

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

October 8, 2021

Yael Lempert  
Acting Assistant Secretary  
Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs  
Department of State  
U.S. Department of State  
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Ms. Lempert:

We write to bring to your attention to a pressing situation involving the Palestinian village of Wadi Foquin in the West Bank. Wadi Foquin is an agricultural village with a population of approximately 1,300 residents located in the Bethlehem District between the 1949 Armistice (Green) Line and the Israeli settlement of Bitar Illit.

It has been brought to our attention that the Israeli government may confiscate farmland in Wadi Foquin to construct a road that could cut through the eastern portion of the village. If such a road is constructed, it could isolate Wadi Foquin from Bethlehem, where the village's produce is marketed, as well as potentially restrict movement from or to Wadi Foquin and other Palestinian villages. Such a development would have severe social, economic, and ecological impacts on the lives of the Palestinian residents in Wadi Foquin.

It is also our understanding that for the past several years, agricultural fields surrounding Wadi Foquin have been regularly contaminated by sewage runoff from nearby Israeli settlements threatening the livelihoods of the village's Palestinian farmers. Local residents have expressed concern that this is part of an organized campaign of harassment and intimidation. We understand discussions are underway to try and resolve the sewage contamination problem and provide compensation to affected Palestinian residents.

We urge the State Department to support any such discussions that recognize the rights and claims of the Palestinian residents. We also request your assistance in working with the Israeli government to ensure that farmland is not confiscated in Wadi Foquin for the building of a road that would isolate part of the village and have detrimental impacts on the lives and livelihoods of the Palestinian residents.

The United States has traditionally played a constructive role as mediator and promoter of dialogue and reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians. That is why we urge you as part of the Biden administration's commitment to making real improvements in the lives of the Palestinian people to include the village of Wadi Foquin in such efforts. We would further

encourage U.S. State Department personnel to visit Wadi Foquin to directly observe the situation in order to help inform U.S. government efforts.

We appreciate your attention to this matter and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Barbara Lee  
Member of Congress

/s

Donald S. Beyer Jr.  
Member of Congress

/s

Peter Welch  
Member of Congress

/s

James P. McGovern  
Member of Congress

/s

Marie Newman  
Member of Congress

/s

Katherine M. Clark  
Member of Congress

/s

Joaquin Castro  
Member of Congress

/s

Jan Schakowsky  
Member of Congress



David E. Price  
Member of Congress

/s

Jackie Speier  
Member of Congress

/s

John A. Yarmuth  
Member of Congress

/s

Mark Pocan  
Member of Congress

/s

Anna G. Eshoo  
Member of Congress

/s

Earl Blumenauer  
Member of Congress

/s

Betty McCollum  
Member of Congress

/s

Gerald E. Connolly  
Member of Congress

/s  
Jerry McNerney  
Member of Congress

/s  
Ro Khanna  
Member of Congress

/s  
Eddie Bernice Johnson  
Member of Congress

/s  
Jesús G. “Chuy” García  
Member of Congress

/s  
Judy Chu  
Member of Congress

/s  
Danny K. Davis  
Member of Congress