

From: [rachel fogel](#)
To: [CityCouncil-List](#); [Manager Manager](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] do not support a resolution on Gaza in Alameda City Council
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 1:11:19 PM

Dear Alameda City Council members and City Manager -

It has come to my attention that a resolution requesting a ceasefire in Gaza may be submitted to the Alameda City Council agenda.

If you are involved in submitting the resolution, I ask that you not. It is an inflammatory motion and should be avoided for several reasons:

- 1) I do not want our local city council focusing its effort on international conflicts. I wish for our city council to focus on local issues, as is their mandate.
- 2) Though I support a cessation of warfare, death, and oppression in all countries, I do not support using our elected local government to advocate for international issues. I do not expect my local officials to have expertise on international issues, nor to use their time in their elected capacity to learn this information.
- 3) If anything, local government declarations for or against international policies INFLAME our local community and decrease safety for all of our residents.
- 4) Simplistic statements regarding international conflicts reduce civil discourse to polarizing soundbites, which unfortunately lead to more prejudice, misperception, and hate crimes, not less. I expect my local government to avoid actions that increase prejudice, misperception, and hate crimes.

In summary, please do not undermine civil society in Alameda with a resolution regarding the Israel-Palestinian conflict.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Rachel Fogel
244 Ennismore Ct.
Alameda CA 94502
415-299-1257

From: [Jacqueline Palchik](#)
To: [Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft](#); [CityCouncil-List](#)
Cc: [Rabbi Meir Shmotkin](#); [Rabbi Mark Bloom](#); rabbi@templeisraelalameda.org; [Rabbi Art Gould](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Your impact on the Alameda Jewish community
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 11:40:12 AM

Dear Mayor and City Council,

I, and so many members of the Jewish community, are disappointed, sad, and scared to see that you have given into pressure to include a ceasefire resolution on the January 2nd agenda. I'm sure you're aware of what happened at the Richmond and Oakland City Council meetings and the ramifications in their communities. Their resolutions of course did not lead to any movement towards a ceasefire, but led to division and [increased anti-Semitism](#).

Before your meeting occurs, as a Jewish Alamedan and mother, I want you to be aware of what has and is happening as a result of your decision. We hoped you would follow the example of Berkeley mayor (summary [here](#)) but I'm saddened that you've chosen a different path that I, and the larger Jewish community in Alameda I am connected with, see as divisive.

- You are creating a rift between the City of Alameda and the Jewish community that will be very difficult to repair. If you doubt that, talk to Jewish Oakland citizens about what they felt after their City Council meeting. Ask their superintendent how many children have successfully put in applications to leave OUSD and enter Piedmont schools. Read Jewish (not Israeli, but American Jewish) newspapers and blogs to learn what the impact has been.
- A wider Bay Area Jewish community is galvanizing around us Alameda Jews right now to show us support in light of your decision. We're getting calls - "are you safe in Alameda?" This includes Rabbis, congregations in the entire East Bay, the JCRC, fellow Jewish parents, and other allies. We are meeting to talk about how to combat the antisemitism that is very likely to happen at your Council meeting because we are scared.
- Respectfully, you don't have the power to impact the outcome of geopolitical events half a world away. You were not elected on platforms or promises to fix complicated issues in the Middle East. What you DO have power over, and a responsibility to, is the community of Alameda and whether or not everyone, including Jews, feels safe to live here.

I am very frightened to attend the meeting, but I will be doing so because it is my responsibility. You might think this is about Israel's actions, but Israel will not be affected by what is said in that room. The Jewish mothers, fathers, grandparents, and children will.

Finally, it is your duty to watch the **entire** video of what happened at the Oakland City Council during the ceasefire resolution, and be prepared for that to happen in Alameda. It made international news, and not for a good reason. This Alameda City Council meeting will inevitably make at least the national news, and Jew hatred remarks that unfortunately are likely to be spoken will be viral and forever associated with our island.

Here is [a link](#) to some of what was said. You truly should watch the whole video of the Council meeting as it was traumatizing to my Jewish friends in the room that night. This is what I'm mentally preparing to face on January 2nd.

This was my Rabbi's summary of events: "it was impossible not to feel the vitriol, anger, and even hatred for Israel in the room... This was not just criticism of Israel, but a mob rule mentality filled with demeaning, outrageous, extremist language, Holocaust imagery turned upside down, and indiscriminate, exaggerated and untrue uses of words like genocide, fascism, and colonialism."

California congressman Adam Schiff was horrified at the meeting to hear citizens "downplay, deny or even seek to justify" the "horrific attacks, rapes, killings and kidnappings." I hope you are prepared to hear and respond to that and have that be part of Alameda's legacy.

I ask if you're truly ready to bring this to Alameda.

Sincerely,

Jacqueline Palchik

(note that I have cc'd four area Rabbis, three from Alameda, but do not claim to speak on their behalf)

Alameda resident since 2016

Jewish mom of 2 AUSD students (Otis and Lincoln)

Vice President, Temple Beth Abraham

Director of Financial Planning & Analysis, Telecare Corporation (based in Alameda)

From: [Danielle London](#)
To: [CityCouncil-List](#); [Tracy Jensen](#); [Trish Spencer](#); [Malia Vella](#); [Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft](#); [Tony Daysog](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] URGENT Request from Concerned Jewish Alameda Resident
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 10:05:22 AM

To Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft and City Council members Vella, Daysog, Jensen and Spencer,

Good morning! I am writing to the five of you to urge you all not to place a "ceasefire" resolution on the Council's Agenda. I have been a resident of Alameda for 18 years. I have raised my two daughters here and put them through our public schools. I am a Jew and a member of our only temple here - Temple Israel. I also sit as vice-president of the board of Alameda Education Foundation. I am a Deputy District Attorney and proudly serve Alameda County and have done so for 25 years. I write to you as a private citizen who loves our Alameda community and does not want the divisive, anti-Semitic ceasefire resolution to be part of any council meeting because it has proven in other cities - most notably Richmond and Oakland - to be horribly antagonistic and threatening to Jewish people. This type of resolution has no place in a city like Alameda that historically does not and should not involve itself in foreign affairs that it has no control over. Even allowing it on the agenda is a step too far because of the viciousness it will introduce into the meeting. Please follow the lead of other local communities like Foster City and Berkeley and do not allow the thinly veiled resolution to tear apart our community. You represent all of us here and your personal beliefs about the war are not what is at stake here. We can all agree that war is evil and killing of innocents is reprehensible, but there are dozens of religious and cultural wars going on all over the world right now that are killing just as many people as the war in Gaza that this Council has no business passing resolutions about. We residents need you as our public electeds to make it clear to all of Alameda that your priorities are focused on all of our people here in this glorious city and that you continue to make this the safest, most beautiful and welcoming city in the Bay Area.

Sincerely,
Danielle London

From: [Mostafa Ahmed](#)
To: [CityCouncil-List](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Support for Ceasefire Resolution in Gaza
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 8:31:57 PM

Dear Alameda City Council Members,

I am writing to urge you to adopt the proposed resolution for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza. This action is crucial to address the humanitarian crisis and loss of innocent lives in the region.

I am deeply concerned about the escalating humanitarian crisis in Gaza. The ongoing conflict has reached a level of dehumanization that is alarming. The heavy bombardment has caused immense suffering, with reports of over 7,700 Palestinians killed, including nearly 2,400 children. Women and children account for a significant portion of the casualties, highlighting the disproportionate impact on the most vulnerable.

The health situation in Gaza is deteriorating rapidly, exacerbated by the recent flooding which has worsened the struggle of displaced Palestinians. Essential infrastructure, including schools and hospitals, has been severely affected. For instance, the Kamal Adwan Hospital in Beit Lahiya was raided, resulting in the detention of medical staff and disruption of vital healthcare services.

The blockade on Gaza has trapped over 2 million people, leading to a lack of access to basic necessities and increasing the vulnerability of the population. The international community's response to this crisis has been inadequate, failing to address the underlying issues effectively.

As a resident of Alameda, I feel it is our moral obligation to stand up against these injustices and support a ceasefire in Gaza. The resolution proposed is not just about political stance; it is about acknowledging and addressing the suffering of innocent people caught in the conflict.

I urge the City Council to adopt the ceasefire resolution, sending a strong message that Alameda stands for peace, justice, and the protection of human rights.

This resolution is a step towards peace and adherence to international law. As a concerned citizen of Alameda, I strongly believe our city must take a stand on this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Mostafa Ahmed

From: [Dganit](#)
To: [CityCouncil-List](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Urgent Request to Refrain from Adding Ceasefire Resolution on Gaza to the Resolution Docket
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 7:47:21 PM

Dear Mayor Ashcraft, Vice Mayor Daysog, Councilmember Jensen, Councilmember Spencer, and Councilmember Vella,

I hope this letter finds you in good health and high spirits. My name is Dganit Abramoff, and my husband and I have been proud residents of Alameda for over three years. I appreciate the rich tapestry of Alameda and the sense of community that it embodies. It is with great concern and care for our shared well-being that I write to you today.

I am aware of the recent discussions surrounding the proposal to add a draft resolution calling for a ceasefire in Gaza to the city council's docket. While I acknowledge the importance of addressing global concerns and understanding the desire for solidarity with affected communities, I fervently plead with you to reconsider this course of action.

Having dedicated my career to building bridges across nations, ethnic groups, and interfaith communities, I am acutely aware of the complexity and sensitivity of geopolitical issues, especially those in the Middle East. It is my sincere belief that introducing a resolution on this matter without careful consideration and thorough dialogue may inadvertently contribute to division within our own community.

The Israel-Palestine conflict is an intricate and deeply rooted issue that defies simplistic categorization. Not to mention that the events of October 07, 2023, in Israel transcend beyond Israel-Palestine and have moved to an arena of the necessity of eradicating a terrorist group, Hamas, a proxy of Iran, that calls not only for the destruction of the State of Israel and the Jewish people but the annihilation of Western values and democracy—an immediate and real threat to the national security of all Americans.

By putting it to a majority vote, we risk oversimplifying a nuanced matter, perpetuating divisive narratives of right versus wrong, and exacerbating xenophobia. I am concerned that such a resolution, rather than fostering global change and a ceasefire, may lead to the polarization of our community, making it an unsafe space for diverse thought and perspectives; OPENING FIRE in Alameda.

Furthermore, I would like to draw attention to the lack of representation from the opposition and the Jewish community during the city council meeting on December 19. It is crucial to understand that our absence does not indicate apathy towards the issue; rather, it stems from genuine concerns for our safety. There is a palpable fear within the Jewish community, and the precedent set by other cities, Oakland and Richmond, calling for similar resolutions has resulted in increased vandalism, hate speech, and violence against Jews. In the [City of Oakland only a week ago a Hannukkah menorah was vandalized and thrown into Lake Merrit](#).

In striving for a resolution that aims to influence geopolitical events, we inadvertently witness a manifestation of local crime, hate, and xenophobia. It is my sincere request that the City of Alameda refrains from adding the Gaza ceasefire resolution to the resolution docket and instead directs its energy towards initiatives that unite our community and create a safe space for diverse perspectives, regardless of creed, gender, faith, or race.

I trust that you will consider these concerns with the utmost seriousness and make decisions that promote education, and understanding within our beloved island.

Thank you for your time and consideration. If you'd like to speak more the matter, please do reach out.

Sincerely,
Dganit Abramoff
501 Buena Vista Ave
Alameda

From: [Jacqueline Palchik](#)
To: [CityCouncil-List](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Fwd: Urging you to resist calls for a ceasefire resolution
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 3:37:14 PM

Good afternoon Alameda City Council Members,

Please see the below note I sent earlier to Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft. I have a personal connection as she once did something very kind for me; my appeal, however, is not just to her but to all of you.

Respectfully,
Jacqueline

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Jacqueline Palchik** <jacqueline.palchik@gmail.com>
Date: Wed, Dec 20, 2023 at 2:15 PM
Subject: Urging you to resist calls for a ceasefire resolution
To: Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft <mezzyashcraft@alamedaca.gov>

Dear Mayor,

I don't know if you remember me, but a few years back the Alameda synagogue was vandalized and we both attended a ceremony to show support for our Jewish community. My children Ariella and Eyal were probably 2 and 6, and you offered to look after them for me. I was so touched that you, the Mayor, would be willing to look after two rambunctious kids so I could pray. I will never forget that you did that for me.

I'm writing today to ask you to do something else for me, and for Ariella and Eyal. It's a very hard time to be Jewish in the Bay Area. So many of my Jewish friends have contemplated relocating or changing schools due to anti-Semitism that has run rampant. I hoped Alameda would be a safe haven from the City-condoned spewing of hatred that has happened in Richmond and Oakland, but I fear that due 30 anti-Semitic individuals at last night's City Council meeting we might be facing the same strife on our island.

Middle east politics are not the purview of our City Council; the only outcome of a ceasefire resolution will be to create division and encourage Jew hatred. If you doubt that, view the hours of anti-Jewish diatribes that made Oakland a national spectacle during their ceasefire resolution discussion. We are better than that in Alameda; as AUSD tells us, we are no place for hate.

Please keep me and my family safe in Alameda, and do not entertain a ceasefire resolution.

Respectfully,

Jacqueline Palchik

202-436-2917
1017 Pearl Street

Alameda, CA 94501

From: [stacy.neiman](#)
To: [Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft](#)
Cc: [Tony Daysog](#); [Tracy Jensen](#); [Malia Vella](#); [CityCouncil-List](#); [Manager Manager](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Thank you, and a request, from a concerned Jewish Alamedan
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 3:01:00 PM

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft, City Councilmembers, and Madame City Manager -

I learned that a Gaza "cease-fire" resolution is being considered for the City Council agenda January 2, 2024, and am writing to beg that you not proceed with this resolution, because of the harmful impact it will have on my family and I believe other Alameda Jewish families - and, the impact it *will not* have on the crisis in the Middle East.

It has been a very tough time for Jewish kids, and the Jewish community as a whole, especially here in the East Bay, as I'm sure you know. Many of us who identify as Jewish feel worried even going to the grocery store in Alameda and buying Shabbat candles or a challah, for fear that someone may see us and attack us. Kids are worried about wearing a necklace with a Jewish star or Hebrew writing to school. There have been horrific anti-Semitic verbal assaults not only during public comment at City Council here, but at many public meetings. As well as discussions of "drawing Hitler" at Wood Middle School art class!

Recently, an Oakland City Council meeting that was launched as a misplaced discussion on foreign policy wound up being hijacked as a multi-hour anti-Semitic rant against the Jewish people and homeland. It has become common for people to say "from the river to the sea" - implying the elimination of over seven million Jewish people in Israel, more than were murdered in the Holocaust - like it is inoffensive. This is immensely, personally threatening. Here is a link that is relevant: <https://jcrbayarea.salsalabs.org/cacitycouncils/index.html>

I have understood that, until now, Alameda has taken the position, vis-a-vis those trying to launch a similar attack through Alameda City Council, that they should lobby their federal elected officials if they have concerns about foreign policy. I want to thank you for taking this stand, and urge you to continue in this vein.

We love Alameda, and chose to purchase our first home here in 2019. My kids attend Wood Middle School and Otis Elementary and are involved in Alameda sports, arts & culture. Our eldest volunteered at Alameda Pride two years in a row! We are very invested in this community!

I continue to love our City and its diversity, but have lately been worried that the poisonous

attacks on Jewish people that we have been seeing in Richmond, Oakland, and other places locally would infect our town. I hope with your leadership that the tide is stopped before it overcomes our island!

There are so many City concerns we all have - poverty and homelessness, public safety, land management, and many others. I am proud that - whatever our different viewpoints might be on international politics - our local elected officials have, until now, not been consumed by complicated foreign policy situations in which many governments and agencies are involved and have expertise. Our city government has enough to do - including protecting all Alameda's residents, of every religion, national origin, race, sexual orientation, etc. from being treated as outsiders here in Alameda.

Those demanding a "cease-fire" resolution do not speak for all Alamedans - or, I believe - even a majority of us, who hope our City government will continue to focus on governing the City. Please do not allow this audience at the January 2nd meeting!

Stacy Neiman

The Neiman Family

1949 Otis Drive

Alameda, CA 94501

(510) 290-9469

From: [Bryan Schwartz](#)
To: [CityCouncil-List](#); [Manager Manager](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Thank you, and a request, from a concerned Jewish Alamedan
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 2:34:57 PM

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft, City Councilmembers, and Madame City Manager -

I learned that a Gaza "cease-fire" resolution is being considered for the City Council agenda January 2, 2024, and am writing to beg that you not proceed with this resolution, because of the harmful impact it will have on my family and I believe other Alameda Jewish families - and, the impact it *will not* have on the crisis in the Middle East.

It has been a very tough time for Jewish kids, and the Jewish community as a whole, especially here in the East Bay, as I'm sure you know. Many of us who identify as Jewish feel worried even going to the grocery store in Alameda and buying Shabbat candles or a challah, for fear that someone may see us and attack us. Kids are worried to wear a necklace with a Jewish star or Hebrew writing to school. There have been horrific anti-Semitic verbal assaults not only during public comment at City Council here, but at many public meetings. Recently, an Oakland City Council meeting that was launched as a misplaced discussion on foreign policy wound up being hijacked as a multi-hour anti-Semitic rant against the Jewish people and homeland. It has become common for people to say "from the river to the sea" - implying the elimination of over 7 million Jewish people in Israel, more than were murdered in the Holocaust - like it is inoffensive. This is immensely, personally threatening. Here is a link that is relevant: <https://jcrbayarea.salsalabs.org/cacitycouncils/index.html>

I have understood that, until now, Alameda has taken the position, vis-a-vis those trying to launch a similar attack through Alameda City Council, that they should lobby their federal elected officials if they have concerns about foreign policy. I want to thank you for taking this stand, and urge you to continue in this vein.

By way of background: my wife and I moved to Alameda in 2010 to raise our family because we were excited about Alameda as a diverse community where everyone belongs, *really*, not just as a slogan. I run a civil rights law practice in Oakland and have been fortunate to help tens of thousands around California and nationwide combat discrimination, harassment, and other unlawful employment practices. Previously I was Chair of the Alameda Open Government Commission, and I am a member of the Board of the Alameda Boys & Girls Club and numerous other local non-profits. My kids attend Alameda High School and Otis Elementary and are involved in Alameda sports. So, I am invested in this community!

I continue to love our City and its diversity, but have lately been worried that the poisonous attacks on Jewish people that we have been seeing in Richmond, Oakland, and other places locally would infect our town. I hope with your leadership that the tide is stopped before it overcomes our island!

There are so many City concerns we all have - poverty and homelessness, public safety, land management, and many others. I am proud that - whatever our different viewpoints might be on international politics - our local elected officials have, until now, not been consumed by complicated foreign policy situations in which many governments and agencies are involved and have expertise. Our City government has enough to do - including protecting all Alameda's residents, of every religion, national origin, race, sexual orientation, etc. from being treated as outsiders here in Alameda.

To conclude - a Jewish parable about the power of speech: a man who was caught gossiping was confronted by the Rabbi about his loose speech (in Hebrew, *lashon hara*, literally meaning "evil tongue") and basically said, "What's the big deal?" On a breezy day, the Rabbi asked him to take a feather pillow to the town square, and cut it open, and then to collect all the feathers and stuff them back into the pillow. The man thought this was ridiculous, but tried to do it to please his Rabbi. He came back to the Rabbi and said, "It was impossible - the feathers went everywhere. Once they are out, you can't put them all back in." "Aha," said the Rabbi, "and it is the same with your words. You never know where those feathers will spread." Gossip can be harmful, but hate speech is even worse, with its unintended consequences.

Those demanding a "cease-fire" resolution do not speak for all Alamedans - or, I believe - even a majority of us, who hope our City government will continue to focus on governing the City. Please do not let the "feather pillow" be cut open at the January 2nd meeting!

Bryan Schwartz

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Pronouns: He/Him/His
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communication is strictly prohibited.

From: [Deborah Sullivan](#)
To: [CityCouncil-List](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Ceasefire Resolution
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 2:09:26 PM

Hello Council Members,

I had the honor of commenting at the meeting last night. I thought I would send you a written copy of my comment. If you have any questions about what millions of Jewish people are saying, please feel free to reach out. I am happy to chat or I could put you in touch with leadership from Jewish Voice for Peace, Bay Area.

I am here a 20 year resident of Alameda and in support of a resolution that will be put forth by Alameda Families and Friends for Ceasefire in Gaza.

In this act of “thinking globally and acting locally,” I urge you to add our Island's voices to this worldwide call for ceasefire. Change comes from grassroot movements that happen locally.

As Eduardo Martinez, the mayor of Richmond, Calif.
Says:

“As a mayor, my voice alone may be meaningless, but when I sing in a chorus, we make music that people have to listen to.”

Like many Jewish people, I was raised in a Zionist family, so I know all the arguments: "it's complicated," "you don't know the history," "you are antisemitic if you criticize Israel." The purpose is to silence us. We will not be quiet.

It's really simple. At this writing, about 20,000 Palestinian men, women and children have been killed by Israel's relentless, indiscriminate bombardment. October 7th was horrific. No question. We mourn for all

those that have been killed and fight like hell for those still alive. It is not a matter of choosing sides of who deserves to live. Israel's not acting in defense. This is genocide.

It is heartbreaking to watch a government call itself The Jewish State, claim to act on behalf of Jews worldwide, and commit the same heinous war crimes that have been done to our own people. Being critical of Israel does not equate to antisemitism. There is plenty of real antisemitism, Islamophobia, and racism. Let's not weaponize oppression in order to oppress others.

This resolution is the least we can do. We must hope that every small action adds up to saving the lives of Palestinians who are dying by U.S. weapons, starvation and disease because of lack of clean water, bombed hospitals with no supplies. Not in our names! Not with our tax dollars! Jews call for ceasefire now!