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Dear NorCal Sabeel:

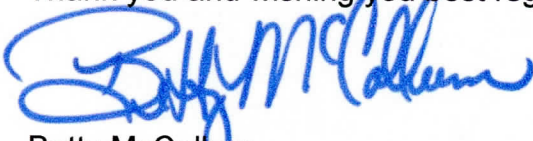
I would like to extend my greetings to all the participants in your webinar regarding censorship and Palestine. Freedom of speech is a fundamental right in our country, and it should be considered an essential human right everywhere – including in Palestine.

I have had the honor of serving in Congress for 20 years representing my Minnesota constituents. My commitment to defend human rights and promote human dignity is deeply rooted in the values of the people I represent and serve. This includes advocating for peace, security, equality, justice, and self-determination for the people of Palestine and the people of Israel. It means voicing my strong opposition to Israel's military occupation of Palestine, along with the systemic repression inflicted on Palestinian children and families.

As a Member of Congress, my voice is one of a few determined to speak out loudly in support of Palestinian rights. I have introduced legislation – H.R. 2407 – to condemn Israel's systemic military detention of Palestinian children. I have also introduced H.R. 8050 to prohibit the U.S. government from supporting or extending legitimacy to Israel's efforts to annex Palestinian land. While these bills will never pass Congress, I want them to be used as tools to mobilize advocates and human rights champions, like you, on behalf of Palestinian rights. I also want the Palestinian people to know that there are American political leaders who will stand with them in solidarity as they seek freedom and self-determination.

This is difficult work, but I am grateful that there are Californians and Minnesotans and people all across our country willing to work to end the oppression of the Palestinians and advance peace, justice and equality for all people.

Thank you and wishing you best regards,



Betty McCollum
Member of Congress



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