more such bombs this month if Congress does not intervene.
- The Israeli military has carried out execution-style mass killings at hospitals. Doctors who have volunteered to treat the wounded have observed an [undeniable pattern](#) of children killed with gunshots to the head.
- Ninety percent of Gazans have been displaced, and Israel is [preparing a new offensive](#) in Northern Gaza in which it announces it will treat all who remain as “combatants,” greenlighting them as military targets and denying them food, water, or humanitarian aid.
- The Israeli military has [adopted a policy](#) of using Palestinians in Gaza as human shields and has regularly shot and killed unarmed Palestinians traveling in designated humanitarian corridors.
- Aid to the entire civilian population of Gaza, including food and medical supplies, has been restricted as a tool of war. As a result, those with preexisting disabilities or war injuries have died horrible deaths for lack of basic medical supplies and children are dying of starvation, hypothermia, and preventable disease.

None of this ocean of historic suffering in Gaza touches on Israeli settler violence in the West Bank [reaching an all time high](#), as [record amounts](#) of Palestinian land are seized in illegal raids, or on the [reports](#) of rape and torture of Palestinians at the Sde Teiman military base. Israel carried out what can only be defined as a terrorism campaign in Lebanon before invading, arming thousands of [pager bombs](#) that killed and blew the hands off civilians and children. Yet Congress and the Biden Administration continue to send arms.

The law is not ambiguous here. As I stated in my letter last November, both the [Arms Export Control Act](#) and Biden's [Conventional Arms Transfer Policy](#) prohibit the President from exporting weapons that aid in the escalation of a conflict or will be used in attacks intentionally directed against civilians; the President is doing it anyway. The Leahy Laws restrict the State Department and the Department of Defense from using funds for assistance to units of foreign security forces where there is credible information implicating that unit in the commission of gross violations of human rights; these departments are doing it anyway. Thousands of 2000-pound bombs continue to be [shipped](#) to Israel—astoundingly destructive weapons never before used heavily in urban areas—and dropped on residential and civilian neighborhoods in Gaza and, until the cease-fire there, in Lebanon.

International outrage continues to grow. Italy has [imposed](#) a full arms embargo on Israel. Jordan, [France](#), and Spain have all [called](#) on the international community to impose a ban on weapons deliveries to Israel. German leaders [blocked](#) weapons exports, demanding assurances the arms would not be used against civilian targets. Similarly, people of conscience within Israel, including many of my counterpart local elected officials, are protesting the takeover of their democracy by far-right extremists and warmongers and bravely speaking up for an end to the devastation of Gaza.

This destruction by Israel—fueled, funded, and protected by the United States—is profoundly changing realities here in the United States and will haunt us for generations. At a recent meeting of the Denver City Council, an eight-year-old hijabi girl from Denver spoke with a profound and simple ask: “Stop arming Israel. Stop arming Israel.” She reflected that her baby brother would be dead if he had been born in Gaza, because he was born in need of lifesaving medical care that simply does not exist, even for babies, within Gaza's devastated health infrastructure.

For over a year now, Arab, Muslim, and Palestinian residents and their supporters have been a reliable presence at public comment before our body, pleading for someone to speak up and stop the destruction inflicted on people they care for. They see a government that is at best indifferent to their suffering and at worst, contributes to their dehumanization as civilians in their countries of ancestry are treated as permissible casualties at an unthinkable scale. Moreover, several Denver residents have family members who were taken hostage and trapped in the horror of Gaza for endless months; at least one has since died in captivity as his family pleaded for a negotiated end to the conflict and return home of the hostages.

I asked you to use your position to work for a ceasefire back in November of 2023, and I ask you again: Call loudly and clearly for a permanent ceasefire. Open humanitarian aid routes into Gaza. Stop providing arms to Israel. Pull our world back from the brink of ever-escalating wars. Hold our nation accountable to the moral and legal standards that protect all of our children. History will not be ambiguous about what we have enabled in Gaza, and I am asking you on behalf of our shared constituents and the principles of human rights to do the right thing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'S. Parady', written in a cursive style.

Sarah Parady
At-Large Council Member, Denver City Council