

May ____, 2011

The Honorable Barack Obama
President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As Members of Congress we strongly urge you to retract the statements that you made last week regarding the Israeli and Palestinian border. During these unpredictable times in the Middle East, it is essential that that United States maintain a steadfast commitment to one of our closest allies. The security of the State of Israel has a direct correlation with the national security of our country. By calling on Israel to support a Palestinian State that reverts back to 1967 borders, your actions have placed Israel in a dangerous and difficult position.

These unprecedented steps would mark a significant change to established U.S. foreign policy. Israel has already made and under any peace agreement with the Palestinians will make, many land concessions and calling for a return to 1967 borders would jeopardize Israeli security and does not reflect the current on-the-ground reality. Border negotiations should be part of the final status issues between Israel and Palestine and should not be individually singled out.

Mr. President, we are extremely disappointed that you took it upon yourself to redefine the borders between Israel and Palestine. The U.S. role should be one of a mediator that seeks to help resolve this conflict but not declare a winner or loser and does not further compromise security in an already volatile region. We agree with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's comments last week that "The viability of a Palestinian state cannot come at the expense of Israel's existence." Your actions are not only misguided, but inappropriate and could not have come at a worse time given the timing of your meeting with the Prime Minister the following day. Today, Prime Minister Netanyahu addressed a Joint Meeting of Congress and reconfirmed that a return to 1967 borders is not practical and would also further place Israel in harm's way.

We urge you and your Administration not to pick winners and losers to appease your agenda at the expense of Israel. Given ever-changing circumstances in the Middle East, our unwavering commitment to Israel, its security and long-term viability is now more important than ever. We look forward to your response to this timely matter.

Sincerely,

Mike Coffman
Member of Congress

Scott Tipton
Member of Congress

Joe Walsh
Member of Congress