

Tuesday, August 9, 2011

Where in the World is YOUR Representative?!

Last week, the President and Congress narrowly avoided an unprecedented default on the U.S. debt by agreeing at the 11th hour to raise the debt-ceiling. But S&P still downgraded the U.S. credit rating, pushing U.S. and global financial markets into a downfall.

Washington's deal does nothing to help Americans who are still suffering from massive cutbacks in social services, an unemployment rate stuck above 9% (over 16% among African-Americans), and an estimated 10 million families facing foreclosure on their homes by next year.



This August break is for Members of Congress to be at home, meeting with constituents to hear about our concerns. They should be listening to our anxiety about the economy and thinking through ways to dig us out of the financial mess they've created with their corporate giveaways, tax breaks for the wealthy and lax regulation of unscrupulous banks that are forcing people out of their homes with fraudulent mortgage documents.

They should hear our outrage about what the more than \$1.2 trillion of our tax dollars are doing to the peoples of Iraq and Afghanistan and to our troops they're sending over to fight wars without purpose.

Instead, 81 Representatives--nearly 20% of the House--are hightailing off to Israel on an all-expense-paid junket organized by an affiliate of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC). Israel's goal there is to lobby the Representatives to continue sending the Israeli military \$30 billion of our tax money -- the amount pledged for these 10 years (2009-2018). That means sending money we won't have for jobs and healthcare to buy weapons for Israel to perpetuate its illegal military occupation and apartheid policies toward Palestinians.

It's time to "name and shame" these Members of Congress who put more weapons for Israel ahead of their own constituents' economic rights. We need you to take action today:

1. Call your Representative and ask if s/he is going (or has gone) to Israel this month on a trip paid by the AIPAC-affiliate American Israel Educational Foundation (AIEF). If not, thank your Representative for not going. If so, politely express your outrage and urge your Representative to cancel the trip if s/he hasn't left yet. [Look up contact information for your Representative here](#), or call the Capitol switchboard at 202-224-3121 and ask to be transferred. [Let us know the result](#) of your call so that we can keep a running list of who is going (only a few of the 81 names are public at this point).



2. Write a letter-to-the-editor of your local paper and call into a local radio talk show to express your outrage about how much money your Congressional district is scheduled to give in weapons to Israel and what that money could be used for instead to fund unmet needs in your community ([find out just how much here](#)). Use the data along with [our sample letter-to-the-editor](#) to raise awareness in your community about the misplaced priorities of Congress. Mentioning your Representative in the local media gets the immediate attention of Congressional staff.



3. Organize a meeting with your Members of Congress during this August recess to urge that they end military aid to Israel and redirect that money to needs here at home. [Sign up to schedule a meeting](#), get a template [constituent meeting request](#), and [download a memo](#) to give to your Representative. Attend "town hall" meetings and put your Representative on the spot in public.



4. Organize a campaign to get your city council to pass a resolution opposing U.S. military aid to Israel and calling on the President and Congress to redirect that money to unmet needs in your city. Download an [organizing how-to guide](#), [template resources](#), and more on our new website: [Fund community needs, not Israel's misdeeds!](#)



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We are in an economic crisis. We've got to send a stringent warning to our elected officials that we will no longer accept business as usual. Take action today to demand that Members of Congress do their job to respond to this crisis by working in their districts and listening to us, not by taking lobbyist-paid junkets to guarantee their support for even more money and weapons to Israel.



Thank you for acting constructively upon the outrage we all feel right now.

6 comments

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Eyad Khalid Al Bahsh · Financial Planning & Budgeting Manager at BMW

this is what all the Americans should understand? the money they really need now is in the hand of Israel....

4 · Like · Reply · Wednesday at 5:10am



Jan Carlos Krueger

...Listening to CNN is so annoying.Makes me sick.All 1 sided views...And not 1 word on how the People of Gaza are coping.

2 · Like · Reply · 23 hours ago



Xaviant Haze · Pierce College

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1 · Like · Reply · 23 hours ago



Steven Hardbarger

Congressman Bob Gibbs is not. Steve Austria's office doesn't know. They are supposed to find out and get back to me....yeah, right.

1 · Like · Reply · Thursday at 10:07am



Pedro Granata

Not all of it, Eyad, there might also some of it remaining in the hands of your customers, the AIPAC lobbyists..

1 · Like · Reply · Thursday at 1:39am



Wameed Madi · Amman, Jordan

Luai Bajjali Moe Badah Omar Gonzalez Sameh Hanna SuZuki Swift check it out guys so true.

Like · Reply · Thursday at 10:15am

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Posted by Josh H. at 3:55 PM

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Labels: action, AIPAC, city councils, congress, hasbara, Israeli propaganda, josh ruebner, lobby, military aid, taxes, U.S. policy

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