U.S. Campaign for Palestinian Rights

**[01 May](https://uscpr.org/hr2407pr)**[Organizations That Support Palestinian Rights Welcome Introduction of Legislation That Would End U.S. Funding for Israeli Military Detention and Abuse of Palestinian Children](https://uscpr.org/hr2407pr)

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WASHINGTON, DC, May 1, 2019—Today, advocates for Palestinian rights welcomed the reintroduction of historic legislation by Rep. Betty McCollum (D-MN) prohibiting funding for the Israeli military detention and mistreatment of Palestinian children. H.R. 2407, the Promoting Human Rights for Palestinian Children Living Under Israeli Military Occupation Act, further solidifies growing progressive consensus demanding real accountability for Israel’s ongoing oppression of Palestinians and the violation of their rights.

According to [**Defense for Children International-Palestine**](https://www.dci-palestine.org/), 500-700 Palestinian children are detained and prosecuted in Israel’s military detention system each year. These children, most of them between the ages of 12 and 17, but some as young as nine years old, are subjected to “widespread, systematic, and institutionalized” ill-treatment, including physical violence, solitary confinement, and threats according to a [**2013 report from UNICEF**](https://www.unicef.org/oPt/UNICEF_oPt_Children_in_Israeli_Military_Detention_Observations_and_Recommendations_-_6_March_2013.pdf).

H.R. 2407 would amend a provision of the Foreign Assistance Act known as the “Leahy Law” to prohibit funding for the military detention of children in any country, including Israel.” The bill also itemizes specific, widespread practices the Israeli military has inflicted on Palestinian children, including “torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment,” “physical violence,” “solitary confinement,” and “confessions obtained by force or coercion,” among others. Additionally, the bill authorizes the appropriation of funds to monitor human rights abuses and provide physical, psychological, and emotional health support and rehabilitation to Palestinian child victims of Israeli military detention.

In her [**press release**](https://mccollum.house.gov/media/press-releases/mccollum-introduces-promoting-human-rights-palestinian-children-living-under), Rep. McCollum stated unequivocally that “Israel’s system of military juvenile detention is state-sponsored child abuse designed to intimidate and terrorize Palestinian children and their families. It must be condemned, but it is equally outrageous that U.S. tax dollars in the form of military aid to Israel are permitted to sustain what is clearly a gross human rights violation against children.”

Yousef Munayyer, executive director of the [**US Campaign for Palestinian Rights**](http://uscpr.org/), welcomed the reintroduction: “Progressive values demand freedom, justice, and equality for all people and across all issues, and we commend Rep. McCollum for putting hers into practice. For too long, Congress has given Israel a blank check even as it has entrenched its brutal military occupation and escalated human rights abuses against the Palestinian people. H.R. 2407 is an important step toward demanding accountability and sending a stern message that the American people do not want their tax dollars being used to deprive Palestinian children of their rights and childhoods.”

Rabbi Alissa Wise, Deputy Director, [**Jewish Voice for Peace**](https://jewishvoiceforpeace.org/) stated: “Palestinian children – like all children – should be protected and treasured. It is unconscionable that U.S. military aid to Israel is enabling the Israeli military’s systematic abuse of Palestinian children; beatings, solitary confinement, and arbitrary detention are no way to treat a child. By prohibiting U.S. aid from funding these human rights violations, Rep. McCollum’s legislation recognizes that change will only happen when Congress demands real accountability.”

Dr. Osama Abuirshaid, executive director of American Muslims of Palestine, stated: “Israel has been violating international laws and human rights for decades now, and has been allowed to do so with total impunity. We welcome H.R. 2407 as a critical step in holding Israel accountable for its crimes against children. If we can have a debate here in the U.S. over the ill treatment of immigrants on our southern border and Trump’s inhumane family separation policy then we should be able to have the same debate in relation to Israel’s abuses of Palestinian children and families, also funded by our tax dollars.”

This legislation comes at a time when progressives are increasingly demanding a reckoning over the role U.S. military aid to Israel plays in violations of Palestinian rights. The legislation specifically asserts that the more than $3.8 billion in annual funds to Israel enable mistreatment of children, and includes detailed accounts of Israel’s systemic mistreatment of Palestinian children from a wide range of international organizations.

As national campaign partners with the [**No Way To Treat a Child Campaign**](https://nwttac.dci-palestine.org/), led by Defense of Children-International and American Friends Service Committee, the US Campaign for Palestinian Rights, American Muslims for Palestine, and Jewish Voice for Peace will mobilize their affiliate organizations and thousands of members across the country to urge members of Congress to cosponsor this legislation and stand in support of Palestinian rights.