



Legislative Building  
Olympia, WA 98504-0482

## Washington State Senate

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October 11, 2023

THE HONORABLE Jay Inslee  
Governor, State of Washington  
P.O. Box 40002  
Olympia, WA 98504-0002

Dear Governor Inslee,

We strongly urge you to demonstrate Washington's support for the people of Israel by flying their flag at the state Capitol and directing that all Washington state flags be flown at half-staff.

The surprise attack by HAMAS on Saturday, Oct. 7 resulted in the largest loss of Jewish lives in a single day since the Holocaust. News sources report that more than a dozen Americans are among the dead. HAMAS has abducted men, women, children, and elderly people. Images and videos have spread across social media of HAMAS militants desecrating dead bodies and committing other unspeakable horrors.

As Israel calls up 300,000 reserve forces to fight against the sudden escalation of the conflict over Gaza by HAMAS militants, it is critical for governments around the world to stand with the Israeli people and for peace in the region.

There is no moral equivalence between self-defense in war and the murder of innocent civilians. As a Wall Street Journal editorial put it, mayhem and injustice can result "when the baser instincts of human nature and murderous ambition are left unchecked by civilized nations."

We must stand together against such atrocities.

HAMAS not only holds Americans and Israelis hostage. They also hold the Palestinian people in Gaza hostage. Anyone who opposes their tyrannical rule is killed.

The United States is Israel's closest ally and the demonstration of our support for the Jewish homeland is an important show of solidarity. This is consistent with the stance taken by President Biden.

Lowering our Washington and the United States flags to half-staff will say that we stand with all who have been murdered and oppressed by HAMAS. Flying the Israeli flag over

our Capitol will say that, in our corner of the world, we stand with our friends on the front lines whose blood is being shed in the defense of freedom and the quest for peace.

Thank you for considering our request.

Regards,

Handwritten signature of Andy Billig in black ink.

Senator Andy Billig  
Senate Majority Leader  
3rd Legislative District

Handwritten signature of John Braun in black ink.

Senator John Braun  
Senate Republican Leader  
20<sup>th</sup> Legislative District