February 15, 2024

Dear Mr. President:

We are writing with grave concern over the fate of the hostages still held in Gaza, including six Americans, following Hamas’s barbaric assault on Israel on October 7. We request that you leverage the U.S. partnership with Qatar to secure the immediate release of the remaining hostages. Time is of the essence and every option must be on the table to achieve that goal.

While Qatar has helped secure the release of some hostages, we are deeply concerned that Qatar has not fully leveraged its relationship with Hamas to ensure all hostages are released without delay. Qatar hosts senior Hamas leaders and provides the U.S.-designated Foreign Terrorist Organization with significant funding. Doha has significant leverage over Hamas, especially with respect to the release of hostages.

Qatar benefits immensely from being a U.S. partner. Two years ago, you designated Qatar as a major non-NATO ally. During the current hostage crisis, you negotiated a ten-year extension of our al-Udeid air base. Qatar makes billions of dollars on investments across the U.S. and has been shielded from terror victim civil suits by the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act. Despite these benefits, only four American hostages have been released since the start of the war.

The clock is ticking for the hostages. The Qatar-brokered week-long ceasefire and hostage deal in November left nearly every American citizen in captivity without proof of life or visits by the Red Cross. Hamas alone is responsible for the health and safety of those it is holding captive.

We are concerned that Qatar is not fully utilizing its unique leverage over Hamas to secure the release of the hostages, especially the Americans. We strongly urge your Administration to continue to employ every tool of leverage with Doha to secure the immediate release of the remaining hostages. Please make clear to Qatar that it will be held accountable for every hostage not brought home. Qatar’s failure to deliver on its commitments will harm bilateral relations.

Congress is watching closely. If we do not see the release of more hostages, including all American citizens, in the days ahead, we will consider a menu of fast-track legislative options to hold Qatar accountable.
Thank you for your leadership, for your consideration of this request, and for your prioritization of efforts to free the hostages.

Sincerely,

Josh Gottheimer
Member of Congress

Young Kim
Member of Congress

Haley M. Stevens
Member of Congress

Michael V. Lawler
Member of Congress

Jim Costa
Member of Congress

Jared Moskowitz
Member of Congress

Michael Waltz
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Ritchie Torres
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Jared Golden
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Anthony D'Esposito
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Susan Wild
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