

Israel-Hamas war

US House censures Rashida Tlaib over comments on Israel-Hamas war

Michigan Democrat draws fire for statement about 'resistance' as Joe Biden's party divided by response to conflict



Rashida Tlaib of Michigan is the only Palestinian-American representative in Congress © Mariam Zuhaib/AP

James Politi in Washington 7 HOURS AGO

The US House of Representatives has voted to censure Rashida Tlaib, a Democratic representative from Michigan, accusing her of “promoting false narratives” about the Hamas attacks on Israel and “calling for the destruction” of the state of Israel.

The formal rebuke of [Tlaib](#) passed the lower chamber of Congress on Tuesday night by a margin of 234 to 188, with 22 Democrats joining most Republicans to admonish the progressive lawmaker, who represents parts of the Detroit area.

The resolution criticised Tlaib over a statement released on October 8, just one day after Hamas attacks in southern Israel that Israeli officials said killed more than 1,400 civilians and soldiers.

The resolution also cited her use of the popular Palestinian slogan “from the river to the sea”, which it said was “widely recognised as a genocidal call to violence” aimed at destroying Israel. Pro-Palestine groups interpret the slogan as a call for freedom and peaceful coexistence.

The censure vote against Tlaib, the only Palestinian-American representative in Congress, comes as [Democrats have been divided](#) over the Biden administration’s response to the conflict between Israel and Hamas, the militant group that has controlled the Gaza Strip since 2007.

While most of the party's lawmakers back the White House policy of supporting Israel's military response while [calling for "tactical pauses"](#) in the fighting, a group of progressive lawmakers, including Tlaib, have pushed for a ceasefire in the blockaded enclave.

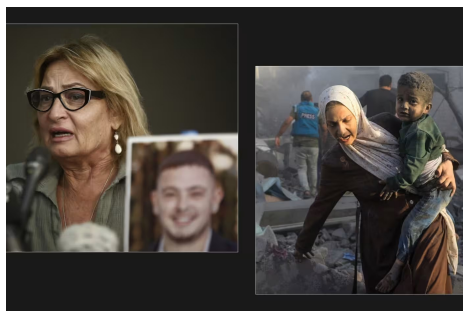
More than 10,300 people have been killed by the Israeli bombardment of Gaza, according to Palestinian officials, where rights groups warn of a growing humanitarian crisis.

Tlaib has warned President Joe Biden that his position on [the war](#) could cost him support among Democrats in the vital swing state of Michigan in the 2024 White House race.

"Trying to bully or censure me won't work because this movement for a ceasefire is much bigger than one person. It's growing every single day," Tlaib, who was elected in 2018, said on Tuesday ahead of the censure vote.

She added: "The idea that criticising the government of Israel is antisemitic sets a very dangerous precedent, and it's being used to silence diverse voices speaking up for human rights across our nation."

Israel-Hamas war: 2-minute briefing



[Stay informed with a summary](#) of the latest events plus FT analysis, comment and features

Six Republicans opposed the censure, but enough Democrats backed the resolution to ensure its passage, among them Debbie Wasserman Schultz, the Florida representative and former chair of the Democratic National Committee.

Censure resolutions, which were once relatively rare but have been increasingly deployed along partisan lines, do not have any impact on a lawmaker's standing in Congress, but represent a formal rebuke and are one step below expulsion.

In February, House Republicans removed Minnesota representative Ilhan Omar, a [Democratic ally of Tlaib](#), from the House Foreign Affairs Committee over previous critical comments she had made about Israel, though that vote was along party lines.

[Copyright](#) The Financial Times Limited 2023. All rights reserved.
