

Resolution language with local impact only

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Dear Councilors,

Amit Sousanna was one of the more than 200 hostages kidnapped by Hamas on October 7, 2023. She told the horrifying details of her nearly two months in captivity in an article published by the New York Times. Prior to that, Ms. Sousanna worked in an Israeli law firm as a colleague of my brother, attorney Abraham ("Avi") Robinson. It really is a small world.

Previously, I wrote to you about my friend Jonathan ("Yoni") Jesner, who was murdered in a Palestinian suicide bombing on September 19, 2002. I included his memory in the middle name of my son, Jacob Jonathan Robinson. They, too, are connected in our small world.

There is no way to advocate for a ceasefire without disappointing some members of my Jewish community here in Malden. This leaves two possibilities. One is to do it anyway and try to word it in a way that limits the adverse impact on either side of the global conflict. The other is to withdraw the notion of ceasefire altogether and make a more focused statement to combat antisemitism and Islamophobia, among all forms of hate.

If you proceed with the first approach, I urge you to put the release of the hostages above all other considerations. Not to suggest an exact wording, but something like "we ask our federal government to persuade the parties to the conflict to release the hostages who were captured in the October 7 attack, as part of a negotiated ceasefire intended to ensure security in Israel, Gaza, and the West Bank, and to increase access to humanitarian aid." Even this wording will not satisfy many in my community, but it would be an improvement over putting the word "ceasefire" before the word "hostages."

The second approach is better. It will disappoint many pro-Palestinians, but you can explain if you choose, that (if true) there is no precedent for involving our local city in global politics and conflict, centered 5,000 miles away, and this is NOT the time to change that precedent. Making sure our people of all faiths feel comfortable in schools, parks, and anywhere else is still important. By the way, my son and I saw some people in apparent Muslim clothing yesterday (Sunday), with their children, in a local park in our city, and everything was fine. It should always be so.

Sincerely,

Yale Yechiel N. Robinson
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