

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 171

Expressing the sense of Congress regarding restoring United States bilateral assistance to the West Bank and Gaza.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 11, 2019

Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Mr. COONS, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of Congress regarding restoring United States bilateral assistance to the West Bank and Gaza.

Whereas the dire health and economic conditions facing the Palestinian people has created a humanitarian crisis in the West Bank and Gaza. The United States has long been a leader in helping address the plight of innocent civilians;

Whereas these fragile conditions could contribute to circumstances that would undermine Israel's security and stability in the region;

Whereas the Palestinian Authority's interpretation of the Anti-Terrorism Clarification Act (Public Law 115–253), which sought to help United States victims of terrorism abroad, led the Palestinian Authority to reject all forms

of United States assistance, meaning that funding for organizations implementing humanitarian aid programs that provide critical services, such as health care and sanitation to civilians, cannot be carried out; and

Whereas the Department of State has failed to obligate any of the funds Congress appropriated in fiscal year 2017 and fiscal year 2018, \$302,750,000 and \$257,500,000, respectively, for bilateral assistance to the West Bank and Gaza: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

2 (1) the Executive branch should expend before
3 the end of fiscal year 2019 all bilateral assistance to
4 the West Bank and Gaza that Congress appro-
5 priated for such assistance in fiscal year 2018, in-
6 cluding—

7 (A) \$196,500,000 for the Economic Sup-
8 port Fund;

9 (B) \$60,000,000 for International Nar-
10 cotics Control and Law Enforcement; and

11 (C) \$1,000,000 for Nonproliferation, Anti-
12 Terrorism, Demining and Related Programs;

13 (2) programs and activities funded by the Eco-
14 nomic Support Fund as described above are focused
15 primarily on providing food, essential health services,
16 and other humanitarian goods and services, and
17 these expenditures must be consistent with the re-
18 strictions and exceptions provided in the Taylor

1 Force Act (title X of division S of Public Law 115–
2 141); and

3 (3) legislation should be enacted to clarify that
4 programs and activities funded through the Eco-
5 nomic Support Fund and that are consistent with
6 the Taylor Force Act (title X of division S of Public
7 Law 115–141) may not be used as a basis to assert
8 jurisdiction over the Palestinian Authority pursuant
9 to the Anti-Terrorism Clarification Act.

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