

Sarah McKinnon, Precinct 20

Dear Town Meeting Members,

Please find below 44 letters submitted to the Select Board in support of STM Ceasefire Resolution. There are many more as well.

Thank you,
Sarah McKinnon
TMM Pct 20

Dear Mr. DeCoursey,

I write as both a resident of and clergy within the Town of Arlington. As a person of faith, I am heartened when I see our town do our part to make this world a more peaceful, more just place for all people. As the conflict in Palestine and Israel continues, it is important that the global community speak out. This is especially true since the United States has funded and supplied Israel's weapons. Hostages need to come home and the violence against the Palestinian people needs to end. This is not a Christian issue nor a Jewish or Muslim issue, this is a concern of our common humanity. I ask that you share this sentiment with the Selectboard and that we pass the Ceasefire Resolution. Please attach this to the agenda as public comment. In gratitude,
Rev. Erica First Parish Unitarian Universalist

Arlington Select Board,

I am writing to support the ceasefire resolution proposed for Article 5 of the Special Town Meeting. I am writing to you in two capacities: first, as a Jewish citizen of Arlington and second, as a Town Meeting Member from Precinct 1.

The Jewish population is far from a monolith on the question of ceasefire. I support this resolution not in spite of my Judaism but because of it. We know that the situation in Gaza grows more dire by the day. As of this writing, Israeli airstrikes have killed more than 34,000 Palestinians and injured more than 77,000. About 15,000 of the dead are children; that's a rate of more than 70 children per day. These numbers do not include the thousands that are missing and presumed dead under the rubble. And despite pleas from the hostage families to negotiate, Netanyahu has expanded the war effort, putting the lives of the remaining hostages at risk.

Amid the ongoing bombardment, a risk of famine continues to mount. According to the latest IPC report, 100% of the Gazan population is facing "high levels of acute food insecurity" – up from 90% in the prior report. About half the population is facing a "catastrophic" level of insecurity, with famine imminent in northern Gaza. No area or country has ever faced such a high level of food insecurity, since the IPC initiative began keeping records.

The combination of displacement and starvation has created a “perfect storm” for deadly diseases, according to UNICEF. The World Health Organization concurs that Gaza is experiencing “soaring rates of infectious diseases.” If the war continues, the deaths from starvation and disease will likely exceed those killed by aerial bombardment. In short, the war must end.

Now I understand that you may each be personally convinced of the rationale for a ceasefire, but at the same time believe it's not an issue in which Town Meeting ought to get involved. As a Town Meeting Member, I myself am normally quite skeptical of resolutions. After all, resolutions are non-binding, usually quickly forgotten, and often serve only to make an already-too-long Town Meeting only longer. Nevertheless, I believe this resolution deserves attention by Town Meeting. There are reasons others will probably focus on, such as the \$700,000 that Arlington taxpayers spend each year on Israeli weapons, or the personal stories of the war's impact on vulnerable populations in Arlington. While these are important considerations, they are not my primary rationale.

My primary reason why a resolution is warranted in this case is that our federal delegation in Arlington is not representing our view on this issue. If we were to pass a resolution in favor of, say, abortion rights, it might be a nice gesture, but it would also be preaching to the choir, as our entire state and federal delegation are in alignment with us on that issue. The question of a ceasefire in Israel/Gaza is special in this respect, because it's a major issue on which our federal delegation is not reflecting the majority view of our town. Such instances are relatively uncommon, but when they do occur, it's the perfect time to use the power of a resolution, so that the town may speak as one voice in the hope that our representatives will listen.

Thank you,
Greg Dennis Town Meeting Member, Precinct 1

My name is Melanie Brown, and I am a Town Meeting Member for Precinct 19. Until last fall, I was also a member of the Arlington Human Rights Commission, where I served for 4 years, before stepping down for family reasons. I mention this to demonstrate my abiding commitment to human rights and issues of Justice.

While I am not currently an adherent of any main religion, I was raised as both a Christian and a Jew, including a short stint in Hebrew School, until I reached the age where my mother informed me that I had to figure the rest out for myself. Indeed, both my husband and I are descended from Jews, on our mothers' mothers side, he an Ashkenazi, and myself a Sephardi. My stepson, who is a student at Emerson College, is a practicing Jew. My Sephardi ancestors well understood what Persecution is, having been chased first from Spain to England, then from England to Holland, and finally from Holland to Sweden.

In 1943, the Swedish government ordered my Jewish grandmother behind German lines as part

of the nurse's brigade. At the same moment, that same government evacuated and hid some 8,000 Danish Jews from German forces set to invade Denmark. The decision to send nurses to the German front is likely part of what kept Germany from also invading Sweden. Still, that decision left 3 little half Jewish girls without their mother for well over a year. My mother, a toddler at the time, suffered nightmares wherein she dreamt the Germans had discovered her mother was a Jew and put her in a gas chamber. These nightmares plagued my mother for years, even well after my grandmother had died of cancer. And so my understanding of Persecution was passed down to me as a generational trauma.

My father's people were not without lessons of their own to teach, as I am but the 4th generation freeborn African American in my family's history. However many generations of enslaved there may have been, are lost in some pre-civil war accounting ledger. My paternal grandmother fled to the North to escape the Great Depression as it arrived in a Jim Crow South, and so the understanding of Oppression was passed down to me as another generational trauma, to inform my own firsthand experiences.

Generational trauma is a hell of a thing. It can make you so paranoid, that you perceive threats that never were, or react to what does land, with actions 100 times worse than were received. Generational trauma is what leads a child who is abused, to become an abuser of children; or someone to abuse their partner, because that was how they saw one parent treat the other. But it can also make it easier for you to recognize the trauma in others, to decide never to raise your hand in anger to someone you love, to respond empathetically to strangers, or to be able to stand back and tell a friend when their actions are out of line.

My experiences with Persecution and Oppression has taught me to understand that more than one thing may be true at the same time:

- That one may be both pro-Israel and pro-Palestine.
- That both peoples have the right to exist, to live lives free from oppression and persecution, and the fear that entails.
- That the Palestinian people are no more Hamas, than the people of Israel are their government.
- That the Jews of the world are not united in the belief that Israel is justified in its actions towards Palestine, either now or before.
- That Israel is the architect of much of its own present grief.
- That while Hamas' actions were driven by trauma, they are still inexcusable. ● That Jews who speak out in support of Palestine are called traitors to their faces, fired from their jobs and expelled from university, just for so daring.
- That, while Hamas was wrong to abduct and murder 1,200 Israeli citizens, Israel was out of line in slaughtering 30 Palestinians for every Israeli life lost.

- That the actions taken by both sides are not the acts of rational, well-considered minds.
- That any form of mass murder is not Justice, it is Vengeance.
- And, that no one may claim the moral high ground while enacting Revenge.

I also understand that if Israel continues down this path toward genocide, they won't do so in a vacuum. Iran has already demonstrated their willingness to engage, and if Iran engages, Iraq and Syria will not be far behind. When that happens, America will have no choice but to engage as well, although not for the reasons you might believe.

What I want from each of you is that, if you will not consider the merits of demanding a ceasefire for humanitarian reasons alone, in the face of tens of thousands of lives already lost, and still to be lost, then do it for the economic ones.

Now, this is not 1973; America has diversified its oil reliance enough that an OPEC embargo, while painful, probably won't stall our economy the way it did back then. What would, however, is the carpet bombing of Israel. Or more specifically, the Silicon Wadi, where nearly every single big tech company in America has moved most, if not all, of their Research and Development.

We are not simply talking about software, but hardware and systems, including cellular components, servers, chips, storage, network cards and switches. Indeed, NVIDIA's latest GPU chip but one, was designed and manufactured entirely in Israel. And while the designs for these systems are likely well stored somewhere in the cloud, and with backups upon backups, it is the loss of human skill and knowledge, and the concomitant slowing of supply chain, that will force America's hand in the Middle East.

Consider this: in America there is not one single University or Hospital, Biotech or Pharmaceutical company, not one Bank, nor scientific laboratory researching everything from Climate Change to Cancer, from NASA to NOAA, Woods Hole to Arlington's own school system, who's entire data and network infrastructure is not built on equipment designed and/or manufactured, in whole or in part, in Israel. And many of those Israeli plants employ Palestinian workers.

Here are but a few names, to help you understand the scope of the crisis we're facing:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NVIDIA • Intel • Hewlett Packard • Phillips • Motorola • Siemens • Cisco • Mellanox • Oracle • IBM • VAST Data • Qualcomm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BMC • SAP • EMC • VMWare • GE Healthcare • Red Hat • Microsoft • Apple • Amazon • Google • And yes, even Facebook
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In short, the economic destabilization and the loss of skill and knowledge would be tantamount to carpet bombing the entire Bay Area. If Israel will not change track on their own, then America must put pressure on them to do so, or we will go down with them, at a time when we are already experiencing unprecedented food and housing insecurity, and an ever-worsening inflation.

It is precisely because of our deep technological reliance on Israel that the American government hesitates to act, just as it hesitated during World War II. And now, just as then, America's early intervention could stand to save tens of thousands of lives. It is only through the voice of her citizens, that the American government can be convinced to intervene sooner rather than later. *Which is why we need you, the members of Arlington's Selectboard, to support your neighbors' cry for a ceasefire, and approve sending this Resolution to Town Meeting.* That we may join the 7 other cities in Massachusetts, and the hundreds more across the nation, who have already done so, and in hope to influence even more to join us.

As my mother instructed, I did eventually figure out the rest of it for myself, learning much about the world's religions, and in doing so, discovered that they all share the same basic tenet, the same core belief. From Wiccanism to Christianity, Islam to Judaism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Jainism and Sikhism, all faiths share this one fundamental commandment. I beg the Selectboard to pardon my language as I write this, but no other words, no matter how proper, can express this in the simplest yet most significant way.

The fundamental commandment of every religion is this: Don't be a dick.
Everything else is just details.

Thank you for your time.
Melanie Brown, TMM P19

Dear Members of the Select Board:

As Jewish women whose families were largely wiped out in the Holocaust and are in favor of a resolution calling for a ceasefire in Gaza and the West Bank followed by negotiations, we are writing to ask that you allow Town Meeting to debate and decide whether or not to pass a resolution on the subject. Thanks initially to the activism of Arlington for Palestine, there is a growing awareness among town residents concerning the plight of the Palestinians, coupled with interest in how we, as engaged citizens, can help bring about an end to hostilities and plant a seed for peace in the Middle East. In that context, a public statement such as we are requesting might be a fitting and helpful gesture.

Speaking for ourselves, we do not think that continued violence against the population of Gaza and the West Bank has done, or can do, anything but exacerbate longstanding tensions between Israelis and Palestinians. Granted that the horrific October 7 attack and taking of hostages by Hamas is what provoked the outburst of hatred and hostility we are now witnessing, the fact that the Israeli Defense Forces have retaliated against a small group of terrorists by murdering thousands and thousands of innocent civilians (many of them women and children), while driving millions of others--penniless and starving—from the rubble of their bombed-out homes, is turning what might otherwise be seen as a humanly understandable reprisal into what increasingly, is being perceived as a genocidal war, aimed at eradicating an entire people.

Thank you for considering our request.

Louise Popkin, Precinct 16

Robin L Bergman, Town Meeting Member, Precinct 12

Dear Members of the Arlington Select Board,

We are writing as residents of the town of Arlington to request that you vote in support of the ceasefire resolution/proclamation that is being brought before the Select Board this evening.

As a family with deep roots in the Middle East, and Palestine in particular, we are asking for your support because this resolution calls for an end to the bombing of Gaza (in the context of an immediate bilateral ceasefire) while acknowledging the pain and suffering experienced by those with family in the region. It is hard to convey the kind of pain one feels when watching the ongoing death, displacement, and starvation of tens of thousands of people who share the

language and culture of your own family members. The experience of going about regular workday activities, parenting duties, and other mundane tasks, as your people face daily massacres, is an experience of extreme cognitive dissonance and mental anguish that cannot be described.

We no longer live in a disconnected world where we have the privilege of disassociating from global events. Rather, our interconnectivity and our role as taxpayers and voting members of a global superpower call for us to acknowledge our role on the world stage. In the case of the current situation in Gaza, our nation is not just a passive observer, but an **active facilitator** of the ongoing campaign of violence against the Palestinian people. We do this in the form of unconditional military aid for Israel despite ongoing human rights violations. This moment calls for us to speak out against this grave injustice while seeking pathways to peace that interrupt the cycle of violence and facilitate diplomatic solutions, while building bridges locally to help ensure a less dangerous world for our children and grandchildren.

It is time for Arlington to join neighboring communities like Somerville, Medford, Melrose, and Cambridge, and call for a ceasefire in Gaza and Israel while recognizing the pain and suffering being experienced here at home. This resolution is one of the best ways we can think of to acknowledge the impact of global events, improve tolerance and understanding, and initiate a dialogue across cultures and experiences. Your vote of yes on this resolution will help put Arlington on the right side of history.

Yours Sincerely,
Kerry and Sammy Abukhalaf
Arlington, MA

Additional note: we hope you will consider supporting this resolution, in light of the recent endorsement by the Arlington Human Rights Commission, which acknowledged that this resolution speaks to our common humanity.

Thank you!!

Dear Members of the Select Board,

My name is Christina Ahmad. I am originally from Lowell, MA and have resided in Arlington with my husband and young children for 10 years. I'm writing to convey the significance of an Arlington ceasefire resolution from the perspective of a proud American, parent, and Christian.

Although my family is American of Palestinian descent through my husband, the reason I believe it is worthwhile for Arlington to issue a ceasefire resolution is to pressure our elected officials to quit slow walking our nation, the United States of America, into a world war. The consequences of escalating the war on Gaza will be long-lasting for Americans who will have had their economic, military, and political might stolen by foreign interests and powerful elites. Furthermore, it is American sons and daughters who will be on the front lines giving their lives in a war that will destroy America's credibility and open our nation to retaliatory attacks. American troops are already in harm's way as they sit in bases across the Middle East, including in the country of Jordan where I have observed the massive U.S. military presence myself.

My concern is also for Gazans, so many of them children, who are suffering catastrophic losses and are in imminent danger to life and limb. As a parent, it is abhorrent to me that American wealth and influence is being used to punish Palestinians who have committed no crime against the United States of America. An estimated 14,000 children have been killed. About 1,000 have had limbs amputated as the result of airstrikes. Scores more have been badly maimed. The deaths include 7 children at St. Porphyrios Greek Orthodox Church who were crushed under a building on the church grounds with 11 members of their family in a confirmed Israeli airstrike after the IDF learned the church was giving shelter to Muslims neighbors in addition to parishioners.

I wish everyone had the opportunity to spend time with Palestinian families, as I have, to see how very committed and gentle the fathers are to their children. Palestinian men in Gaza are presumed to be terrorists by virtue of their age and gender and are marked for execution. The loss of the father is catastrophic for families. So, too, is the death of the mothers, many of them pregnant. Breastfeeding women have been killed in airstrikes, the babies losing their mother and her milk. I have seen children screaming for their dead mothers to come back. The trauma of those losses will haunt Palestinian children and the world order for decades to come.

At Holy Family Catholic Church, a mother and daughter were murdered by Israeli snipers as they crossed the church compound's courtyard on their way to the bathroom. Another woman sheltering at the Catholic church was shot in the leg by an Israeli sniper. Members of the church who tried to help her were shot at as well. She bled to death on the road overnight.

It is not lost on me, a Greek Orthodox Christian resident of Arlington, that the political class of the United States watches as Christians disappear from the Holy Land. It is chilling that the justification for not saving our Christian brethren is that the existence of Palestinians threatens the safety of Jewish people, or that our Jewish neighbors feel threatened by assertions that the people of Gaza deserve life and aid.

Please allow the residents of Arlington to put on record for our elected representatives the urgent need to preserve life and liberty with a ceasefire in Gaza. The wellbeing of our town and nation depends on it.

Thank you,

Christina Ahmad Park Circle, Arlington MA

Dear Members of the Arlington Select Board -

My name is Hina Jolin, I am a long-time Muslim resident of Arlington, a town I chose to raise my family because of its progressive, diverse, and inclusive nature. I am writing to you today to implore the Select Board to adopt a proclamation in favor of an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Palestine, the release of all hostages, including those held illegally in Israeli prisons, the immediate provision of lifesaving humanitarian aid to Palestinians, and a diplomatic resolution for Palestinians and Israelis.

Arlington has a growing Muslim community, with a highly diverse and educated group of residents. We have participated and contributed to the cultural and economic strength of this town; yet we are regularly overlooked, or worse, subjected to acts of hate. Any criticism of Israel's actions or even calls for a ceasefire are being met with baseless accusations of antisemitism. Our students are being harassed and discriminated against at all levels and the Muslim workforce is being silenced for voicing our fears. Support from our elected officials has never been more essential. So, I ask you why has the Select Board and the Town of Arlington remained silent on the matters of human life as we watch an active genocide unfold before our eyes? I am asking you to reflect on the immense power you have to change course at this very moment. You have the extraordinary privilege to influence cities and towns across the Commonwealth and lead by example.

We all witnessed the horror of October 7th, and it is right to condemn that violence. However, in this moment, 7 months later, silence equates to unconditional support for Israel's disproportionate and indiscriminate response by elected officials across the US political spectrum, which has resulted in our nation's tacit responsibility for the genocide happen right now. I truly believe the deafening silence by our elected officials and the dehumanization of the Muslim world has allowed Israel to attack Palestinian land with impunity.

In addition to appeals to the Select Board for a vote in favor for this proclamation, the residents of this town and across the Commonwealth have called upon Congress and the Biden Administration to:

1. Demand for an immediate and permanent ceasefire
2. Rush humanitarian aid and work to reinstate UNWRA
3. Stop the funding of military aid to Israel
4. Hold the Israeli government accountable to international law

Personally, I am ashamed to live in a town which has not yet taken the steps to address the ongoing genocide of the Palestinian people, which truly is the bare minimum at this point in our history. I am filled with so much anger when I wake up every morning to an increasing number of murders. I am enraged that more people have not acknowledged or are unwilling to acknowledge, the brutal slayings by the Israeli Occupying Forces of over 33,000 Palestinians, 13,000 of which are children, not to mention the thousands that remain missing under the rubble

and the hundreds of thousands who have been slaughtered over the last 75 years. This death toll will continue to rise at an alarming rate as countless others are forcibly starved and denied essential humanitarian aid.

It is our responsibility as people of conscience to demand an end to the relentless violence that has been erasing an entire people for decades. Knowing that this genocide would not have been possible without the unwavering support from the United States government and knowing that our own tax dollars continue to fund the weapons used against innocent civilians, is not only a difficult reality to live with but an incredibly shameful one to bare for anyone who has been paying attention.

The violence in Gaza has been felt deeply and viscerally in Arlington. People of Palestinian descent are mourning the loss of their loved ones in Gaza on a daily basis. They live in a constant state of distress about the future of those who remain, forced to live under an inhumane occupation. However, one does not need to be of Palestinian descent to bear witness to, yet another US backed slaughter against humanity.

I urge you to read through every message about this proclamation and listen to every testimony from the residents of this town. And I urge you to do what many cities and towns across the Commonwealth, including Somerville, Cambridge, Medford, Melrose, East Hampton, Greenfield, Northampton, and Amherst have already done, and pass this ceasefire resolution.

The time is long overdue for the Town of Arlington to join in this public declaration for an immediate and permanent ceasefire.

In Solidarity,

Hina Jolin

Dear Select Board members,

I'm writing as a Palestinian-American resident of Arlington, MA to **urge you to vote yes for Warrant Article 5: Arlington Resolution for a Ceasefire Proclamation**, which calls for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Palestine and Israel, the release of all hostages, the immediate provision of lifesaving aid, and a diplomatic resolution to the violence.

This resolution matters to me because it takes a stand for peace in the face of

extraordinary suffering. As of the date of this letter, more than 34,000 Palestinians have been killed and more than 1.9 million of the 2.2 million people in Gaza have been displaced due to ongoing military campaigns by Israel. Gazans aren't the only ones impacted. In fact, more than 1,200 Israelis have been killed and more than 135,000 displaced. And the cycle of violence is in danger of becoming a regional, if not global conflict.

As a resident of the town of Arlington, I believe it is important for our town to make a public call for a ceasefire. Here are some reasons why:

- **Our tax dollars help pay for the weapons used against Palestinians** • **Many residents of Arlington are directly impacted by the violence**, as well as local and national incidents of Islamophobia, antisemitism, and anti-Palestinian hate, as documented in four listening sessions hosted by the Arlington Human Rights Commission (AHRC). This resolution expresses support for impacted community members.
- **Arlington has previously passed proclamations** and resolutions on issues related to our community values. These issues often extend beyond the borders of our town. • **The AHRC has recognized that this resolution centers our common humanity** rather than placing blame or taking sides, and has given their endorsement for that reason.
- By passing this resolution, we can **encourage our elected officials** at the state and federal level to **pursue diplomacy on the road to peace**.

Massachusetts cities such as Somerville, Cambridge, Medford, Melrose, Greenfield, Northampton, Easthampton, and Amherst have already passed ceasefire resolutions, and the town of Wellfleet is in progress. As of March 26th, the United Nations passed one as well. The time is long overdue for the Town of Arlington to join other people of conscience and publicly call for an immediate and permanent ceasefire.

I thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Hytham Bakir

Hello Select Board Members for Arlington

I am writing you today to urge you to support the warrant article calling for a permanent

ceasefire in Gaza. We have worked through the democratic channels of the town. My wife and I collected signatures for the warrant article outside of the Whole Foods. In just under 2 hours over 75 people signed on in support. The only reason we didn't get more signatures was we ran out of paper. This last Monday I counted 111 gestures of support during our weekly Monday standout. That amounted to almost one every 30 seconds. These included pedestrians, bus drivers, HVAC technicians, Uber & Lyft drivers, bicyclists, a local plastering company, electricians, plumbers, and many people with their children in their cars. Their is support for a ceasefire across the spectrum of Arlington residents.

As a member of the team which wrote it I can tell you that we put in over 2 months of effort working with the AHRC to craft this warrant article. We have engaged with the commission to bring forth a statement that reflects the shared values of the community. When we first came to the AHRC our proposal for a ceasefire was voted down 10-1. We attended 4 meetings with the AHRC, 2 non quorum groups with members and 4 listening sessions. During the time that we gathered signatures for the article there was one consistent message from the community. They wanted the killing to stop, all the hostages released and a diplomatic solution to the problem. Our motto during the process was "as little as possible, as much as required." We revised and rewrote to make a statement not that reflected everything we felt, but one that we knew from our work would unite our community.

There was one other thing that we heard repeatedly from members of our community. People are afraid. They are afraid for what this conflict is doing to the people of Israel and Gaza, they are afraid for what it says about us and how we will be remembered and they are afraid at how our government is failing us. When you look at the news you can see as well as anyone that our institutions are not meeting the moment. A democracy only works when the representative bodies are able to represent the best of our shared values. Once people lose faith in the ability of our institutions to stand for what is right they start to seek alternative means to achieve justice. This is not a fate I want to see in our town. We have to live together. A vote not to endorse will not make the issue go away, it will only create more desperation.

Some have said that we should entreat our congressional representatives instead of our local government. I have personally been in meetings with representatives of Katherine Clark where Arlington residents have described the literal obliteration of multiple generations of their family in Gaza and the representative said nothing. People are desperate, they feel like no one is listening to them. I am in multiple meetings every week with members of our community who don't know what to do to save their family, and Arlington youth who think that there is no point in engaging with our government.

I implore you to listen to these people, to respect the work that we have done with the AHRC. To validate our engagement in the democratic processes of the town and take a stand for life. If you vote no, I hope you will have sound justification for why you are going against the recommendation of the AHRC.

Thank you

David

Dear Arlington Select Board,

I write in regard to the Ceasefire Resolution that concerned residents of Arlington have brought before the Board. As a long time Arlington resident and peace activist during the long years of forever wars, I recall bringing a similar resolution to the Select Board and to Town Meeting to call for an end to the war on Iraq, particularly with regard to bringing the Massachusetts National Guard home.

At that time the Board voted No Action and one prominent Board member was vocal about how she could not "stomach" a resolution that addressed the foreign policy our taxes pay for. However, later it was found that illegal underage drinking was taking place in her home and she evidently did not have an issue "stomaching" that.

It is estimated that between 280,771-315,190 Iraqis were killed by direct violence as a result of the invasion and occupation. According to the Massachusetts Fallen Heroes Memorial 301 Service Members were killed in the Global War on Terrorism.

It seems clear to me that these deaths have been considered worthwhile in general by society, despite the fact that no wars were won, that the violence was wanton and cruel, continuing for many years. In 2011 the U.S. departed Iraq due to the "Status of Forces Agreement" passed by the Iraqi Parliament. A pointless war, costing trillions of tax dollars, as well as the lives lost.

It is two decades later, a new series of conflicts has erupted in the Middle East. More than 33,000 people, mainly women and children in Gaza have been killed by Israeli and U.S. bombs since the brutal incursion by Hamas militants on October 7, 2023 into Israel. The conflicts are spiraling out of control and could easily lead not only to a wider war, but one in which nuclear powers (Israel is a nuclear power) begin to reach for these planet-destroying weapons.

Simply put, Planet Earth is facing a serious climate crisis, one that, to be solved, must mean that all wars and commerce of militarism (which uses tremendous amounts of oil) are ended. Yesterday would not be soon enough.

As ordinary people, we are placed in a difficult position, with many conflicting wishes and priorities. At the very least, vision and courage are needed to assess the whole picture, to understand that while there is always antisemitism, as there is always racism, to absolve a nation-state that is openly - even referring to human beings in Gaza as vermin - massacring a captive population in a revenge war is morally repugnant and restraints should be imposed by the global community of which we are a small part.

I hope that the Select Board of 2024 will do better than the Board of twenty years ago. It is good to learn from history, to not sidestep issues that cause discomfort and to take action out of a real concern for people who are being consigned to the dustbin of history before our eyes.

Please attach this letter to the agenda as a public comment. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Thea Paneth Chandler St., member, Arlington United for Justice with Peace

To the Select board of Arlington:

I am a resident of Arlington and teach high school in a neighboring town.

Since October 2023, I've followed with horror the attack against Israel and the ensuing retaliation on Gaza. Though I lived in a war for 10 years, nothing prepared me for what I've seen in Gaza. The aggression on that little strip of land cannot be described by the word "war" - it is annihilation. Two million civilians trapped inside a wall, bombed with missiles and white phosphorus, shot with drones, starved and deprived of all the infrastructure they need to survive (water, sewers, medical care, bakeries, power plants, cell network, etc) – it all seems like a chilling dystopian sci-fi movie.

15,000 children have been killed since October. For comparison, Russia killed 500 children in 2 years.

Killing 15,000 children is like killing every single child in Arlington, and then also killing every single child in Concord.

That would be like killing the entire student body at the high school where I teach, 12 times over.

It means having to bury 85 children every single day for 6 months.

Whether we like it or not, we are fully implicated in what Oxfam called "the deadliest conflict in the 21st century" back in November.

The US has authorized over 100 weapon sales paid for with our tax money, and last week, our government decided to send another \$17 billion of military aid to Israel's fascist, violent government. We could do so many constructive things for our country with this money!

The US blocked a UN resolution for a ceasefire three times in 5 months, before allowing it to pass the 4th time. We also were the only country on the Security Council to block a resolution that would have given Palestinian statehood. And finally, we defunded UNWRA, the backbone of humanitarian aid in the Gaza strip. This essentially accelerated the potential death by starvation of half the Gaza population.

I'm terrified about what this means for the stability of world order! Setting such a bloody precedent for warfare is unconscionable and could turn against us in the future.

The Palestinians have lived under apartheid for decades, as per Amnesty International and many other major humanitarian organizations. Apartheid is a form of enslavement and daily humiliation. Journalists who are familiar with this situation have been warning that something like the October 7th attack would happen, if Israel keeps crushing the Palestinians under its boot. It is time to help end this injustice, just like we, the people, helped South Africa end its apartheid. Remember that our government called Nelson Mandela a terrorist and was one of the last governments on the planet to recognize the apartheid.

Change must start with us, the people!

“ But what can I do, I’m just a person - said 7 billion people...”

To conclude, since our government has thrown international law and humanity to the wind, it now falls upon us to start a grassroots civic movement and press for an immediate ceasefire, no more arms to Israel, and the dismantling of the apartheid system, so that Palestinians and Israelis can all live with dignity and without the threat of violence.

Thank you for considering my request,

Lina Smith

Dear Town Meeting Members,

Please find below several letters submitted to the Select Board in support of STM Ceasefire Resolution.

Dear Members of the Select Board,

I'm writing to you to express my support for Warrant Article 5. A Resolution for a Ceasefire Proclamation which will be discussed at your meeting today. I urge you to vote in support of this article as it connects directly to the Arlington community.

It has been almost impossible for my usually close neighborhood to talk about anything to do with Israel or Palestine for the past 6 months. We are a very connected and involved group of neighbors, yet it seems that no one feels it is "okay" or "safe enough" to talk about what is happening. Some seem afraid to "hurt" our Jewish neighbors and to be labeled "antisemitic", while others seem to fear that posting a "Let Gaza Live" sign will invite vandalism and abuse. This seems to get tied to unease about our very divided country facing a "high stakes" election, and the threat of escalation and possible regional war in the Middle East and the US' role in this.

Added to this is my mounting concern for my Jewish, Palestinian, Muslim and Arab friends, who are all experiencing feelings and actions that are hurtful, harmful and silencing in Arlington, at school and work (ie institutionally), in public and even from Congressional Resolutions that

promulgate division and blame.

This proposed Ceasefire Resolution is different. It offers the community an opportunity to reconnect with each other and collectively reaffirm our shared value of human dignity, and our commitment to human rights and non-violent responses to conflict.

Arlington has created and fostered many commissions (AHRC, Rainbow, Disability, Civilian Police Advisory, etc) and DEI teams (in our Town Government and in APS) which center human dignity by addressing systemic and individual acts of discrimination and hate. As a town we continue to seek to meet the human right to food, housing, education, healthcare and safety in Arlington, regionally, and internationally, from FoodLink to welcoming refugees. Whenever Town Meeting considers and enacts by-laws about, say, the environment, housing or traffic, we consider the impact not only within Arlington, but in Massachusetts and globally.

Occasionally, the people of Arlington ask Town Meeting to make a resolution to reflect and amplify our values in response to situations or events that particularly resonate for us as individuals and collectively. This doesn't mean we all agree as to "what should be done," but rather that the impact of certain events, be it climate crisis or the Patriot Act, feel both local and global. This can feel very unbalancing and overwhelming, which is why a reconnection to our collective values in the form of a resolution and proclamation can bring us back together towards equilibrium.

Having felt the oppressive and fearful quiet of my neighbors, I feel this ceasefire resolution would be a way for Town Leadership to remind us: "we can talk about it, even if it is difficult." It is furthermore a message we can collectively send to our leaders at the State and National level: to center a ceasefire and de-escalation in order to secure the release of all hostages in both Gaza and Israel, the prioritization of humanitarian aid, and to begin the process of non-violent deep listening and dialog. As in Arlington, so in Palestine & Israel.

Thanks for considering and please add my comments to the record,

Sarah McKinnon
Town Meeting Member Pct 20
Kilsythe Rd

To the Town of Arlington Select Board,

I am requesting that the Select Board unanimously pass the Special Town Meeting, Article 5 that calls for as resolution for a ceasefire proclamation in favor of an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Palestine and Israel, the release of all hostages, the immediate provision of lifesaving aid, and a diplomatic resolution for Palestinians and Israelis based upon values of dignity, equity, and justice. Please attach this to the agenda as public comments.

My name is Mona Mandal and I am a 20+ year resident of Arlington, a town meeting member from Precinct 9, member of the Diversity Task group and a mother to an Arlington High School

student. My precinct is also

where we have the Palestine standouts on a weekly basis. I wanted to ensure that our constituent concerns are heard and am writing in solidarity support. I have a long history to stand against any hate or discrimination in our community - from BLM Standouts, attending the

Town Hall support meeting after the arson incident with Rabbi Avi, APS standouts against hate, being part of diversity inclusion groups and Palestinian solidarity standouts. I deeply care & want to ensure that Arlingtonians feel included, safe, included and they belong in this community.

Professionally, I work with a humanitarian organization on addressing inequality and poverty alleviation which is also actively working a Ceasefire now. This war has caused the highest number of aid worker deaths till date which has included my colleagues in the organization and so, my connection to this conflict is that of standing for humanity that is part of our values in our wonderful Arlington community!

As a person of conscience and representing my constituents, I am horrified at the live streaming of genocide of the Palestinian people! More bombs have been dropped on Gaza than Ukraine, Syria or the second world war - one of the most ***intense civilian collective punishment campaigns in history!*** It is important that we stand up as a town by learning lessons from our history as the nice and peace-loving Germans did not want to stand up for their neighbors' human rights during the holocaust - being silent during a genocide shows complicity!

How Arlingtonians have shown they care as this is very LOCAL and relevant to OUR town:

- **Our Arlington Taxes of around \$700K** just this year and some of it is going to the war in Israel - we say no to our tax money supporting genocide.
- **Our Arlington Voters Say No preference in latest Primary:** Arlington voted **11.32% No preference vote** – clear message to President Biden to signal that they want a deescalation in war in Palestine.
- **Two Weekly Palestinian Solidary Standouts by Mass Ave:** when we started to break the silence, the group would get mostly hateful language thrown at the group and wishing death to Palestinians and a few honks in January; these days, we get over 50 honks, more people joining the group and people thanking the standout community for standing up for Palestine.
- **Arlington For Palestine/IfNotNow/JewishVoicesForPeace** - members of these groups are local residents who met with local representations in Warren/Markey/Clark offices multiple times on this issue
- **Precedence in this issue** - Several neighboring cities and towns have taken a stand on this most impactful issue of our times - complete silence from Arlington sends a chilling message to the community
- **Climate Emergency** - In Jun 2021, Arlington's Town Meeting adopted a resolution declaring a **climate emergency** and this resolution greatly support that earlier

resolution as this war will have lifelong climate implications with more bombs dropped on Gaza than Ukraine, Syria or the second world war! We have only one planet and we are already seeing major climate catastrophes in the world as that makes the global into a local issue!

- **AHRC Listening Sessions** - from the attendance, it showed that this is important to all in the community making it very local and very important to us all and this resolution addressed that we need to stand up against any discrimination in our community as this is an Arlington value to stand up for each other.
- **Diversity Equity Inclusion Mandate** in town to focus to "build a community where everyone is heard, respected, and protected" and so, we want the Select Board to honor that Arlington value with this very balanced resolution.
- **Mental Health Implications** from such extreme trauma seeing so much death and devastation on our devices as a society will last generations and a ceasefire puts a line in the sand as a community that we care for all our impacted communities

Growing up a first generation immigrant teenager, I was very moved by Anne Frank's diary which was a required reading for me to work on social justice and not stay silent as that makes us complicit to such extraordinary violence of our times.

Asking the Select Board to have moral courage to stand up for human rights for ALL in our community! Thank you so much for hopefully unanimously approving this aspirational ceasefire resolution to stand up for the Arlington values as a town as ***your vote speaks to where YOU stand in history*** on this issue.

Warm regards,

Mona Mandal

Precinct 9, Town Meeting Member

Town of Arlington, Diversity Task Group

Dear Select Board Members Mahon, DeCoursey, Diggins, Helmuth, and Hurd,

My name is Brendan Gibson. I am a committed educator and voter who lives here in Arlington with my wife and three children. I am writing to request that the Select Board vote in favor of the resolution calling for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza, as well as the release of all remaining Israeli hostages.

As the fourth generation of my family to reside here in town, I admittedly feel very strongly that this town's government has not yet taken sufficient steps to address the ongoing and relentless violence that is disproportionately affecting the Palestinian people.

Though this conflict is taking place thousands of miles away on a separate continent, it has local ramifications. Taxes paid by Arlington residents are subsidizing the suffering of innocent civilians. Incidents of Islamophobia and antisemitism are on the rise. Student protests have consumed nearby colleges, including my alma mater Tufts University. Several of Arlington's

neighboring communities - including Cambridge, Medford, and Somerville - have already passed ceasefire resolutions.

The time is overdue for the Arlington Select Board to publicly call for an immediate and permanent ceasefire, as well as the release of all hostages. I urge you to do what is within your power and vote to minimize human suffering. Let's be on the right side of history.

Thank you for your time and consideration, and please attach this to the agenda as public comment.

Sincerely,
Brendan Gibson
63 Palmer Street

Dear Select Board members,

I'm writing as a resident of Arlington, MA and a *Jewish Israeli-American* to **urge you to vote yes for Warrant Article 5: Arlington Resolution for a Ceasefire Proclamation**, which calls for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Palestine and Israel, the release of all hostages, the immediate provision of lifesaving aid, and a diplomatic resolution to the violence.

I have studied this conflict, Human Rights and International Law, engaged in Human Rights work in Palestine-Israel, and personally experienced colleagues, friends, and family on both 'sides' be devastated by violence before and since this war began.

Since October I've co-organized weekly vigils at the Mass. State House, along with a group of Israelis and Israeli-Americans from Arlington and the Boston area, calling for: ceasefire, humanitarian aid, hostage exchange, and diplomacy. While these vigils have grown in attendance and diversity -- as other efforts in support of human rights and international law have -- they have not been enough.

In these dark days silence has often been the most painful.

The smallest gestures of solidarity have carried resounding significance and hope.

This resolution matters to me because it takes a stand for peace in the face of extraordinary suffering. As of the date of this letter, more than 34,000 Palestinians have been killed and more than 1.9 million of the 2.2 million people in Gaza have been displaced due to ongoing military campaigns by Israel. Gazans aren't the only ones impacted. In fact, more than 1,200 Israelis have been killed and more than 135,000 displaced. And the cycle of violence is in danger of becoming a regional, if not global conflict.

As a resident of the town of Arlington, I believe it is important for our town to make a public call

for a ceasefire. Here are some reasons why:

- **Our tax dollars help pay for the weapons used against Palestinians**
- **Many residents of Arlington are directly impacted by the violence**, as well as local and national incidents of Islamophobia, antisemitism, and anti-Palestinian hate, as documented in four listening sessions hosted by the Arlington Human Rights Commission (AHRC). This resolution expresses support for impacted community members.
- **Arlington has previously passed proclamations** and resolutions on issues related to our community values. These issues often extend beyond the borders of our town. ● **The AHRC has recognized that this resolution centers our common humanity** rather than placing blame or taking sides, and has given their endorsement for that reason.
- By passing this resolution, we can **encourage our elected officials** at the state and federal level to **pursue diplomacy on the road to peace**.

Massachusetts cities such as Boston, Somerville, Cambridge, Medford, Melrose, Greenfield, Northampton, Easthampton, and Amherst have already passed ceasefire resolutions, and the town of Wellfleet is in progress. As of March 26th, the United Nations passed one as well. The time is long overdue for the Town of Arlington to join other people of conscience and publicly call for an immediate and permanent ceasefire.

I thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Rona Merrill

Dear Select Board,

Please vote in favor of the Ceasefire in Gaza resolution that is before the town of Arlington.

I have several close friends who are Palestinian whose friends and relatives have been killed in Gaza, sometimes after being displaced multiple times and going to places they've been told by the Israeli army would be safe. I have heard first hand truly horrible stories of terror and destruction affecting men, women and children, even babies. People in Gaza are living in a state of ongoing terror, trauma and horror that has had no end for nearly 7 months. They are waiting to be killed and are facing unfathomable losses in an ongoing, never ending way.

The climate in the U.S. right now, where people supporting justice and peace in Gaza are being negatively labeled is affecting my family here in Arlington as well.

My son, attending high school here, is scared to discuss anything about this issue at school for fear of reprisal if he shares his concerns and views. I want to put a sign up in my yard that says "Let Gaza Live" but am scared to do so about what the response of my neighbors might be.

Gaza is a largely civilian population of men, women and children. They do not deserve to be starved and slaughtered in a systematic way by one of the most powerful armies in the world. 70% of the deaths in Gaza are women and children. Civilian infrastructure, all universities, and an entire civilization, including institutions and buildings that go back to the Byzantine era, are being razed to the ground, damage that is also bringing erasure to the people in Gaza who are now displaced and living in misery, terror and imposed starvation.

We need to change the climate and discourse around discussion of this issue. A very important way to start is with a yes vote on this ceasefire issue so we can assert values of humanity and human rights that apply to all people. The U.S. has a clear and direct role in what's going on in Gaza and as citizens and taxpayers, we need to send a message to our federal government by being one of the forward thinking towns that has the wisdom and humanity to vote on the right side of history. With a yes vote, Arlington will be in the vanguard and standing for the equal rights of all people to life and liberty.

Of course, what Hamas did on 10/7/23 was horrible but a campaign of systematic destruction and imposed starvation on a civilian population of 2 million people (half of whom are children) is not morally right as a response.

As a town resident of almost 30 years and as an immigrant to this country from the Muslim world, I have been appalled and frightened to see the rage and hate directed at people of Muslim, Arab and Palestinian origin in our communities, as if these victims are not as human as everyone else.

Please be on the right side of history here and vote in favor of a ceasefire.

Best,

Aida Khan Sheraton Park

Good morning Select Board,

My name is Sophie Spink. I am a 23 year old resident of Arlington who is deeply concerned about the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. I have lived in Arlington since I was 5 years old, and went through APS, starting at Brackett, then Ottoson, and finally the High School. I played in Arlington Soccer Club until 8th grade, rowed for Arlington Belmont Crew all of High School, and started the high school's chapter of Amnesty International. I have been involved with the town's Diversity Task Group. All of this to say, Arlington is where I grew up, and Arlington is where my heart is.

Today, I am writing to urge the Arlington Select Board to vote yes on the ceasefire warrant article that is before you.

As of the date of this letter, more than 33,000 Palestinians have been killed and more than three quarters of the 2.2 million people in Gaza have been displaced due to ongoing military campaigns by Israel. The suffering of the Gazan people is incalculable, and is in direct violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

As a young adult who grew up in the town of Arlington, and have chosen to stay in Arlington, I strongly believe in our town to do the right thing. Not only are our tax dollars contributing toward the weapons used against Palestinians, but there are residents of Arlington whose family and loved ones are directly impacted by this violence. It is important to me as a lifelong resident of Arlington that Arlington stands on the side of humanity and passes a ceasefire resolution. Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. I cannot stress how deeply I feel about this issue. I hope that you can consider this with an open heart, with compassion for every person suffering in Gaza and Israel, and with compassion and love for those in Arlington who have family involved in the conflict.

Sincerely,

Sophie

Dear Select Board Members,

I write to you today as an Arlington, MA resident urging you to vote yes for Warrant Article 5: Arlington Resolution for a Ceasefire Proclamation, which calls for an immediate and

permanent ceasefire in Palestine and Israel, the release of all hostages, the immediate provision of lifesaving aid, and a diplomatic resolution to the violence. Indeed, the only time that a significant number of hostages were freed was during the first ceasefire late last year.

This resolution matters to me because it takes a stand for peace in the face of extraordinary suffering. As mass graves are being discovered containing hundreds of Palestinians, many exhibiting evidence of having been tortured, the mainstream media is focused almost solely on peaceful college campus protests. Despite their efforts, many people are not falling for this distraction. The overwhelming majority of Americans support a ceasefire.

Since October 7, more than 130 journalists have been killed, more than WWII and Vietnam combined, in less than 7 months. Upwards of 15,000 children have been killed, approximately 30x the number killed in the Russia/Ukraine War in less than 1/3 of the time. More than 350 healthcare workers have been killed, compared to 128 in Russia/Ukraine in less than 1/3 the time.

As a nation we had no trouble at all immediately condemning the acts Hamas committed on Oct 7. Indeed, condemning the killing of 12,000 people, the majority being civilians, should not be difficult. However, many of those same people have had an awful lot of trouble in the past 7 months condemning the acts that have contributed to the figures I cited in the previous paragraph.

As a resident of the town of Arlington, I believe it is important for our town to make a public call for a ceasefire. Here are some reasons why:

- Our tax dollars help pay for the weapons used against Palestinians. The United States is just as responsible for these atrocities as Israel.
- Many residents of Arlington are directly impacted by the violence, as well as local and national incidents of Islamophobia, antisemitism, and anti-Palestinian hate, as documented in four listening sessions hosted by the Arlington Human Rights Commission (AHRC). This resolution expresses support for impacted community members.
- Arlington has previously passed proclamations and resolutions on issues related to our community values. These issues often extend beyond the borders of our town.
- The AHRC has recognized that this resolution centers our common humanity rather than placing blame or taking sides, and has given their endorsement for that reason.
- By passing this resolution, we can encourage our elected officials at the state and federal level to pursue diplomacy

on the road to peace.

Just today Boston City Council voted to pass a ceasefire resolution! Other Massachusetts cities such as Somerville, Cambridge, Medford, Melrose, Greenfield, Northampton, Easthampton, and Amherst have already passed ceasefire resolutions, and the town of Wellfleet is in progress. As of March 26th, the United Nations passed one as well. The time is long overdue for the Town of Arlington to join other people of conscience and publicly call for an immediate and permanent ceasefire.

I thank you for your consideration.

Dan Goguen, Pleasant St.

Dear Arlington Selectboard,

My name is Marc d'Anjou and I am an Arlington resident in Precinct 20. Today, I am writing to urge you to support Article 5, a Resolution for a Ceasefire Proclamation, as an important step in working towards an end to the unconscionable violence that has been occurring to the people of both Palestine and Israel.

I have closely followed the development of this grassroots effort to find ways by which we, as individuals and as a community, can work to influence the Biden administration to work harder and more effectively to address the humanitarian and moral crisis that continues to unfold in Gaza. At first glance, the events in Gaza can seem very complex and very far removed from Arlington. However, a deeper analysis, such as that conducted by the Arlington Human Rights Commission via their community listening sessions and thoughtful vote to support the Resolution, reveals that this complexity and injury very much exist within the members of our community and within our own humanity as individuals and as a community. The need to proclaim our support for universal human rights for all people transcends town lines, state and national borders and also applies even in the most extreme of circumstances.

A call to stop the actions that are having such a horrific impact on such a large population of non-combatants has come from millions of individuals and is being reflected by similar proclamations to Article 5 by local town and city councils around Massachusetts, the US and the world. For our community, the voice of Arlington's elected representatives to advocate for a ceasefire can join those of Somerville, Cambridge, Medford, Melrose,

Northampton, and Amherst and help to influence our federal officials, who have the ability to sway events in Gaza and Israel, but have so far chosen not to act effectively to do so. A ceasefire is a very basic, initial, but necessary act that, however imperfect, can let some semblance of life return to the people of Gaza and be a step to a lasting diplomatic solution between the people of Palestine and Israel.

As such, I am requesting that the Arlington Select Board vote to support Article 5 and advocate for its endorsement at the Special Town Meeting on 8 May, 2024. As an Arlington resident, I am disappointed that I live in a town which has not yet taken any formal steps to recognize the ongoing harm occurring to the Palestinian people both in Gaza that live here as our neighbors.

This suffering should have been acknowledged long ago, but the next best time to act is now.

I urge you to listen to your hearts, know that you are not powerless to act, and to have the courage to proclaim that what is happening in Gaza is wrong and needs to stop. Thank you for your consideration.

Marc d'Anjou, Kilsythe Rd

As a resident of the town of Arlington, I believe it is important for our town to join other municipalities in the region and make a public call for a ceasefire in Israel/Palestine. The continued violence in the Middle East is now having regional as well as global consequences, endangering the safety and security of US citizens. Supporters of Israel are being erroneously conflated with the Jewish religion. Supporters of the Palestinian cause are being labeled as anti-semitic. Americans are being seen as citizens of a nation that is complicit in a genocide. I reject all of these mis-characterizations, all of which endanger my safety and the safety of my neighbors, no matter which position they may or may not take. The only way to stop the growing violence in this country and abroad is through a ceasefire in Israel/Palestine.

The growing calls for a ceasefire do influence elected US officials to stop our government from unconditionally sending weapons and military aid to the belligerents, a policy that enables a continuation and potential escalation of death and destruction. As a compassionate community which stands up for diversity and inclusion, Arlington must not be silent while a genocide is taking place - one which is funded with our tax dollars and supported by our government's unwavering political support for the Zionist agenda. Federal branches of our government are not currently representing the Will of The People; therefore, we must act on a local level.

I further request that the Arlington Select Board put forth a resolution which calls for the US to suspend its military and financial support to Israel until a bilateral agreement to cease hostilities between Israel (the occupying power) and various militant groups, including Hamas, is in place.

Please report out favorably on Article 5 and join the other cities and towns that publicly proclaim that we stand for humanity.

Thank you,

Gina Sonder Kimball Rd |

Dear Arlington Select Board,

My name is Carissa Englert, and I am writing to you as a resident of Arlington, to urge you to **vote yes for Warrant Article 5: Arlington Resolution for a Ceasefire** Proclamation, which calls for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Palestine and Israel, the release of all hostages, the immediate provision of lifesaving aid, and a diplomatic resolution to the violence.

On top of these appeals to the Arlington Select Board, in a larger sense we are calling for Congress and the Biden Administration to:

1. Demand an immediate and permanent ceasefire
2. Rush humanitarian aid and work to reinstate UNWRA
3. Stop funding military aid to Israel
4. Hold the Israeli government accountable to international law

As an new Arlington resident, I feel very strongly about the fact that I live in a town which has not yet taken the steps to address the ongoing genocide of the Palestinian people. As someone who works in education, it disgusts and infuriates me to know that over twice the equivalent of our student population - at least 14,000 innocent children - have been murdered in Gaza since October.

It is our responsibility as people of conscience to demand an end to the relentless violence that has been destroying all life in Gaza. At this moment, more than 34,000 Palestinians have been murdered by the Israeli Forces since October. Knowing that this would not have happened without the unwavering support from the United States government, and knowing that our billions of tax dollars continue to fund the guns and

bombs used on innocent civilians, is beyond sickening for anyone who has been paying attention.

The violence in Gaza continues to be felt deeply here in Arlington. Many people of Palestinian descent are mourning the loss of their loved ones in Gaza, and they are in a constant state of distress about their loved ones who are still forced to live under the most inhumane and fatal conditions. This suffering should have been ended long ago, but the next best time to act is now.

Other Massachusetts towns such as Somerville, Cambridge, Medford, Melrose, Greenfield, Northampton, Easthampton, and Amherst have already passed ceasefire resolutions, and Wellfleet is in progress. As of March 26th, the United Nations passed one as well. The time is long overdue for the AHRC and the town of Arlington to join other people of conscience and publicly call for an immediate and permanent ceasefire.

I urge you to do what is right and within your power.

****please attach this to the agenda as public comments****

Carissa Englert (she/her)

Dear Arlington Select Board,

My name is Naila Al Hasan. I am writing to you to ask that you vote for a permanent ceasefire in Gaza and the West Bank. **Please attach my letter to the agenda as public comments.**

After 7 months of ethnic cleansing that has killed over 41,000 Palestinians and the near-complete destruction of Gaza, a permanent ceasefire resolution is not only the bare minimum, it is time to end US financial and moral complicity, and sanction Israel for war crimes. As such, my family are additionally choosing to engage in Genocide Tax Resistance this tax season as I explain below.

My family moved to Arlington about six months ago primarily because of its family friendly focus. I am a stay-at-home parent to a toddler as well as 6.5 months pregnant.

In fact, I've been pregnant almost exactly the same number of days as the Israeli aggression,

now officially a genocide, on the Palestinian people. The horrifying footage coming out of Gaza is distressing and traumatizing to bear witness to. We cannot continue to stand by and whitewash the suffering of the Palestinian people. A permanent ceasefire is critical to saving precious human lives. As world citizens and taxpayers whose taxes are unjustly funding the Israeli genocide of the Palestinian people, it is our responsibility and moral duty to do the right thing by enabling an end to this carnage.

On April 5th, 2024, day 182, it was Palestinian Children's Day. Here are some stats that marked the occasion:

- 1) Israel has killed 14,000+ children in Gaza and 117 in the West Bank since Oct. 7th. 31 of the Gazan children were killed by starvation while 50,000+ are actively malnourished
- 2) 200 children are held captive by Israel
- 3) 17,000+ are unaccompanied or separated by immediate family
- 4) More than 10 children on average have lost one or both of their legs every day in Gaza since October 7, with many amputations performed without anesthesia [1]
- 5) 'Wounded child, no surviving family' is an official term for injured children with no parents to care for them [2]
- 6) As of Dec. 4th, 2023, nearly 25,000 Palestinian children in Gaza have become orphans [3]

These are just SOME of the horrific stats reported by reputable agencies.

One video that has stuck with me is of 5 year young Faisal, recounting the moment his mother was executed in front of him in cold blood.

"They shot her in her stomach. She was pregnant"

In what world is this acceptable???

Bearing witness to a new level of horror every day of the past 198 days has left me in a continuous state of dysregulation and trauma, I already worry I am passing on significant trauma to the child I am carrying.

As a nation, we have funded Israel with \$3.8 billion USD, no-strings-attached every year since 2017. Massachusetts and Arlington have sent \$129,975,320 and \$706,408, respectively, taxpayer monies for weapons [4].

In Arlington, this aid could instead be used for:

- 83 households with public housing for a year
- 245 children receiving free or low-cost healthcare
- 7 elementary school teachers
- 2,011 households with solar electricity produced for a year
- 18 students with their loan debt canceled

For many years, I've lobbied US representatives, without success, to condition this aid as Israel has used this funding to implicate, detain, and imprison children. House bills were introduced by Congresswoman Betty McCollum that never saw a companion bill in the senate [5].

In light of these facts, my family is choosing this year to divest our taxes from the state of Massachusetts as well as our home town of Arlington so long as they continue to invest taxpayer monies, and therefore, make us personally complicit in the Israeli genocide of Palestinians.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

[1]

<https://www.cnn.com/2024/01/08/middleeast/gaza-children-losing-legs-disease-intl-hnk/index.html>

[2] <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-67614139>

[3]

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20231211-report-nearly-25000-children-in-gaza-now-orphan-s/>

[4] <http://www.uscpr.org>

[5] [US congresswoman introduces bill to restrict aid to Israel](#)

Many thanks,

Naila Al Hasan, Ph.D.

Arlington, MA

Dear Select Board Committee,

We are re-submitting the following remarks which we sent after the deadline last week. *Please attach to agenda or minutes as correspondence is received.*

Additional note: we hope you will consider supporting this resolution, in light of the recent endorsement by the Arlington Human Rights Commission, which acknowledged that this resolution speaks to our common humanity.

My name is Poornima Manavalan. We have been residents of Arlington since 2013 and we are deeply affected by the on-going humanitarian crisis in Palestine/Gaza.

As an immigrant and now a citizen of this country who has chosen to raise my 4 year old son in the town of Arlington, I strongly believe in our town to do the right thing and to call for a symbolic bilateral ceasefire to bring lasting peace to Palestine and Israel. Thousands of innocent children have succumbed in this war and as a mother, it has been extremely hard to cope and go about our daily lives. Although this is an international issue, it does affect the citizens of this town directly, because I have several Muslim, Arab and Jewish friends who have been traumatized by what is happening and have been directly subjected to hate speech on multiple occasions. I believe it is the duty of our Select Board and the town of Arlington to pass this ceasefire resolution and join some of the other towns and cities in Massachusetts who were able to recently pass a resolution as well (Wellfleet, Amherst, Somerville, Medford, Melrose, Cambridge). Not only are our tax dollars directly contributing toward the weapons used in this war, but there are residents of Arlington whose family and loved ones are directly impacted by this violence.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. Our humanity is failing, but we cannot give up and we need to do the right thing. Let Arlington go down in the history books, if we don't do this now, we will surely repent this in the future!

Thanks

Poornima Manavalan, Akash Srinivasan and Srinivasan Anandan
oak hill drive, Arlington

As a resident of Arlington, I am writing you today to urge you to support the warrant article calling for a permanent ceasefire in Gaza. We have worked through the democratic channels of the town, but it seems, to no avail.

People are afraid. They are afraid for what this conflict is doing to the people of Israel and Gaza, they are afraid for what it says about us and how we will be remembered and they are afraid at how our government is failing us. When you look at the news you can see as well as

anyone that our institutions are not meeting the moment. A democracy only works when the representative bodies are able to represent the best of our shared values. Once people lose faith in the ability of our institutions to stand for what is right they start to seek alternative means to achieve justice. This is not a fate I want to see in our town. We have to live together. A vote not to endorse will not make the issue go away, it will only create more desperation.

Some have said that we should entreat our congressional representatives instead of our local government. I have personally been in meetings with representatives of Katherine Clark where Arlington residents have described the literal obliteration of multiple generations of their family in Gaza and the representative said nothing. People are desperate, they feel like no one is listening to them. I am in multiple meetings every week with members of our community who don't know what to do to save their family, and Arlington youth who think that there is no point in engaging with our government.

I implore you to listen to these people, to respect the work that we have done with the AHRC. To validate our engagement in the democratic processes of the town and take a stand for life. If you vote no, I hope you will have sound justification for why you are going against the recommendation of the AHRC.

Thank you

Maroussia Lévesque

Dear members of the Select Board of Arlington,

My name is Lauren Kleutsch, and I have been a resident of Arlington for the past ten years, along with my husband and two children. I am proud to live in this town for many reasons, among them the town's commitment to human rights and social justice.

I am writing to request that the Select Board vote in favor of a proclamation calling for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza.

As you know, the Arlington Human Rights Commission has spent many hours collecting input from community members about a potential statement, and have endorsed the article currently before you. The statement reflects an enormous amount of time, emotional labor, and engagement among community members with a range of political views and beliefs. A statement from Arlington supporting a ceasefire is an important signal of our community's commitment to racial and social justice. This is crucial in this time of increased racism, Islamophobia, and antisemitism. I'm a teacher, and in the past few weeks, i have witnessed two incidents of Islamophobia: one in which a 5th grader who wears a hijab was told that "people like her are terrorists" and in the other, when a Muslim student was told by a bus driver that he had to sit at the front of the bus after saying that he didn't celebrate Easter and didn't believe

that Jesus was the son of god. This is my twelfth year of teaching, and the first time I've encountered these sorts of open hostilities toward my Muslim students. I don't think it's a coincidence that these two incidents occurred when they did.

Thank you for your time and attention to this critical matter. ****Please attach this to the agenda as public comments****

Thank you for your time,
Lauren Kleutsch, Brattle St.

Dear Arlington Town Select Board Member,

I'm writing as a resident of Arlington, MA to **urge you to vote yes for Warrant Article 5: Arlington Resolution for a Ceasefire Proclamation**, which calls for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Palestine and Israel, the release of all hostages, the immediate provision of lifesaving aid, and a diplomatic resolution to the violence.

This resolution matters to me because it takes a stand for peace in the face of extraordinary suffering. As of the date of this letter, more than 34,000 Palestinians have been killed and more than 1.9 million of the 2.2 million people in Gaza have been displaced due to ongoing military campaigns by Israel. Gazans aren't the only ones impacted. In fact, more than 1,200 Israelis have been killed and more than 135,000 displaced. And the cycle of violence is in danger of becoming a regional, if not global conflict.

As a resident of the town of Arlington, I believe it is important for our town to make a public call for a ceasefire. Here are some reasons why:

- **Our tax dollars help pay for the weapons used against Palestinians** ● **Many residents of Arlington are directly impacted by the violence**, as well as local and national incidents of Islamophobia, antisemitism, and anti-Palestinian hate, as documented in four listening sessions hosted by the Arlington Human Rights Commission (AHRC). This resolution expresses support for impacted community members.
- **Arlington has previously passed proclamations** and resolutions on issues related to our community values. These issues often extend beyond the borders of our town. ● **The AHRC has recognized that this resolution centers our common humanity** rather than placing blame or taking sides, and has given their endorsement for that reason.
- By passing this resolution, we can **encourage our elected officials** at the state and federal level to **pursue diplomacy on the road to peace**.

Massachusetts cities such as Somerville, Cambridge, Medford, Melrose, Greenfield, Northampton, Easthampton, and Amherst have already passed ceasefire resolutions, and the town of Wellfleet is in progress. As of March 26th, the United Nations passed one as well. The time is long overdue for the Town of Arlington to join other people of conscience and publicly call for an immediate and permanent ceasefire.

I thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Faisal Syed, 58 Beacon St,

Dear Select Board Members,

I'm writing as a resident of Arlington, MA, to **urge you to vote yes for Warrant Article 5:**

Arlington Resolution for a Ceasefire Proclamation, which calls for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Palestine and Israel, the release of all hostages, the immediate provision of lifesaving aid, and a diplomatic resolution to the violence.

This resolution matters because it takes a stand for peace and humanity in the face of extraordinary suffering. As of the date of this letter, more than **34,000 Palestinians have been killed, about 77,000 wounded, and more than 1.9 million** of the 2.2 million people in Gaza have been displaced due to ongoing military campaigns by Israel. With starvation and lack of healthcare, many more will die, and this is a humanitarian issue. Gazans aren't the only ones impacted. More than 1,200 Israelis have been killed and more than 135,000 displaced. The cycle of violence is in danger of becoming a regional, if not global, conflict. As a resident of the town of Arlington, I strongly believe it is important for our town to make a public call for a ceasefire. Here are some reasons why:

- **Our tax dollars help pay for the weapons used against the Palestinians** • **Many residents of Arlington are directly impacted by the violence**, as well as local and national incidents of Islamophobia, antisemitism, and anti-Palestinian hate, as documented in four listening sessions hosted by the Arlington Human Rights Commission (AHRC). This resolution expresses support for impacted community members.
- **Arlington has previously passed proclamations** and resolutions on issues related to our community values. These issues often extend beyond the borders of our town. • **The AHRC has recognized that this resolution centers on our common humanity** rather than placing blame or taking sides and has given their endorsement for that reason.
- By passing this resolution, we can **encourage our elected officials** at the state and federal level to **pursue diplomacy on the road to peace**.

Massachusetts cities such as Somerville, Cambridge, Medford, Melrose, Greenfield, Northampton, Easthampton, and Amherst have already passed ceasefire resolutions, and the town of Wellfleet May 1st, 2024 is in progress. As of March 26th, the United Nations passed one as well. The time is long overdue for the Town of Arlington to join other people of conscience

and publicly call for an immediate and permanent ceasefire.

I thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Nimat Haque

Hello Select Board Members,

My name is Michelle Lewis and I'm writing in continued support for Article 5: Resolution for a Ceasefire Proclamation. Last week I sent an email asking that the Select Board pass this article and take a stand for the honor and respect of all human life. As we witness the ongoing genocide of the Palestinian people and the ecocide that is decimating the entire region, I hope that the Select Board will take this small step in affirming that this needs to end and we need to do whatever is in our power to stop funding military action, military weapons, and the devastating destruction of humanitarian aid.

Just before the Select Board meeting last week, the Arlington Human Rights Commission endorsed this article. To not endorse it with them and vote in favor would be a slap in the face to all of the hard work the Commission has done to host listening sessions, digest comments from across the community, and create a statement summarizing the issues raised by residents holding a variety of ideas/beliefs. This needs to move forward, Gaza and our Arlington community cannot wait.

Please attach this to the agenda as public comments.

Thank you,

Michelle Lewis, Arlington resident, Precinct 14

Dear Select Board Members,

Our community members, our neighbors are affected by international events, as previous generations were during the the Irish Famine & Troubles, Armenian genocide, during the 1930s and 1940s when isolationism prevented safe harbor here to refugees in Europe, during Vietnam when brothers, fathers, neighbors fought and many died; the USA for some a model of democracy, a beacon of human rights to the world, also a purveyor of weapons systems, if our neighbors ask us to consider a Resolution, respectfully, I think a discussion merited.

Monday Town Meeting heard from the mayor of our sister city in Japan, Nagaokakyo. Arlington engages internationally. The world is a much smaller place than it was when a generation sailed off to defend democracy at the behest of FDR.

In 1797 here in Menotomy, Prince Hall, shared a Charge, a vision of hope, brotherhood, the promise of democracy and community while acknowledging the suffering of neighbors near and far.

I ask the Select Board to continue this Menotomy and Arlington tradition, to build on our international engagement, I ask the Select Board to have the courage to suggest a consideration of peace with their vote.

As a resident of Arlington I ask you to vote yes for Warrant Article 5: Arlington Resolution for a Ceasefire Proclamation, which calls for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Palestine and Israel, the release of all hostages, the immediate provision of lifesaving aid, and a diplomatic resolution to the violence.

Prince Hall tirelessly advocated for his fellow enslaved Africans, and rejoiced when US sailors were freed by Barbary pirates, (A Charge). Take up his mantle, take up the example of one of our Founding Fathers who spoke out forcefully against bondage, who believed in the words of the Declaration of Independence, step into the breach, speak for a Ceasefire and return of hostages. Be the brave, be with the Peacemakers.

Respectfully,

Beth Melofchik, Town Meeting Member, Precinct 9

As a resident of Arlington, MA to **urge you to vote yes for Warrant Article 5: Arlington Resolution for a Ceasefire Proclamation**, which calls for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Palestine and Israel, the release of all hostages, the immediate provision of lifesaving aid, and a diplomatic resolution to the violence.

It is important to me that the town of Arlington take a stand for peace in the face of extraordinary suffering. As of the date of this letter, more than 34,000 Palestinians have been killed and more than 1.9 million of the 2.2 million people in Gaza have been displaced due to ongoing military campaigns by Israel. Gazans aren't the only ones impacted. In fact, more than

1,200 Israelis have been killed and more than 135,000 displaced. And the cycle of violence is in danger of becoming a regional, if not global conflict.

In the US today young students across large college campuses are taking a steadfast stand even as they face repression from the college administrations and the police for their demands. This is an issue that we as a community must confront, deliberate on, and take a moral and just stand by, at the very minimum, calling for a ceasefire.

As Israel's Aerial Bombardments Intensify, 'There Is No Safe Place in Gaza', Humanitarian Affairs Chief Warns Security Council | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases

A staggering 85 per cent of the total population of Gaza — 1.9 million civilians — have been forcibly displaced amid Israel's military operations, the United Nations Emergency Relief Coordinator told the Security Council today, as delegates categorically rejected any statements proposing that Palestinians should be resettled outside of Gaza, including from members of the Israeli Government.

press.un.org

As a resident of the town of Arlington, I believe it is important for our town to make a public call for a ceasefire. Here are some reasons why:

- **Our tax dollars help pay for the weapons used against Palestinians** ● **Many residents of Arlington are directly impacted by the violence**, as well as local and national incidents of Islamophobia, antisemitism, and anti-Palestinian hate, as documented in four listening sessions hosted by the Arlington Human Rights Commission (AHRC). This resolution expresses support for impacted community members.
- **Arlington has previously passed proclamations** and resolutions on issues related to our community values. These issues often extend beyond the borders of our town. ● **The AHRC has recognized that this resolution centers our common humanity** rather than placing blame or taking sides, and has given their endorsement for that reason.
- By passing this resolution, we can **encourage our elected officials** at the state and federal level to **pursue diplomacy on the road to peace**.

Massachusetts cities such as Somerville, Cambridge, Medford, Melrose, Greenfield, Northampton, Easthampton, and Amherst have already passed ceasefire resolutions, and the town of Wellfleet is in progress. As of March 26th, the United Nations passed one as well. The time is long overdue for the Town of Arlington to join other people of conscience and publicly call for an immediate and permanent ceasefire.

Please attach this letter to the agenda as part of the public comments.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Manisha Sharma, Mary St.

Dear Arlington Select Board Members,

I am a resident of Arlington writing to **urge you to vote yes for Warrant Article 5: Arlington Resolution for a Ceasefire Proclamation**, which calls for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Palestine and Israel, the release of all hostages, the immediate provision of lifesaving aid, and a diplomatic resolution to the violence.

This resolution matters to me because it takes a stand for peace in the face of extraordinary suffering. I am Armenian and come from a family impacted by the Armenian genocide. I understand the unimaginable lasting impact of the kind of violence being perpetuated by Israel against the Palestinian people. As of the date of this letter, more than 34,000 Palestinians have been killed and more than 1.9 million of the 2.2 million people in Gaza have been displaced due to ongoing military campaigns by Israel. Gazans aren't the only ones impacted. In fact, more than 1,200 Israelis have been killed and more than 135,000 displaced. And the cycle of violence is in danger of becoming a regional, if not global conflict.

As a resident of the town of Arlington, I believe it is important for our town to make a public call for a ceasefire. Here are some reasons why:

- **Our tax dollars help pay for the weapons used against Palestinians** ● **Many residents of Arlington are directly impacted by the violence**, as well as local and national incidents of Islamophobia, antisemitism, and anti-Palestinian hate, as documented in four listening sessions hosted by the Arlington Human Rights Commission (AHRC). This resolution expresses support for impacted community members.
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- By passing this resolution, we can **encourage our elected officials** at the state and federal level to **pursue diplomacy on the road to peace**.

Massachusetts cities such as Somerville, Cambridge, Medford, Melrose, Greenfield, Northampton, Easthampton, and Amherst have already passed ceasefire resolutions, and the town of Wellfleet is in progress. As of March 26th, the United Nations passed one as well. The time is long overdue for the Town of Arlington to join other people of conscience and publicly call for an immediate and permanent ceasefire.

Thank you for your consideration. Please attach this message to agenda or minutes as correspondence received.

Sincerely,
Irena Manukian

Dear Arlington Selectboard,

My partner and I moved to Arlington almost 5 years ago with the goal of starting our family. Arlington is a great environment for children and we hope to continue to raise our one year old here. It has been incredibly disturbing to see children and families killed daily since October and to watch parents unable to feed their starving babies. So far over 13,800 children have been killed and over 12,000 have been injured. It is critical that I am able to raise my child in a community that actively demonstrates it cares about the lives of all children. When my baby is old enough to understand, I will be proud to tell them that they live in a community that called for a ceasefire and made an effort to protect children in Gaza.

I urge you to vote yes for Warrant Article 5: Arlington Resolution for a Ceasefire Proclamation, which calls for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Palestine and Israel, the release of all hostages, the immediate provision of lifesaving aid, and a diplomatic resolution to the violence.

This resolution matters to me because it takes a stand for peace in the face of extraordinary suffering. As of the date of this letter, more than 34,000 Palestinians have been killed and more than 1.9 million of the 2.2 million people in Gaza have been displaced due to ongoing military campaigns by Israel.

As a resident of the town of Arlington, I believe it is important for our town to make a public call for a ceasefire. Here are some reasons why:

- **Our tax dollars help pay for the weapons used against Palestinians** ● **Many residents of Arlington are directly impacted by the violence**, as well as local and national incidents of Islamophobia, antisemitism, and anti-Palestinian hate, as documented in four listening sessions hosted by the Arlington Human Rights Commission (AHRC). This resolution expresses support for impacted community members.
- **Arlington has previously passed proclamations** and resolutions on issues related to our community values. These issues often extend beyond the borders of our town. ● **The AHRC has recognized that this resolution centers our common humanity** rather than placing blame or taking sides, and has given their endorsement for that reason.

- By passing this resolution, we can **encourage our elected officials** at the state and federal level to **pursue diplomacy on the road to peace**.

Massachusetts cities such as Somerville, Cambridge, Medford, Melrose, Greenfield, Northampton, Easthampton, and Amherst have already passed ceasefire resolutions, and the town of Wellfleet is in progress. As of March 26th, the United Nations passed one as well. The time is long overdue for the Town of Arlington to join other people of conscience and publicly call for an immediate and permanent ceasefire.

I thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Sheila Tripathy

Dear Arlington Selectboard Members,

I'm writing as a resident of Arlington, MA to **urge you to vote yes for Warrant Article 5: Arlington Resolution for a Ceasefire Proclamation**, which calls for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Palestine and Israel, the release of all hostages, the immediate provision of lifesaving aid, and a diplomatic resolution to the violence.

This resolution matters to me because it takes a stand for peace in the face of extraordinary suffering. As of the date of this letter, more than 34,000 Palestinians have been killed and more than 1.9 million of the 2.2 million people in Gaza have been displaced due to ongoing military campaigns by Israel. Gazans aren't the only ones impacted. In fact, more than 1,200 Israelis have been killed and more than 135,000 displaced. And the cycle of violence is in danger of becoming a regional, if not global conflict.

As a resident of the town of Arlington, I believe it is important for our town to make a public call for a ceasefire. Here are some reasons why:

- **Our tax dollars help pay for the weapons used against Palestinians** • **Many residents of Arlington are directly impacted by the violence**, as well as local and national incidents of Islamophobia, antisemitism, and anti-Palestinian hate, as documented in four listening sessions hosted by the Arlington Human Rights Commission (AHRC). This resolution expresses support for impacted community members.
- **Arlington has previously passed proclamations** and resolutions on issues related to our community values. These issues often extend beyond the borders of our town.
- **The AHRC has recognized that this resolution centers our common humanity**

rather than placing blame or taking sides, and has given their endorsement for that reason.

- By passing this resolution, we can **encourage our elected officials** at the state and federal level to **pursue diplomacy on the road to peace**.

Our neighbors in Massachusetts cities such as Somerville, Cambridge, Medford, Melrose, Greenfield, Northampton, Easthampton, and Amherst have already passed ceasefire resolutions, and the town of Wellfleet is in progress. As of March 26th, the United Nations passed one as well. The time is long overdue for the Town of Arlington to join other people of conscience and publicly call for an immediate and permanent ceasefire.

Thank you for your consideration and time. ****please attach this to the agenda as public comments****

Sincerely,

Ginger Leib

Arlington Resident

Hello,

My name is Marina Wagner and I am writing to request that the AHRC propose and vote on a proclamation calling for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza. I also propose that when this proclamation is passed by the AHRC, it be sent to the Arlington Select Board for a vote. ***Please attach this to the agenda as public comments.***

On top of these appeals to AHRC, we are calling for Congress and the Biden Administration to:

1. Demand an immediate and permanent ceasefire
2. Rush humanitarian aid and work to reinstate UNWRA
3. Stop funding military aid to Israel
4. Hold the Israeli government accountable to international law

As a lifelong Arlington resident, I feel very strongly about the fact that I live in a town which has not yet taken the steps to address the ongoing genocide of the Palestinian people. As someone who has worked in healthcare and now is in disability justice and advocacy, it disgusts and infuriates me to see our governments small and large -- in Arlington, in Massachusetts, in the U.S. -- choosing to be complicit to genocide. To be silent. To turn away from an unavoidable reality because it is "uncomfortable." Because folks do not want to dissect their own role in upholding systems of oppression. As U.S. tax payers, the reality is we are all funding Israel's genocide of Palestine. Israel Occupation Forces are murdering indigenous people on their ancestral lands daily ON OUR DOLLARS.

It is our responsibility as people of conscience to demand an end to the relentless violence that has been destroying all life in Gaza. If you care about your children's lives and "public health" you must support Palestine. If you care about climate change, protecting our selfless and

generous Mother Earth, and building sustainable futures you must support Palestine. Tell me -- why does climate justice only matter when it is on the terms of the colonizer (i.e. the NPS, the USFS, etc.)? The most "just" thing for the Earth right now would be to end Israel's mass destruction of Palestine. Palestine is home to so much biodiversity and humans who model reciprocal and respectful land stewardship. You can tell who is the indigenous, colonized people and who is the colonizer from looking at Palestinians' cultural identity being deeply interconnected relationships with native and ancestral landscapes. Meanwhile, Israel massacres not only people, but livestock, plant and fungi communities, and wild animals, bombing them and poisoning their homelands, making them inhospitable. Check out [The Story of Palestine's Colonization, and Resistance, Is Embodied in the Trees](#) if you'd like to read more. If you care about "restoration" of native landscapes and biodiversity, if you care for the trees and plants that collectively give us food, medicine, shelter, wisdom, and beyond, if you care about the rivers and seas that give us water, food, recreation, and life, you must stand for Palestinian liberation. The fight for all liberations is inherently interconnected. If you want your descendants to have a future at all, Palestine must have a future. This is a collective fight for collective liberation, and we call on you to participate in this movement.

Somerville, Cambridge, Medford, Melrose, Northampton, and Amherst have already passed ceasefire resolutions, and Brookline is pending approval. As of March 26th, the United Nations passed one as well. The time is long overdue for the AHRC and the town of Arlington to join other people of conscience and publicly call for an immediate and permanent ceasefire. I urge you to do what is right and within your collective power as individuals and within public office.

please attach this to the agenda as public comments

Sincerely,
Marina Wagner
Arlington Residen

Dear Select Board,

My name is Maile Blume and I am an Arlington resident. Attached is my letter of support for the ceasefire proclamation coming before the Select Board today. I ask that my letter be considered and attached to public comment, and that the board vote in support of the proclamation calling for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza.

Thank you,
Maile Blume

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Hello,
My name is Hannah Barber Doucet, and I am writing to request that the Arlington Select Board vote in support of the resolution for a ceasefire proclamation.

I am an Arlington resident, and as a pediatrician, a Jewish person, and a human, the death and suffering in Gaza is unbearable for us to stand by and do nothing. We may be only a town, but we still have the ability to use the voice we have to continue to put pressure on our government and others for a ceasefire, as other local towns already have. I urge the board to adopt this resolution and continue to apply pressure upwards.

please attach this to the agenda as public comments

Hannah Barber Doucet, MD, MPH [*she/hers*]

April 23, 2024

Dear Select Board Members,

My name is Claudia Donnet, and I am writing in support of Arlington Select Board voting to support an immediate and permanent ceasefire resolution in Gaza.

I want to add my voice to request Congress and the Biden Administration

- to:
1. Demand an immediate and permanent ceasefire
 2. Rush humanitarian aid and work to reinstate UNWRA
 3. Stop funding military aid to Israel
 4. Hold the Israeli government accountable to international law

As an Arlington resident for 12 years, I feel very strongly about the fact that I live in a town which has not yet taken the steps to address the ongoing genocide of the Palestinian people while tens of thousands of civilians, including about 14,000 innocent children, have been murdered in Gaza since October. Knowing that this would not have happened without the significant support from the United States government, and knowing that our billions of tax dollars continue to fund the guns and bombs used on innocent civilians, is something I cannot ignore, and nobody should ignore.

The violence in Gaza continues to be felt deeply here in Arlington. Many people of Palestinian descent live here and are mourning the loss of their loved ones in Gaza, and they are in a constant state of distress about their loved ones who are still forced to live under the most inhumane and fatal conditions. Many residents with personal ties to Israel are also hurt and not approving their government's military action. I have no direct ties to neither but I see the images of the suffering of too many innocents. It has been too much damage already. This needs to stop. Other Massachusetts towns such as Somerville, Cambridge, Medford, Melrose, Northampton, and Amherst have already passed ceasefire resolutions, and Brookline is pending approval. As of March 26th, the United Nations passed one as well. The time is long overdue for the AHRC and the town of Arlington to join other people of conscience and publicly call for an immediate and permanent ceasefire.

I urge you to do what is right and within your power.

Sincerely,

Claudia Donnet

Arlington resident, precinct 9

Dear Select Board,

I am a resident of Arlington and am writing to express my support for the proclamation in support of an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza. Please attach this to the agenda as public comments.

One of the things that resonated with me in an article I read about the Medford ceasefire resolution was how local statements like these are a way to amplify public opinion and the voices of local residents who feel ignored at federal levels of the government. Massachusetts towns such as Somerville, Cambridge, Medford, Melrose, Northampton, and Amherst have already passed ceasefire resolutions. And support for a ceasefire is shared widely. The latest Gallup polls suggest that nearly 75% of all US adults disapprove of what is happening in Israel currently. I am Muslim American, and I have been buoyed by statements from people of conscience from all backgrounds-- over 1000 Black Pastors, over 1000 Rabbis, U.S. Churches via the National Council of Churches, church leadership worldwide, the Pope (who has reiterated his call twice), and so many more. This is because the current situation in Gaza has reached records we are all horrified by-- the largest cohort of pediatric amputees in history, more children killed in 4 months in Gaza than all over the world over four years, more healthcare workers and aid workers kidnapped and killed than all world's conflicts in previous years, a larger carbon footprint and environmental impact than more than 20 of the world's most climate-vulnerable nations in just the first 60 days of bombings -- and all these statistics have already become underestimates given that we are now 200 days in and counting, with violence continuing unabated. That billions of our tax dollars are used to fund the weapons used on innocent civilians make this all the more important for us to take an unequivocal stance for peace.

I also want to share an experience I had attending a rally calling for a ceasefire in downtown Boston, as one example of how I've been impacted and why this is personally important as an Arlington resident. Shortly after the rally had started, a woman in the crowd had a seizure, and, as a neurologist, I took care of her until the paramedics arrived. As the crowd had marched far away from us, I decided to come home. While I was waiting for my Lyft back to Arlington, two women noticed I was holding a sign that said "Healthcare Worker for Gaza," and they began to berate me. They first said: "Just go to Gaza" and "Why don't you leave America then and go to Gaza." I initially responded, "I would love to go there and help people who are dying." My first inclination as a healthcare worker is always to jump in to help, and this was before 400+ attacks on hospitals in Gaza making delivering healthcare there nearly impossible. But then one smirked and said and repeated: "yes, go over there and see what they will do to you. See what they will do to you." Her insinuation was clear: as a Muslim woman with a headscarf, I would be shot and killed.

This incident was steeped in the logic of collective guilt, which has unfortunately been used to justify the horrific current reality in Gaza and statistics I included in my email above. But there can be no justification for this degree of indiscriminate killing and violence, like newborn Palestinian babies being left by Israeli soldiers to die and decompose in their hospital beds with

milk bottles and diapers next to them. It is absolutely within our power to say that people who look like me and children who look like my children do not deserve to die simply because they are guilty by association.

I hope you will support this proclamation as a message of hope and peace for residents of Arlington. I will end with the words of Michelle Alexander from this poignant [interview](#): "All of us have a conscience that whispers to us, sometimes in the dark. The mandates of conscience that arise within each of us arise not out of loyalty to abstract principles or doctrines, but from a place of deep knowing, a deep knowing that we owe something to each other as human beings, that we belong to each other, and that our freedom and liberation depends on one another."

Thank you for reading and in humanity,
Altaf Saadi
(resident of Arlington)

Dear Select Board,

My name is Emily Mo and I am writing in support of a permanent bilateral ceasefire resolution.

I want to start by validating the reports of increased local antisemitism and Islamophobia that have risen since October. Some of these incidents I have witnessed first-hand. As someone who supports a ceasefire, I can say that all of the neighbors I've met who also support a ceasefire are doing so out of a love for humanity and an intolerance for human suffering. I know that our Arlington community has exercised their power to organize against hate crimes in the past, and I have hope that we can continue to do so in the future.

But we can't divorce the problem in our communities from what's happening in the Middle East. The tensions brewing in our communities are directly tied to sentiments around what lives are expendable in Israel and Gaza. Our tax dollars are flowing directly to weapons that contribute to the slaughter. We can't have a productive community conversation on this topic without taking a strong stance that we need to try to end the violence for EVERYONE—otherwise we would inherently be leaving some people out of the conversation. The notion that one group of people has to keep dying in order to keep another group safe is inherently dangerous, and we must reject this thinking. The issue of Israel depriving Palestinian civilians of basic necessities is not "too complicated" for Arlington to talk about.

Committing to a ceasefire resolution will send a message to our leaders that we can (and should) do better as a country and as humans. **We are better than the notion that mass annihilation and starvation can ever be productive towards the goal of peace.** I want to live in an Arlington that simultaneously takes war crimes

seriously AND works to build long-term understanding, friendship, and safety among its residents.

Thank you,

Emily Mo
42 Allen St

Dear members of the Arlington Select Board,

I have lived in East Arlington for over 25 years. I write not only as a long time resident but also as a deeply concerned citizen of the planet.

Thinking globally, we know we are in a climate crisis and as we try to tackle the urgency of that crisis, I am moved to raise my voice locally for peace and against the conflict in Israel and Palestine. The devastation in Gaza caused by relentless bombing and bulldozing is causing a humanitarian crisis that I am not willing to ignore. Every day, innocent people are dying in hundreds, while their cultural, educational and healthcare institutions are turned to rubble. I write because it is wrong to pretend that life can go on as "usual" in Arlington.

I am compelled to make direct connections between the crisis in Gaza and the Town of Arlington.

One clear connection is the climate crisis that humanity needs to address together. It is clearer than ever that the world is experiencing extreme weather more frequently and with more intensity. It is also clear that it is experiencing devastating conflicts. In general, production and maintenance of weapons is heavily dependent on fossil fuels and contributes significantly to greenhouse gas emissions. Active conflicts, like the one in Gaza, contribute even more to those emissions. We need this conflict like we need a hole in our head.

Another important connection is that Jewish and Muslim residents of Arlington are experiencing hate on a daily basis. I strongly empathize with the deep emotional conviction that Jewish people all over the world have, (whether living in Israel or not), for a safe, secure place that the state of Israel is meant to be. At the same time, as someone who grew up in a colonized South Asian country, I also believe that Israel needs to coexist by truly acknowledging the right of Palestinians to self-determination, land, freedom and a life of dignity.

As I join other like-minded residents of Arlington in weekly, peaceful stand-outs in the center of Arlington, I am concerned about the safety of all Arlington residents caught up in this conflict, which has touched a lot of us in deeply significant ways.

Peace is not possible without justice. so let's agree to work on a livable planet for all with justice and peace. Let's call for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Palestine and Israel, and for a political and diplomatic solution to this conflict.

I would very much appreciate it if you attach this email to the agenda as part of public comments.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Gitanjali (Anju) Joglekar, Winter Street

Dear Select Board Members,

My name is Emily Quigley, and I am writing in support of the ceasefire resolution being reviewed by the Arlington Select Board committee.

As a proud Jewish resident of Arlington, I am appalled and heartbroken that the town I live in has not yet taken the steps to address the ongoing genocide of the Palestinian people. My family holds generational trauma from years of living in diaspora, and I have found myself here in Arlington - an educator, a friend, and member of the community. It is within this community that I organize for peace and justice alongside my neighbors of all races and religions. My safety as a Jewish person is tied up in the safety of all oppressed peoples, and is not bolstered by ongoing violence and genocidal acts of terror in Gaza.

Knowing that our government is the one supplying weapons, machinery, and funding of this genocide, I find it imperative to act on the governmental levels at which I have agency. Other Massachusetts towns such as Somerville, Cambridge, Medford, Melrose, Northampton, and Amherst have already passed ceasefire resolutions, and Brookline is pending approval. As of March 26th, the United Nations passed one as well. It is long overdue for the town of Arlington to join other people of conscience and publicly call for an immediate, permanent ceasefire, and an end to military aid to Israel.

The best time to act was months ago, but the next best time to act is now. I urge you to do what is right and within your power.

please attach this to the agenda as public comments

Thanks,
Emily Quigley, Magnolia St

To the Town of Arlington Select Board regarding its April 24 Meeting:

I write today to urge you to support the Ceasefire Resolution as it is now proposed and written.

I am a 20-year resident of Arlington, and a 70-year inhabitant of Massachusetts, the United States, and the World. I work to affect a more just community locally and globally. As a U. S. citizen, aware of the disproportionate power our government exerts, I recognize my

responsibility to speak out when that power is exercised to inflict massive suffering upon the most oppressed peoples [usually brown and Black]- and when it, as routine policy, funds and arms occupation/colonial forces [usually white] and carries out cruel sanctions.

I am horrified that those in power continue to fund the annihilation of a people who are forced to live as refugees in their homeland. I am ashamed that my tax dollars contribute to it.

"If you are 'neutral' in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor." Desmond Tutu

I urge you to support the proposed ceasefire resolution, as is, and to remember that what is happening now in Occupied Palestine did not begin on October 7, 2023, as those who frame the narrative want you to believe.

Please attach this letter to the agenda as a public comment.

Thank you, Susan Mortimer

Dear Arlington Select Board,

My name is Farha Hasan, and I am writing to request that the AHRC propose and vote on a proclamation calling for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza. I also propose that when this proclamation is passed by the AHRC, it be sent to the Arlington Select Board for a vote.

As an Arlington resident and a parent raising a child in Arlington, I strongly feel that the town I live in should address the on going Genocide in Gaza. It is our responsibility to set an example for our children. To let them know that Arlington is a town that stands with peace and with humanity and values the lives of all human beings regardless of their religion, color, or political beliefs. According to the United Nations, the six months war on Gaza, has resulted in over 10,000 women being killed, leaving 19,000 children orphaned

Other Massachusetts towns such as Somerville, Cambridge, Medford, Melrose, Northampton, and Amherst have already passed ceasefire resolutions. AHRC and the town of Arlington must join other people of conscience and publicly call for an immediate and permanent ceasefire. I urge you to do what is right and within your power.

****please attach this to the agenda as public comments****

Kind regards,

Farha Hasan

My name is Thomas Lemere and I have lived in Arlington for the past 15 years. I am asking that the town of Arlington produce a document, in the towns name, calling for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza, and that the document be passed by the Select Board at the earliest possible date.

I am not going to debate the merits of one side or the other concerning the ongoing conflict between Israel and the Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank. Rather, I am here to lend my voice to the call to recognize and respect the common humanity of all people.

Human Rights are universal! If it were Israelis dying by the 10's of thousands I would be here asking for a ceasefire on their behalf. I was horrified and sickened by the events of October 7th. I am horrified and sickened by what has transpired since.

“They have denied us our humanity... why should we respect theirs?” Which side in this conflict has the exclusive rights to this statement?

Earlier communications from the Arlington Human Rights Commission seeking input from local residents concerning the petition calling for a ceasefire made reference to those “impacted members of the community”. My first impression was that I was being excluded rather than included by that wording as I am neither Jewish, Israeli, Muslim, nor Palestinian. I assure the Select Board however, that as a thinking and feeling human-being, and member of the community, that I have been profoundly “impacted” by the events of the past six months.

I respectfully ask that the Board pass the statement and that they attach this request to the agenda as part of the public comment.

Thank you,
Tom Lemere
