

Become an Original Cosponsor: UNRWA Emergency Restoration Act of 2024

Sending Office: Honorable Andre Carson
Sent By: andrea.martin@mail.house.gov

Request for
Cosponsor(s)

Restore Funding to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA)

Deadline for Originals: Friday, August 2, 2024

To join this bill as an original cosponsor, please [click here](#):

Co-Leads: *Carson, Jayapal, Schakowsky*

Original Cosponsors: *DeLauro, Dingell, Grijalva, Holmes Norton, Lee (PA), McGovern, Ocasio-Cortez, Pocan, Pressley, Ramirez, Stansbury, Tlaib, Velazquez*

Endorsed by: Amnesty International USA, Center for Jewish Nonviolence, Church World Service, CIVIC, Common Defense, Democracy for the Arab World Now (DAWN), Friends Committee for National Legislation (FCNL), Global Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and United Church of Christ, Humanity & Inclusion, Labor Rise Climate Jobs Action Group, MADRE, Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns, Middle East Democracy Center (MEDC), Migrant Roots Media, Minnesota Peace Project, Mennonite Central Committee US, MPower Change Action Fund, Nonviolence International, Peace Action, Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft, International Refugee Assistance Project, ReThinking Foreign Policy, RootsAction, Sisters of Mercy of the Americas – Justice Team, The Center for Jewish Nonviolence, United for Peace and Justice, US Campaign for Palestinian Rights Action (USCPR Action), Women for Weapons Trade Transparency, Working Families Party, World BEYOND War

Dear Colleagues:

We hope you will join us as original cosponsors of legislation that will end the congressionally mandated pause on funding for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). [Full text](#)

[HERE](#).

The **UNRWA Emergency Restoration Act of 2024** would:

- Repeal the funding prohibitions on UNRWA included in the FY24 Appropriations bill and the Israel Security Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2024;
- Express a sense of Congress that supports appropriating critical funds to UNRWA for FY25;
- Require the Secretary of State to report to Congress on a quarterly basis on the steps UNRWA is taking to implement recommendations from the United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) to further ensure the neutrality of its workforce;
- Urges the Secretary of State, as soon as practicable, to rescind the temporary pause in funding for UNRWA and resume funding to UNRWA under current authorities of the Department of State.

UNRWA serves nearly six million Palestinian refugees across the West Bank, East Jerusalem, Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon and is the primary humanitarian aid organization operating in Gaza. The U.S. has historically been one of the largest financial supporters of UNRWA but paused funding following allegations by the Government of Israel that twelve Agency employees had direct involvement in the October 7 terrorist attack.

Following these allegations, UNRWA took additional steps towards accountability, transparency, and reform, including immediately terminating the employees allegedly involved and undergoing an independent investigation from the OIOS.

The report from OIOS investigators found UNRWA had robust, well-developed internal mechanisms, and identified steps the agency can take to ensure its commitment to neutrality and to improve operations. UNRWA welcomed the report and stated it is “fully committed” to implementing its recommendations.

Following the UN's investigation and proactive commitments made by UNRWA toward complete accountability and reform, nearly all countries have resumed UNRWA funding including the European Union, United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, Finland, Germany, Japan, and Sweden, restored funding to UNRWA following actions taken by the UN and commitments made by UNRWA toward complete accountability and reform.

International humanitarian NGOs and the major United Nations humanitarian organizations have made it clear that, given UNRWA's role as the backbone of the humanitarian response makes it imperative that funding be maintained to the Agency. Their statements are especially relevant considering several of these humanitarian organizations would be required to drastically scale up their efforts at an impossible speed and scope to fill the humanitarian void that would be created should UNRWA cease to operate.

Additionally, the United States joined 118 UN Member States in signing the [Joint Commitments Initiative to Support UNRWA](#) which stated that "that UNRWA is the backbone of all humanitarian response in Gaza, and recognizing that no organization can replace or substitute UNRWA's capacity."

If we fail to act now, this escalating humanitarian crisis will only grow worse in Gaza, further exacerbate tensions across the Middle East, and continue to embolden Hamas and other terrorist groups. It is in the strategic interest of both the U.S. and all of its allies, including Israel and Jordan, to resume and maintain funding to UNRWA in order to stabilize the region and alleviate the humanitarian catastrophe that no other organization or agency will be able to effectively address.

If you have any further questions, please contact:

Andrea Martin (Andrea.Martin@mail.house.gov) with Rep. Carson,

Diego Sanchez (diego.sanchez@mail.house.gov) with Rep. Jayapal, or

Andrew Orlebeke (andrew.orlebeke@mail.house.gov) with Rep. Schakowsky.

Sincerely,

Rep. André Carson

Rep. Pramila Jayapal

Rep. Jan Schakowsky