

**From:** [Alyssa Cokinis](#)  
**To:** [Linda Nishioka](#)  
**Cc:** [CityRecorder](#); [Chris Hoy](#); [Jose Gonzalez](#); [Julie Hoy](#); [Deanna Gwyn](#); [Micki Varney](#); [Virginia Stapleton](#); [Vanessa Nordyke](#); [SALEM Manager](#)  
**Subject:** 5.28 Agenda Item - Ceasefire Resolution comment  
**Date:** Monday, May 27, 2024 11:24:45 AM

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Hello Councilor Nishioka and the rest of City Council,

I'm Alyssa, one of your Ward 2 residents. I greatly appreciate the work you do on Council. Please continue your good work at the next meeting on 5/28 by passing the Ceasefire Resolution *as written by the City of Salem Human Rights Commission*. I am also CCing Mayor Hoy, the rest of Council, the City Manager, and the City Recorder to serve as my written comment.

The alternate resolution drafted by the City Manager does not adequately encompass all of the hard work that went into the Human Rights Commission's resolution draft, which included the work of interfaith and interracial communities in Salem. It fails to mention who is committing the atrocities (i.e. the Israeli government and the Israeli Defense Forces) on Palestinians, but the HRC draft does. The HRC draft also goes into specific detail and cites sources from which it gathered the data it quotes.

As you--Council Nishioka--are an advocate for National Diaper Need Awareness Day, I hope you are aware of the unfolding diaper crisis in Gaza, where as of February 7 2024 the Strip has almost entirely run out of diapers and those that are left are being price-gouged. As an environmental advocate, you must also be aware that Israel's carbon footprint since October 7 2023 has skyrocketed to equal the annual emissions of 20 smaller nations and is only growing as it continues to use internationally banned weapons such as white phosphorous to raze Gaza to the ground. As I'm writing this on May 27 2024, the IDF massacred Palestinians in Rafah by targeting a dedicated humanitarian safe zone being serviced by the remaining UNRWA members in the Strip, where the IDF dropped 2000-ton U.S.-made bombs on refugee tents. *Tents*. The images coming out of Gaza in the wake of that massacre are horrifying, as each image over these nearly 8 months has been progressively more and more horrifying. How many more videos and images must we see of burned, amputated, starved, traumatized, dead children and adults before City Council will do the bare minimum in passing the HRC draft of the Ceasefire Resolution to pressure the Biden-Harris Administration to cut ties with Israel and stop all weapons funding?

This is genocide, and the Salem Human Rights Commission rightly defines it as so, as do many, from U.N. experts to Holocaust survivors to Bosnian Genocide survivors to many, many more; a quick Google search will back these claims up with reporting done by Reuters, the Associated Press, Al Jazeera, and more. According to Article II of the 1948 Genocide Convention, "In the present Convention, genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such: (a) Killing members of the group; (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group." **Based on this definition, Israel is committing genocide against the Palestinian people, and it started long before October 7 2023.** The evidence is glaring from their dehumanizing rhetoric toward Palestinians to how they break international law to target

hospitals, refugee camps, libraries and universities, and civilian homes.

City Council should stand for what is right and just, *especially* since the name of our city "Salem" comes from the Arabic and Hebrew words meaning "peace." If you ever wondered what you would do during the Holocaust in Europe of Jewish people, queer people, Romani people, and many other groups targeted by the Nazi Party, then look at how you are responding to the very clear evidence of what is happening in Gaza. We must not sugarcoat what is happening, which is why ***passing the City of Salem Human Rights Commission Ceasefire Resolution is paramount.***

Thank you for your time.

Alyssa, Ward 2



Virus-free [www.avast.com](http://www.avast.com)

**From:** [Brian Hines](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Testimony on Gaza resolution  
**Date:** Monday, May 27, 2024 1:00:37 PM

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Mayor Hoy and members of the City Council, I strongly urge you to pass the resolution calling for an end to hostilities in Gaza and a free flow of humanitarian aid to the people of Gaza, most of whom are not part of the Hamas terrorist group that attacked Israel on October 7, 2023.

Here's a summary of a story by Haaretz, an Israeli news organization today. It speaks to the urgent need for a ceasefire.

"The IDF confirmed that an Israeli strike overnight into Monday in the southern Gazan city of Rafah targeting senior Hamas members ignited a blaze in a nearby tent camp, leading to the death of 45 civilians. An Egyptian soldier was killed and several others were wounded in an exchange of fire with Israeli forces at the Rafah border crossing. Qatar's Foreign Ministry said Israel's strike in Rafah could hinder truce negotiations. Hamas sources told Haaretz that it would not participate in negotiations due to the Rafah deaths."

Brian Hines  
10371 Lake Drive SE, Salem

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Brian Hines  
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<https://www.facebook.com/OregonBrian>  
<https://www.facebook.com/StrangeUpSalem>  
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<https://www.facebook.com/SalemCanDoBetter>  
<https://twitter.com/oregonbrian>  
[www.hinesblog.com](http://www.hinesblog.com) (blog)  
[www.churchofthechurchless.com](http://www.churchofthechurchless.com) (other blog)  
[www.salempoliticalsnark.com](http://www.salempoliticalsnark.com) (other other blog)  
[www.brianhines.com](http://www.brianhines.com) (web site)  
<https://brianhines.journoportfolio.com> (selection of my writings)

**From:** [Cynthia B Jones](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Yes resolution for immediate ceasefire in Gaza.  
**Date:** Thursday, May 23, 2024 10:05:28 PM

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I urge the City Council to pass the resolution for immediate ceasefire in Gaza.  
Cynthia Jones  
Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Diane Chavez](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Support ceasefire resolution, for the public record  
**Date:** Monday, May 27, 2024 5:13:56 PM

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For the Public Record

To Councilor Stapleton, Mayor Chris Hoy and members of the City Council,

As a constituent in Ward 1, I fully support passage of a ceasefire resolution in Salem, Oregon.

I am horrified that my tax dollars are being used to send weapons of war to a country that is failing to abide by international law.

As a child I was fascinated by evolution, genetics, ecology and animal behavior and so I became a biologist. As a young adult I understood that nuclear war threatened not only the current generation but generations to come so I was active in the movement to prevent nuclear war.

After my children were born it became clear to me that the only way to establish peace in the long term was through education and conflict resolution skills, so I became an elementary school teacher.

Many have said that Israel has a right to defend itself. What we are seeing in Gaza goes beyond self defense. The continuing siege of Gaza is putting Israel and the US at greater risk in the long term.

No amount of weapons will provide long term security. Any defense can be penetrated eventually. Until a plan for long term coexistence is established no one is secure.

The world is watching, as Israel continues to kill, maim, and starve Palestinians using US weapons. The USA and Israel are simply on the wrong side of history and I am horrified by my country's actions. It is time to stop U.S. aid, monetary or otherwise, directed to the arming of Israel or the Israel Defense Forces for the purpose of arming, or executing offensive military actions.

Malala Yousafzai, the Pakistani student who was shot by the Taliban, once said, with a bullet you can stop a terrorist, with education you can stop terrorism.

No child is born a terrorist, but every child who has watched a friend, a sibling, a parent or other loved one, killed or maimed has the potential to become a terrorist. Israel is creating more terrorists as it kills children and parents in Gaza.

Basic human needs and dignity must be recognized.  
None of this can be accomplished until we have a ceasefire.

The concern has been raised that a resolution could increase fear in Salem's Jewish community. The Palestinian community is also experiencing fear. I too, am fearful that this conflict could spiral into a larger regional conflict and possibly a nuclear conflict. A conflict that could impact us all. The environmental and climate impacts of a larger conflict could also

impact us all.

Again war is not the answer. We need to spend our funds solving the world's problems, not creating more. If we are to survive in today's world we must develop the skills to solve conflicts in a non-violent way.

Please support this resolution and let's begin the process of building the peace we all need.

Sincerely,  
Diane Chavez

**From:** [Dawn McD](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Regarding ceasefire resolution  
**Date:** Friday, May 24, 2024 9:10:20 AM

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In response to the Salem Reporter's story concerning the upcoming city council meeting and the proposed ceasefire resolution, I would like to state, on the record, my objection to the use of the term "genocide" as a charge against Israel in their current operation to destroy the operational functionality of the terrorist organization Hamas.

What happened on October 7 in Israel is what genocide actually looks like. The use of this word as a charge against Israel is a politically motivated lie, and if the city council passes the proposed resolution with this word included, I just want to state on the record that the resolution will not represent the position of "the people of Salem, Oregon."

Any inclusion of the supposed position of "major international organizations" in pushing the lie of "genocide against Palestinians" holds no weight, because in going down this road these organizations have shown a clear anti-Israel bias and have lost all credibility on this issue.

I too want peace for the people of Gaza and for the people of Israel, and all of the other things mentioned in the proposed resolution. But I will not go along with a lie.

Dawn McDowell  
Salem resident

**From:** [Daniel Smith](#)  
**To:** [Chris Hoy](#); [citycouncil](#); [Micki Varney](#)  
**Subject:** Written Testimony for 5/28 Council Meeting  
**Date:** Monday, May 27, 2024 4:32:24 PM

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Hello Mayor Hoy, Councilor Varney, and the rest of the Council,

My name is Daniel Smith, I am a resident of Ward 8, and I am writing to share my frustrations and concerns about the shady behavior of the City Manager regarding the Human Right's Commission's draft resolution addressing the ongoing genocide in Gaza.

The HRC resolution does a wonderful job addressing all aspects of Israel's campaign of genocide across the Gaza Strip in a direct and accurate way that is not arguable. The statements are factual, and make reference to sources where needed.

The draft provided by the City Manager dilutes the language of the resolution, making it less accurate to the situation on the ground in Gaza and the brazenness of the IDF in its indiscriminate killings of tens upon tens of thousands of Palestinian civilians, many of whom being children. Just this week, the IDF murdered over 35 civilians in a designated UNRWA refugee camp. The bombing left women and children burned and disfigured, tortured to death in Israel's genocidal campaign to ethnically cleanse the entirety of the Gaza Strip. Deliberate and calculated violence on this scale demands firm language. It demands that any resolution NOT make false equivalencies (as the City Manager's draft inexplicably does) as if this is somehow a "conflict" between two equally well-equipped and powerful nation states. Further damaging is the fact that the City Manager's draft makes no mention of the fact that the United States is actively aiding and abetting this genocide, providing billions upon billions of dollars in weapons that the Israeli government uses to mass murder civilians. Calling out this complicity and demanding that it stops is absolutely vital to include in any statement on the matter.

I want now to talk directly to my representative on the Council, Councilor Varney. I know from your bio that you were at one point in your career a high school teacher. I would like you, for just a moment, to imagine what it would be like to have the school where you taught bombed. Not just once, but repeatedly, until there was nothing left. Imagine that your students were at school at that time, and were murdered in the bombing. Imagine that maybe some students survived and were forced to live in a refugee camp, as their family's home had been bombed as well. And finally, imagine that the refugee camp where they were forced to live was bombed repeatedly, burning and disfiguring your students. This is exactly what has and is happening to students, children too young to even start school, and infants in Gaza, along with their families.

It is shameful that this council would even consider a statement that refuses to call Israel's war crimes what they are: an ongoing genocide, as well as fails to demand the immediate halting of all arms transfers to Israel. Such a failure would be an insult to those murdered by the IDF, and a stain on our city's history. I implore you all, and especially Councilor Varney, to vote in favor of the proposed resolution put forward by the citizens of Salem, the volunteers constituting the Human Rights Commission who have written a very well thought out and truthful statement.

-Daniel Smith



**From:** [noreply@cityofsalem.net](mailto:noreply@cityofsalem.net) on behalf of [jill.hohnstein@gmail.com](mailto:jill.hohnstein@gmail.com)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Submission  
**Date:** Monday, May 27, 2024 4:41:51 PM  
**Attachments:** [ATT00001.bin](#)

Your Name	Jill Hohnstein
Your Email	<a href="mailto:jill.hohnstein@gmail.com">jill.hohnstein@gmail.com</a>
Your Phone	5039912433
Street	940 5th St. NE
City	Salem
State	OR
Zip	97301
Message	<p>Tonight, the city council will will consider a ceasefire resolution between the IRC and Hamas. I'm encouraging the council to adopt the wording from the HRC over the milquetoast resolution proposed by the Salem manager. Along with this, I would recommend that the City of Salem divest from supporting Israel with my tax dollars, until Netanyahu is out of office. However, I strongly encourage the council to include additional clarifying language that condemns anti-Semitism and the rise of white nationalism in our city especially, and to rewrite the resolution in order to remove anti-Jew bigotry, or anything that can be construed as such, from the language. There are Jewish leaders in Salem who would be beneficial to this process and who should have been an integral part of it from the beginning. The resolution should be forceful in its commendation of the atrocities in Gaza. At the same time it should be as forceful in its support of the Jewish community of Salem and in the condemnation of anti-Semitism. Anti-Jew hate has risen threefold since the beginning of the Israel-Hamas conflict. I believe, although I cannot prove it, white Christian nationalists have been using sly propaganda to influence anti-war activists and pro-Palestinian supporters to foment anti-Semitism and to make it more acceptable US citizens. This has to stop. There has to be an understanding that Israeli citizens and the Jewish diaspora are not the IRC, are not netanyahu, and do not deserve hate. The Salem City council has the moral obligation condemn Palestinian genocide while continuing to support our Jewish citizens and condemn white nationalist anti-Semitism. thank you</p>

This email was generated by the dynamic web forms contact us form on 5/27/2024.

**From:** [Jon Poole](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Gaza on the City Council Agenda? Unbelievable  
**Date:** Monday, May 27, 2024 8:35:42 PM

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I am sending this note to express my extreme displeasure with the City Council for wasting valuable meeting time it should be spending addressing the many problems we have here in Salem with an absolutely useless 'ceasefire' resolution for Gaza. This is a matter for Oregon's Representatives and Senators in Washington DC, not the Salem City Council. What exactly is the City Council hoping to achieve with this resolution? Whatever the result, it will be completely meaningless and make Salem look ridiculous. Please learn how prioritize your limited time more efficiently for the benefit of the Salem citizens.

Jon Poole  
West Salem

**From:** [Kris Bifulco](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#); [Virginia Stapleton](#); [Chris Hoy](#)  
**Subject:** Adopt HRC's Ceasefire Resolution  
**Date:** Monday, May 27, 2024 9:14:36 AM

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For the city council meeting on May 28.

City Council & Mayor Hoy,

I am a Ward 1 resident writing in support of the HRC's ceasefire resolution and I strongly urge Salem City Council to adopt it immediately. It is important for us to name what is happening in Gaza: a genocide, committed by Israel with the support of the United States. We must show that we stand against genocide as a city and use whatever power we have to pressure the state and the country to both call for an immediate and permanent ceasefire and end our involvement in genocide.

Though I wish this had happened earlier, there is no better time than now to adopt a ceasefire resolution. In fact, now may be more important than ever. A few months ago, the International Criminal Court found that Israel was committing genocidal acts against Palestinians- Israel intensified those genocidal acts after the ruling. Days ago, the ICJ found that Israel was not doing enough to avoid genocide in Gaza and released arrest warrants. Genocidal acts increased- there have been at least 60 confirmed bombings in so-called "safe zones" in the 48 hours after the ICJ ruling. People were burned alive, dozens died with many more injured, and through eyewitness video accounts, we've seen children beheaded. Refugee camps in the West Bank have also been subject to attack, and the violence is ever-intensifying. As I write to you, I'm reading more accounts from survivors of the latest massacre; each more heartbreaking than the last. There are no words to match the horrors that Gazans and Palestinians go through daily because of this genocide. We cannot go another day without calling for an immediate and permanent end.

Over the four years I've lived here, I've written to the council several times to remind you that Salem means "Peace." Let's live up to our name and call for peace through an immediate and permanent ceasefire, an end to the genocide we are witnessing. It is the very least we can do. I also encourage the City of Salem to also divest from any company that is contributing to the genocide- we need to use every tool available to us to bring about an end to the genocide. As part of the United States, we have great power to do so and as humans we have the moral imperative to do so. Let's create a world where this will never be tolerated and can never happen again.

Respectfully,  
Kris Bifulco

**From:** [Kim Davis](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Support for a Resolution for a Permanent Ceasefire  
**Date:** Sunday, May 26, 2024 4:48:21 PM

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I am writing to express my strong support for the adoption of the Resolution for a Permanent Ceasefire in Gaza.

I am however disturbed and concerned that the recrafted resolution from the originally recommended draft has erased the naming of Palestinians and instead names only 'civilians'. This erasure of identity, presumably for the sake of some ideal of political correctness, can easily be seen as further violence against the peoples of Palestine, whether Jewish, Christian or Muslim, and their unique cultures, institutions and human rights. I urge you to recraft this resolution to acknowledge the 'atrocities' of genocide are directed toward *Palestinian* civilians. For example: "Whereas, we support compliance with international law and the protection of the people of Palestine, and the immediate access of humanitarian aid to reduce the continued widespread human suffering; "

In addition, "considering the findings that \$2,357,111 of Salem taxpayers' dollars are estimated to annually have been used to fund Israel's atrocities on Gaza" I call on the City of Salem to immediately divest from all holdings that directly or indirectly support Israel and the Israeli and U.S. military industrial complexes. I do not want this blood on my hands. Divest now.

Thank you.  
Kim Davis  
97306

**From:** [Kelsey Murray](#)  
**To:** [citycouncil](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comment for 5/28 Meeting  
**Date:** Thursday, May 23, 2024 5:03:20 PM

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Hello-

I couldn't sign up to comment on Tuesday's City Council meeting, so I am submitting my comment through email.

I am commenting on the proposed resolution from the City Manager vs. the HRC's resolution. The proposed resolution from the City Manager does not include the word "Israel" at all and does not put a name to who is committing the "atrocities in Gaza [that] has resulted in immense human suffering and loss of life." What a waste of opportunity to call out a violent oppressor who is being funded by our government to kill tens of thousands of civilians. We cannot pass a resolution that uses vague language and is too scared to even name the aggressor. This resolution reads as if Israel and Palestine are equal offenders in this conflict and are equally to blame for the 38000+ lives lost.

The Human Rights Commission heard more than 100 residents of Salem when creating their resolution, which means that the HRC's resolution is better informed by Salem residents.

I encourage the City Council to reject the City Manager's resolution and pass the resolution from the Human Rights Commission.

Warm regards,

Kelsey Murray

**From:** [LARRY GLASSOCK](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Gaza Resolution  
**Date:** Friday, May 24, 2024 2:11:46 PM

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Dear City Council Members,

I am deeply concerned that the City of Salem is spending taxpayer money crafting a one sided resolution on such a volatile issue. What is the cost of the staff time devoted to research, analyze and present the proposed Resolution? Were other viewpoints considered?

If the City of Salem is really in a budget crisis, what is City management doing to curb costs and focus on essential city services?

I strongly suggest that the mission of the City Human Rights Commission be limited to dealing with human rights issues within the City and not causes outside our corporate limits. This resolution smacks of mission creep and fails to fully address other human rights violation in the rest of the world.

Larry Glassock  
2587 Bandon Ct. NW  
Salem, OR 97304

**From:** [Laura Sauter](#)  
**To:** [Chris Hoy](#); [Virginia Stapleton](#); [citycouncil](#)  
**Subject:** Gaza Resolution  
**Date:** Friday, May 24, 2024 4:11:10 PM

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I am writing to urge the Salem City Council to reject the "Gaza Resolution" which is pointless posturing at best, and anti-Semitic at worst.

I was asked by a friend if I would sign the petition to bring this resolution before the city council. I told her that I could not, in good conscience, sign it, because it makes no mention of the unimaginable brutality of Hamas or the fact that Hamas were the ones that broke the peace. The resolution makes no demand to return the hostages taken on Oct. 7.

Hamas is a terrorist organization which has been the defacto government of Gaza since 2007. Hamas instigated this war on October 7 with the brutal rape, murder and abduction of innocent Israelis - men, women, children, babies, and elders. This resolution blames the victims and implies that the state of Israel has no right to exist in what has, since 1000 BCE, been the Jewish peoples' historic homeland.

Passing this resolution is not only a futile exercise- because it is purely performative - but also a slap in the face to all of the Jewish citizens of Salem. How safe will our Jewish citizens feel if this resolution has the support of the city council?

We all deprecate war and long for peace. Hamas is dedicated to jihad and to the obliteration of all Jews - a true genocide. Is this what the Salem City Council wants to support?

Again I urge the Salem City Council to reject this well-meant but highly misguided resolution.

Laura Sauter  
1145 16th St. NE  
Salem, OR 97301

**From:** [M](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Re: This is final and updated from my previous draft sent  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 28, 2024 8:10:00 AM

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M <[moore.m1721@gmail.com](mailto:moore.m1721@gmail.com)> schrieb am Mo. 27. Mai 2024 um 18:40:

Monique Brunkal-Moore, ward 8

There is a genocide going on in Palestine. Palestinians have been exiled from their lands all throughout history and are continuing to have to flee their homeland. Different governments throughout history have tried to control these lands and the Palestinian people have suffered at the hands of other governments for many years, it is devastating. Jewish immigration was imposed on by British military power many years ago, which caused so much tension in Palestine. So whether you believe in the Quran, the Torah, or the Bible, people from everywhere take pride in these holy lands. It is heartbreaking to see that some of the most holiest places for all of these religions are being desecrated and tore apart from the people who call this place sacred. Is it ever right to massacre innocent civilians? The mainstream media continues to misinform people on what is really going on. The mainstream media is brainwashing this nation and the government is funding a false narrative. There are ulterior motives for this occupation and people need to open their eyes. We can't blame people that truly don't know but we strive to educate people on the real problems. We really want people to know how many innocent civilians are being slaughtered. I urge people to educate themselves further than mainstream media, as it is and always will be bias, we must know this. We have the opportunity due to the internet nowadays to further educate ourselves. Please I beg people if your curious and want a good legitimate resource to start you may look at the [un.org](http://un.org) "The Palestine question". They have very good information going back many hundreds of years showing the ongoing struggles of the Palestinian people throughout history. Palestinians have been exiled from their land for many years. It is truly heartbreaking to see this take place in our world, it will affect us all and it will continue unless we put a stop to this. The Palestinian people should be able to exercise their right of self-determination, national independence and sovereignty in Palestine. Long live Palestine and the Palestinian people who need a land to call home before it's too late. We should be striving to set an example for international peace, not more bloodshed. Also, our country is currently blocking aid and not funding any support but instead sending billions of dollars to Israel to continue this bloodshed. We urge you to write, rally and engage with your governments to plead for a stop to this endless massacre. These are innocent people and we need for aid to be approved for Palestinians.



**From:** [Marisol Espinosa](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comment for 5/28 Meeting  
**Date:** Monday, May 27, 2024 10:53:15 PM

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Hello,

My name is Marisol Espinosa. I'm a resident of Salem, Oregon within Ward 2. I'm writing to express my support for the Ceasefire Resolution to be passed. I do ask that the resolution that has been approved by the Human Right Commission be what is passed. Recently, Israel has invaded Rafah, one of the zones they had previously told people to go to because it was a "safe zone." Report within the last two days, this encampment of displaced refugees was attacked with multiple American made bombs that resulted in a great fire that took the lives of 45-50 people. The impact of the bombing was so intense, babies heads were separated from their bodies. There's currently a viral video online of a grieving father holding up the body of his headless child for the world to see the grotesque violence being taken against innocent Palestinians.

Any other resolutions that doesn't use the correct language of referring to this as a genocide is a blatant and disgusting normalization of this violence. The Human Right Commission and Salem residents have put in the work to write this resolution. I ask that the Salem City Council approve of this particular resolution.

I don't want to live in a world where it's okay to ignore a genocide and neither should you.  
Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Marisol Espinosa

**From:** [Marc Overbeck](#)  
**To:** [citycouncil](#)  
**Subject:** Comments regarding proposed resolution on Gaza under consideration tonight  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 28, 2024 8:48:57 AM

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I likely will not be able to join you at 6 pm online. However, it's important for me to share my strong feelings on this topic with you:

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PLEASE VOTE NO ON THE PROPOSED RESOLUTION, OR VOTE TO TABLE A VOTE AND CONSIDER FURTHER WORK

Dear Mayor Hoy and Members of the City Council:

I am utterly appalled by the resolution Salem's Human Rights Commission has brought for the Council's consideration. Much of what is portrayed as "fact" is not factual at all, but are reports from sources with specific, political aims of undermining Jewish peoplehood. The language is incredibly biased, using loaded terms like "Israel's atrocities on Gaza" and "collective punishment" against Palestinians, as well as "liberated Palestinian state."

Further, the resolution demonstrates an incredible lack of understanding of the history of this region and the current state of affairs.

There are so many aspects of this resolution that are not based in fact or would lead to the destruction of Israel, it requires that the resolution be re-examined. A few examples:

- The resolution identifies as a "fact" that more than \$2.3 million from Salem have been estimated to fund "Israel's atrocities on Gaza." The citation takes the reader to a page that estimates a per-taxpayer total contribution to Israel's total aid package from the US. Some of this money has in fact, been used to pay for the campaign to eradicate Hamas in Gaza. But other funds have been used solely defensive purposes, such as the Iron Dome system, and repelling attacks on Israel from Iran, Houthis in Yemen, and Hezbollah in Lebanon.
- The resolution demands that "no more US aid..." be directed to the "defense of Israel." Do members of the Council understand that—under the guise of expressing support for Palestinians, they are being called on to approve a resolution that says the US must stop all aid to Israel to be used for its defense?
- This resolution is so biased against Israel it doesn't even demand the release of hostages—merely that (both) hostages and detainees (which would include terrorist prisoners in Israeli jails) have a "right" to freedom and immediate and unconditional release.
- The resolution identifies as "fact" that Israel is conducting genocide, when they are not. People keep identifying the ICJ's ruling that Israel take all care to avoid genocide as some sort of proof that it has committed genocide. Even using the figures provided by Hamas, the number of Palestinian casualties in eight months is less than 1.5% of the total population of Gaza—including combatants, which Hamas will not distinguish from civilians. The loss of life is horrific. But I assert that no war has been conducted in history with the type of care demonstrated to save life as much as possible as in this campaign.

I mourn the loss of life, and the suffering of Gazans. However, I also am saddened and deeply dismayed that this resolution places zero responsibility on Hamas for its withholding of humanitarian aid, its use of hospitals and schools as launch sites for missiles (in violation of international law). This is what is being purported as professional work and being considered

by the City Council that “stands in solidarity” with Jewish citizens? I don’t feel supported as a Jewish resident of Salem.

Do you what would generate a cease-fire? If the leaders of Hamas, who planned and executed the October 7 attack that killed more than 1,000 Israelis, perpetrated sexual violence, and took over 200 hostages, would surrender—to either Israel or the United Nations—and take accountability for their actions. I promise you that if Hamas’ leadership surrendered and turned over hostages—living and dead—there would be a ceasefire. This resolution comes nowhere close to asking for this.

I have been consistently critical of the Netanyahu governments for their policies regarding Palestinian sovereignty for more than 10 years. If you want to bring a resolution calling for a just settlement to the Palestinian/Israel conflict, a permanent and lasting ceasefire, and criticism of Benjamin Netanyahu’s government, I would be happy to support it. But that’s not what this resolution does.

I believe that the Israeli government should enact a unilateral cease-fire. But it is not for the City of Salem Council to make a one-sided statement saying that Israel has conducted genocide, and demand a stop to all spending on the defense of Israel.

I understand that people want an end to violence. I am one of them.

I respectfully request you table this motion and make another effort at a resolution that does not include such loaded language with anti-Israel and (frankly) anti-Jewish bias.

Thank you for your consideration.

Marc Overbeck

(resident of Salem since 1984)

**From:** [Margaret Stephens](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Comment on an upcoming agenda item  
**Date:** Thursday, May 23, 2024 11:23:53 AM

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Hello:

I am one of the Salem citizens that attended and spoke at the Human Rights Commission meetings that discussed and developed the current ceasefire resolution that will be before the Council on May 28, 2024.

I completely support the ceasefire statement that the HRC has presented. It will be an honor to be a Salem resident if this ceasefire statement is adopted as written because it means that Salem condemns genocide, apartheid and murder and maiming and disabling of tens of thousands of innocents, not even to mention that hundreds and thousands of people have had their homes and businesses destroyed along with the ecocide that the Israeli military has created.

The fear that some people have said they have around a ceasefire statement does not have credibility. There is no antisemitism in the ceasefire statement; quite the opposite. We who worked on the statement stand in solidarity with all vulnerable people and are in favor of the safety of all. But this statement will not create a greater state of danger. So please adopt the statement without modification.

--Margaret Stephens  
Ward 1

**From:** [Peter Bergel](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Cc:** [citycouncil](#)  
**Subject:** Testimony of Peter Bergel on Resolution on Agenda Item 24-222  
**Date:** Sunday, May 26, 2024 10:07:32 PM

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Mr. Mayor and Members of the Salem City Council:

My name is Peter Bergel. I am a resident of Salem and would like to comment on the Council's intention of adopting a resolution regarding the crisis in Gaza.

I am very much in favor of the Council adopting such a resolution and urge the Council to do so at once.

I have examined the two resolutions that have been put forward as candidates for the Council to consider and I prefer the version written by the Human Rights Commission because its call is more detailed and nuanced.

However, I note that an important purpose of resolutions like this is **to create a consensus that has power to influence national decision makers to take action intended to end the war**. The inclusion of the word "genocide" in the HRC version of the resolution has sparked controversy among some of those who otherwise support the Council's taking this action. "Genocide" is a clearly defined legal term. Wikipedia explains it this way: "In 1948, the United Nations Genocide Convention defined genocide as any of five "acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group". These five acts were: killing members of the group, causing them serious bodily or mental harm, imposing living conditions intended to destroy the group, preventing births, and forcibly transferring children out of the group. Victims are targeted because of their real or perceived membership of a group, not randomly."

It would seem that the policy Israel is carrying out in Gaza includes several of these "acts." That would make "genocide" a legally accurate term. That said, however, if the word "genocide" is likely to derail the purpose mentioned above, or distract from it, I would argue for using different language such as "mass atrocities." Nevertheless, I hope the Council will adopt the HRC

language, with that change. We need to speak with one voice to the greatest extend possible in all honesty.

I am unable to attend Tuesday's Council meeting, but appreciate the opportunity to be heard in this way.

Thank you,

Peter Bergel  
pbergel@igc.org

**From:** [Ray Quisenberry](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** 5/28 council meeting agenda item 5 b. Gaza resolution  
**Date:** Thursday, May 23, 2024 3:40:46 PM

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To Mayor Hoy and council members

My name is Ray Quisenberry. I'm a resident of Ward 1. I want to thank the city of Salem for speaking out on the mass killing of innocent people in Gaza, and adding our voice to those of hundreds of cities in the US and around the world watching this genocide unfold in real time and in full color. The images are hard to watch, and the deliberate brutal killing of Palestinians is hard to fathom. Or I should say, it would be hard to fathom if we haven't already been seeing smaller versions of the genocide taking place on both Gaza and the West Bank for many years. Like any colonial power, Israel has to justify and ease their conscience for the taking of innocent lives by seeing the Palestinians as less human than them, and with an ugly religious justification thrown in to wash their hands of guilt. We hear such disgusting rhetoric from Israeli leaders all the time. The language of colonizers.

But of course the Palestinians are just as human, and just as deserving of dignity as anyone on the planet. The same was true for the American Indians during our own colonial project, for the natives of Australia, for the peoples of South America when Europeans came to convert and to kill, for the Nazi killing of Jews....And for the Heart of Darkness in the Congo and most of Africa. Today, these same atrocities are happening in Gaza and the West Bank. Exactly the same genocide, and for the same reasons. In the 21st Century! And we're abetting this crime with our tax dollars! MY tax dollars!

Please use the Salem HRC version of the resolution for the meeting on the 28th, and send it to our federal officials to show our complete disgust of what is happening. We need a ceasefire, a rebuilding of Gaza, compensation for the families of Gaza and for the hostages taken by both Hamas and Israel, and a state for the Palestinians so they can live in dignity for the first time in decades.

Thank you

Sent from my iPad

**From:** [Chris Hoy](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: written testimony for hearings tomorrow night  
**Date:** Monday, May 27, 2024 5:31:15 PM

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Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "rabbi tbsholom.org" <[rabbi@tbsholom.org](mailto:rabbi@tbsholom.org)>  
**Date:** May 27, 2024 at 5:06:28 PM PDT  
**To:** Virginia Stapleton <[VStapleton@cityofsalem.net](mailto:VStapleton@cityofsalem.net)>, Linda Nishioka <[LNishioka@cityofsalem.net](mailto:LNishioka@cityofsalem.net)>, Trevor Phillips <[TPhillips@cityofsalem.net](mailto:TPhillips@cityofsalem.net)>, Deanna Gwyn <[DGwyn@cityofsalem.net](mailto:DGwyn@cityofsalem.net)>, Jose Gonzalez <[JGonzalez@cityofsalem.net](mailto:JGonzalez@cityofsalem.net)>, Julie Hoy <[JHoy@cityofsalem.net](mailto:JHoy@cityofsalem.net)>, Vanessa Nordyke <[VNordyke@cityofsalem.net](mailto:VNordyke@cityofsalem.net)>, Micki Varney <[MVarney@cityofsalem.net](mailto:MVarney@cityofsalem.net)>, Chris Hoy <[CHoy@cityofsalem.net](mailto:CHoy@cityofsalem.net)>  
**Subject:** written testimony for hearings tomorrow night

Dear City Council,

I assume it is because of the holiday but we are no longer able to submit written comments to the city council regarding the meeting tomorrow night. I am submitting mine here in the hopes that you will take the time to consider them as testimony:

Dear Members of the Salem City Council,

I came out publicly in favor of a ceasefire, even if only a unilateral one in which only Israel ceased military operations, 67 days after October 7. I am a signer on the Rabbis for Ceasefire petition as well as the ceasefire statements of J Street and T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights even though I do not think their statements went far enough in condemning Israeli violations of international law. I am deeply concerned that what is happening in Gaza is genocide, even though I recognize that it cannot be proven until it is brought before international courts of law. For 30 years, I have invested my time and money in supporting a just and sustainable peace in the Middle-East.

This said, I believe that the HRC members are community partners and are, despite everything, community partners who are devoted to coalition building and solidarity in the future.



I have been distraught since the first Human Rights Commission meeting regarding the drafting of a proclamation or resolution on the horrific situation in Gaza, the West Bank, and Israel. From the moment the public hearings began, it was clear that leadership of the HRC had an agenda that primarily aligned with those who came insisting on a ceasefire resolution that contained the accusation of genocide. Moreover, those present, and members of the HRC, expressed bias against not only Israel and Zionism but against Jews in general. When I raised this concern, those present and members of the HRC denied the concern and argued against me while neither addressing my specific concern or pausing to ask why I felt I was experiencing anti-Jewish bias. The results of the process, the draft resolution of the HRC, thus contain inherent bias and even bigotry. The HRC failed to mitigate nasty and bigoted behavior in those present at the HRC meetings. A formal complaint to this end is being submitted by others to the city with documentation from the videos and written testimony from the meetings. In short, the process has been awful. The product it yielded is not a reflection of the imperative of the HRC, as stated in their own document. In fact, the process, and the document itself, has engendered a lot of distrust, resentment, and fear in the city of Salem.

Throughout this period, the *only* individuals who have shown up to express concern for Jews in Salem, Jews throughout the world and in Israel, has been Jews themselves. The expressions of concern made in the document itself are insufficient since no one has adequately modeled this concern. The words sound utterly hollow. To my knowledge, the HRC did not incorporate any of the specific additions nor recommended best practices by Jewish members of the City of Salem, which may have made this resolution less disconcerting. But, bottom line, the process has been atrocious and the HRC failed to demonstrate the very mission it is bound by.

The second resolution being proposed is, to my mind, insufficient because it does not express the legitimate concerns of other citizens of our city, especially Palestinian Americans. Namely, it does not address the primary concern that what is happening in Gaza may constitute genocide. This is an extremely contentious issue and, as I understand it from exchanges with scholars of genocide and hours and hours of reading about it, cannot be determined conclusively until international law courts rule on the case. And even then, the results may not be conclusive. But from the perspective of Palestinians, what is happening in Gaza is the decimation of both the people and the culture of Gaza and an extension of the ongoing experience

of what many feel is a cultural genocide over the past 80 years. For Palestinians of Salem, the experience of having people in their own city denying what they are experiencing as Palestinians is excruciating. This is regardless of the technical aspect of whether or not the attack on Gaza does or does not legally constitute genocide.

While I favor the resolution put forth by the City Manager and feel it is a good "compromise," it saddens me greatly. It worries me that it lacks the strength of compassion for Palestinians, and others, in our city that the HRC resolution does.

Because the results and the process are deeply flawed, and because, as far as I can determine, there is no real urgency about passing a City Council Resolution, my recommendation is not to pass either resolution and to send the process back to the HRC to come forward with a statement that upholds the imperative of the HRC as expressed in their own documents and that reflects a collaborative effort by all those who feel invested in the outcome. Barring this, I urge you to support the resolution put forward by the City Manager and not the HRC.

While many who have spoken have criticized the slow pace of this process, citing the urgency for Gazans, it has also been said - to no apparent disagreement - that this resolution will have no effect on the situation in Gaza in the near future. So it is my understanding that there is a false sense of urgency in passing a resolution. Moreover, passing the HRC resolution - because the process was so poor and biased - due to a false sense of urgency, fails to take into account neither the precedent being set nor the effect of the resolution on our City in the future.

Regarding the precedent, this resolution was pushed forward by a small group of activists who have engaged in anti-Jewish hatred, dogmatic and extremely biased positions, and ugly behavior that included heckling, harrassment, distrust, disrespect, and intolerance. Are we to understand now that if we are belligerent and disrespectful for enough time, we can push the city council to pass resolutions on many other international situations that do not immediately affect the community of Salem? Can anyone now press the city to pass resolutions on a host of other injustices worldwide based on the argument that American tax dollars fund the same, even while Salem itself is facing a number of crises and our volunteer City Council members do not even have the time to respond to phone calls and emails from concerned citizens? And will the accusation of genocide spill over into attacks on the Jewish community?

The position all of this has put me in as a Jew is profoundly distressing. On one hand, I am deeply concerned for the safety of the Jewish community of Salem as well as Jews all over the world. And on the other, I am deeply pained over the tens of thousands of deaths as well as the trauma inflicted on all survivors in Gaza, the West Bank and Israel. I desperately want a ceasefire. And yet, I am placed in a position where I feel I must either support poor resolutions that do not adequately reflect the concerns of Salemites and which came out of a terribly managed and biased processes or ask that neither resolution be accepted. Either way, I feel I have been backed into a corner by the activists advocating for a ceasefire resolution, the HRC, and the City Council. The reality is that in every direction, I see danger for the integrity and safety of Salem.

Temple Beth Sholom  
1274 Cunningham Lane SE  
Salem, OR 97302  
503-362-5004

*\* Please note that I am unavailable by phone or email on Tuesdays, Saturdays (Shabbat), and Jewish holidays. If there is an urgent need, please contact our emergency number 503-383-5436*

**From:** [Zohra Campbell](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Gaza resolution  
**Date:** Friday, May 24, 2024 4:48:09 PM

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To Whom It May Concern,

As the City of Salem considers taking a stand, I wish to offer the following statement:

Any resolution meant to address this issue is only fair if it includes language that denounces and condemns the actions by Hamas- not only on October 7 by slaughtering innocent citizens-but even more importantly and destructively against its own people-the Palestinians, the people it is supposed to be protecting, governing, and defending. The tactics by Hamas have consistently put the Palestinian people in harm's way, used them as human shields, and silenced their voices. They steal supplies and food for their own, increasing the Palestinian's suffering. All while "poking the bear"- shooting missiles indiscriminately at Israeli citizens and cities, provoking violence and war.

While Israel has sought to defend itself against this terror, their actions have disproportionately hurt, destroyed, and inflicted hardships on innocents.

The war must stop. But the hostages must be returned and Hamas must be held accountable.

Any resolution that does not reflect this is misguided and does not truly represent the reality of the situation.

I implore the City Council members and citizens to consider this unless the intent is truly anti-Israel, anti-Semitic, and biased. I caution considering the far reaching implications of your resolution.

Sincerely,

Zohra Campbell

Salem citizen