

The Promoting Human Rights for Palestinian Children Living Under Israeli Military Occupation Act (H.R. 2407)

The Promoting Human Rights for Palestinian Children Living Under Israeli Military Occupation Act (H.R. 2407), introduced by Rep. Betty McCollum (MN-07), acknowledges the harm being done to Palestinian children living in occupied West Bank and Gaza. It ensures that U.S. funds will not be used to support human rights violations against children anywhere in the world and provides \$19 million to NGOs to deliver critical trauma relief for Palestinian children who have suffered abuse in the Israeli military detention system.

Israel detained approximately 908 Palestinian children in 2018, [according](#) to Palestinian Prisoners' Society. The advocacy organization B'Tselem [reported](#) that there were 210 Palestinian children held in Israeli prisons in July 2019. Many formerly detained children report that they were apprehended from their homes in the middle of the night with no warning and without a parent or guardian present. The most common charge for the detained children? Stone throwing.

The military courts in Israel processing these cases often lack basic standards of due process, and Israeli military law provides no right to legal counsel during interrogation. After leaving custody, Palestinian children often [report](#) being subjected to various forms of abuse, including physical violence, verbal abuse, intimidation, and humiliation.

FCNL's Approach to Supporting Human Rights of Children

Military detention of children is wrong no matter where the child is from. This legislation would protect innocent children in the following ways:

- **Acknowledge the harm being done to Palestinian children:** The bill describes the ways in which Israeli military law violates the internationally-recognized rights of children, including Israel's own obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It declares Israel's practices as "inconsistent with international humanitarian law and the laws and values of the United States."
- **Ensure U.S. funds are not supporting human rights violations against children:** The bill would prohibit the use of foreign assistance to support the military detention, interrogation, abuse, or ill-treatment of children anywhere in the world.
- **Invest in Palestinian Children:** The bill would authorize \$19 million annually to support NGOs providing health services to formerly detained Palestinian children, as well as organizations monitoring and documenting human rights abuses associated with Israel's military detention of Palestinian children.

An Important Step

Over the past several years, we have watched the abhorrent treatment of migrant children along the U.S.-Mexico border with great concern. This has only strengthened FCNL's commitment to a future in which the U.S. stands in policy and action as a nation that will not tolerate the abuse of children.

Congress should send a strong message that the military detention and mistreatment of children will not be supported by U.S. funds. By cosponsoring H.R. 2407, members of Congress can declare that U.S. assistance be used in a way that aligns with American values and international law.