

JIM BANKS
THIRD DISTRICT, INDIANA



COMMITTEE ON
ARMED SERVICES

COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE

SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE
STRATEGIC COMPETITION
BETWEEN THE U.S. AND THE
CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1403

October 18, 2024

The Honorable Lloyd J. Austin III
Secretary
U.S. Department of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20301

The Honorable Antony Blinken
Secretary
U.S. Department of State
2201 C St NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Blinken and Secretary Austin,

I write to urge the Biden-Harris administration to cease withholding the weapons that Israel needs to finish the fight against terrorists in Gaza and Lebanon and for you to retract the absurd letter that you sent to Israeli officials this week threatening to impose an arms embargo.

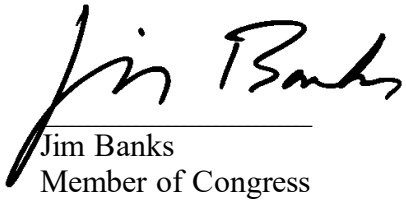
Now that the terror mastermind Yahya Sinwar has been killed in Rafah – a location which this administration spent months trying to prevent Israel from clearing of Hamas – it is vital that the United States provide our greatest ally in the region with what it needs to rescue the hostages and crush Hamas for good. As such, the Biden-Harris administration must immediately stop holding up arms shipments to Israel, including 2,000 lbs. bombs and other critical arms, on the false pretext that a ceasefire which leaves terrorist organizations such as Hamas intact will bring peace and return the hostages.

Your administration's attempts to tie Israel's hands have instead prolonged the war and only achieved record numbers of fruitless diplomatic meetings. With the death of Sinwar, Israel has brought a hostage deal closer by killing the greatest obstacle to a hostage deal. With the death of Hamas and Hezbollah leaders like Hassan Nasrallah, Israel is forcing the conditions for a lasting peace upon the greatest obstacles to peace. Your opposition to Israel's strategy and unjustified belief that victory was impossible has delayed this moment but not stopped it.

The only path forward is to recognize the bankruptcy of your administration's whole perspective on this conflict, retract your irrational letter threatening an arms embargo, and give Israel the weapons they need to end the threat of Hamas, Hezbollah, and their Iranian terrorist supporters. Despite your best efforts to the contrary, Israel is achieving peace through victory, on their terms and in America's interests.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim Banks". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style. Below the signature is a horizontal line.

Jim Banks
Member of Congress