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June 18, 2021

Peace Education Center of the  
Greater Lansing Area  
1120 S. Harrison Rd.  
East Lansing, MI 48823  
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Honorable Elissa Slotkin  
1531 Longworth HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Your Support For H.B. 2590

Hon. Elissa Slotkin:

For fifty years the Peace Education Center of the Greater Area has advocated for peace and social justice at home and abroad. This has included such activity as opposing the Vietnam War, ending excessive military spending, supporting the United Nations and working to end to the apartheid government of South Africa. In that spirit, the Peace Education Center asks you to support and cosponsor H.B. 2590 recently introduced by your colleague Rep. Betty McCollum and 13 cosponsors under the title of the "Defending the Human Rights of Palestinian Children and Families Living Under Israeli Military Occupation Act."

Under this legislation, Israel would be prohibited from using U.S. taxpayer dollars in the Occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem for: the military detention, abuse, or ill-treatment of Palestinian

children in Israeli military detention; to support the seizure and destruction of Palestinian property and homes in violation of international humanitarian law; or, to extend any assistance or support for Israel's unilateral annexation of Palestinian territory in violation of international humanitarian law.

Under Israel's prolonged military occupation, millions of Palestinians are denied their basic rights. Since 2000, more than 10,000 Palestinian children in the West Bank have been arrested and held in Israeli military detention, where their rights to protection and due process are systematically violated. And since 2006, at least 12,767 Palestinians, including 5,700 children, have lost their homes under Israeli policies that fuel forced displacement and home demolitions in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.

As we request your support, we ask you to consider the words of your colleague when she announced the introduction of this legislation: "U.S. assistance intended for Israel's security must never be used to violate the human rights of Palestinian children, demolish the homes of Palestinian families, or to permanently annex Palestinian lands. Peace can only be achieved by respecting human rights, especially the rights of children, and this includes the U.S. taking responsibility for how taxpayer-funded aid is used by recipient countries, Israel included. Congress must stop ignoring the unjust and blatantly cruel mistreatment of Palestinian children and families living under Israeli military occupation."

As the recent conflict between the Israeli government and the Palestinians in Gaza showed, there is a growing consensus among a wide swath of Americans that the Palestinian people deserve justice, equality, human rights and the right of self-determination. Already this legislation has received support from an unprecedented number of human rights organizations, as well as from Christian, Jewish, and Muslim organizations. This broad support for this legislation shows a growing recognition that there can never be peace between Israelis and Palestinians unless there is support for Palestinian human rights.

The Peace Education Center appreciates your past concerns for human rights given different injustices around the world. We respectfully request that you continue this concern by supporting and co-sponsoring H.B. 2590.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Nelson A. Brown, Jr." with a stylized flourish at the end.

Nelson A. Brown, Jr.,

For the Board of the Peace Education Center

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