

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 21, 2023

President Joseph R. Biden  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave N.W.  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden,

We write with deep concern over the fate of the hostages still held in Gaza by Hamas, including eight Americans, following Hamas's brutal terrorist attack on Israel on October 7. We are grateful for your engagement and focus on releasing the hostages, and request that you further leverage the U.S. partnership with Qatar to secure the immediate release of the remaining hostages.

On October 7, the world witnessed Hamas – a U.S.-designated Foreign Terrorist Organization – commit the deadliest attack in Israel's history, murdering over 1200 people, including 32 American citizens. Tireless U.S. advocacy facilitated a pause in fighting last month that resulted in the release of over 100 Israeli and foreign hostages held by Hamas, reuniting them with their loved ones. However, since Hamas unilaterally broke the temporary pause on December 1, the majority of the American hostages were left behind in Gaza, and Hamas has refused to provide proof of life or visits by the International Committee of the Red Cross to deliver urgently needed medical care to any of the hostages.

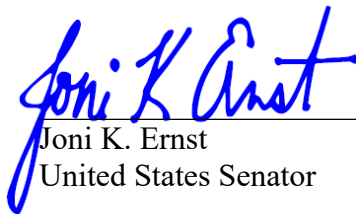
As you know, Qatar maintains close ties with Hamas, hosts senior Hamas leaders, and provides the organization with significant funding, affording Doha outsized access and influence with the group, including with respect to hostage negotiations. At the same time, Qatar is a major non-NATO ally, hosts a large U.S. Air Force contingent at Al-Udeid Air Base, and is a strategic hub for U.S. military operations in the Middle East.

We appreciate Qatar's efforts so far to secure the release of hostages held by Hamas and their commitment to continue coordinating efforts to release all remaining hostages. However, we are concerned that Qatar is not fully utilizing its leverage to seek further concessions from Hamas.

Therefore, we ask that you make clear to Qatar that the United States is closely watching

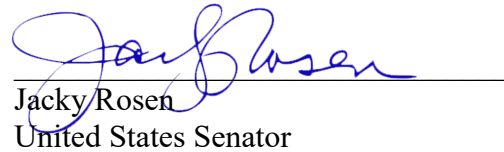
ongoing hostage negotiations and convey that Qatar's inability to deliver on its commitments regarding the safe return of all remaining hostages will significantly impact bilateral relations. Time is of the essence to free the hostages – and every diplomatic option must be on the table to secure their release. Hamas alone is responsible for the health and safety of those it is holding captive. Given Qatar's unique ability to influence Hamas, it is imperative that Doha understands our expectation that negotiations result in the release of all remaining hostages. Thank you for your consideration of this request and for your continued prioritization of efforts to free the hostages.

Sincerely,



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Joni K. Ernst  
United States Senator



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Jacky Rosen  
United States Senator