

RESOLUTION 21-12

CONDEMNING THE ILLEGAL EVICTIONS OF PALESTINIANS BY THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT

BE IT RESOLVED by the Rent Stabilization Board of the City of Berkeley as follows:

WHEREAS, the mission of the Berkeley Rent Stabilization Board and the purpose of the Rent Stabilization and Eviction for Good Cause Ordinance include the prevention of unwarranted, unjust, and illegal evictions;¹² and

WHEREAS, while the Rent Board's jurisdiction is limited to the City of Berkeley, as Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. stated, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere"; and

WHEREAS, Israeli settlers are attempting to use racist laws, which permit Jews but not Palestinians to make claims on land held from before the partition of Israel and Palestine,^{3 4} to forcibly evict Palestinian residents of the East Jerusalem neighborhood of Sheikh Jarrah;⁵ and

WHEREAS, the settlers attempting to occupy these properties have never owned or lived in them, and some have moved from as far away as the United States to perpetrate this dispossession;⁶ and

WHEREAS, the organizations and individuals perpetrating the evictions in Sheikh Jarrah are by their own admission undertaking these actions to convert the neighborhood from majority Palestinian to majority Jewish, in what amounts to a campaign of ethnic cleansing;⁷ and

WHEREAS, the escalation of violence and oppression in Sheikh Jarrah and at the Al-Aqsa Mosque by Israeli Occupation Forces was the trigger for the most recent escalation of violence in Israel and Palestine;⁸ and

¹ https://www.cityofberkeley.info/Rent_Stabilization_Board/Department_Master_and_Collections/TEMP_-_About_Us_and_Contact_Us/Rent_Board_-_About_Us.aspx

² BMC Section 13.76.030, Ord. 5467-NS § 3, 1982; Ord. 5261-NS § 3, 1980

³ https://www.nrc.no/globalassets/pdf/legal-opinions/absentee_law_memo.pdf

⁴ <https://www.jpost.com/israel/arabs-jews-dont-have-equal-rights-to-recover-property>

⁵ <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2021/may/17/palestinians-sheikh-jarrah-jerusalem-city-identity>

⁶ <https://apnews.com/article/jerusalem-africa-middle-east-government-and-politics-bf48f2b789e4989d8d3a9e77243ab3b8>

⁷ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vn0JytPgcgg>

⁸ <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/10/world/middleeast/jerusalem-protests-aqsa-palestinians.html>

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WHEREAS, militarized police forces carrying out unjust evictions is not unfamiliar to us here in the East Bay, with the Alameda County Sheriff's Department under the leadership of the rightwing, anti-immigrant Sheriff Gregory Ahern deploying armored vehicles and over 30 armed agents to evict the Moms 4 Housing from their reclaimed Oakland home;⁹ and

WHEREAS, both international¹⁰ and Israeli¹¹ NGOs have determined that Israel's racist and anti-democratic system of law and government, which subjects millions of Palestinians to Israeli military rule, is a form of apartheid; and

WHEREAS, despite this clear and ongoing violation of international law and human rights, the American government continues to provide multiple billions of dollars a year in military aid to Israel, which it uses to further the dispossession, oppression, and assault of the Palestinian people;¹² and

WHEREAS, Berkeley has a proud history of standing with the victims of apartheid, with the Anti-Apartheid movement in the United States in many ways beginning in Berkeley;¹³ and

WHEREAS, Representative Betty McCollum of Minnesota has introduced H.R.2590, a law that would promote and protect the human rights of Palestinians living under Israeli military occupation and to ensure that American tax dollars are not used by Israel to support the military detention of Palestinian children, the unlawful seizure, appropriation, and destruction of Palestinian property and forcible transfer of civilians in the West Bank, or the further annexation of Palestinian land;¹⁴ and

WHEREAS, while this law fails to concretely reduce American aid to Israel, it represents a crucial first step in ending America's unconditional support for Israeli apartheid.

⁹ <https://www.ktvu.com/news/sheriffs-deputies-with-guns-drawn-evict-homeless-moms-from-oakland-home>

¹⁰ <https://www.hrw.org/report/2021/04/27/threshold-crossed/israeli-authorities-and-crimes-apartheid-and-persecution>

¹¹ https://www.btselem.org/publications/fulltext/202101_this_is_apartheid

¹² <https://carnegieendowment.org/2021/05/12/bringing-assistance-to-israel-in-line-with-rights-and-u.s.-laws-pub-84503>

¹³ <https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/how-students-helped-end-apartheid>

¹⁴ <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/2590>

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NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Berkeley Rent Stabilization Board condemns the illegal evictions of Palestinians from Sheikh Jarrah and the continued displacement of Palestinians across Palestine and Israel; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Berkeley Rent Stabilization board calls for the end of American funding of Israeli apartheid, starting with the passage of H.R. 2590, and calls on Congresswoman Barbara Lee to immediately cosponsor the legislation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution shall be sent to Congresswoman Barbara Lee, Senator Dianne Feinstein, and Senator Alex Padilla.

Dated: June 17, 2021

Adopted by the Rent Stabilization Board of the City of Berkeley by the following vote:

YES:

NO:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

Leah Simon-Weisberg, Chairperson
Rent Stabilization Board

Attest: _____
Matt Brown, Acting Executive Director