



The Sabra Report

Senate Resolutions Blocking Arms Sales to Israel Fail

Recap:

The US Senate voted to block three resolutions aimed at stopping the transfer of US weapons to Israel.

The Context:

- ✧ The war in Gaza began last year after Hamas killed 1,200 people in Israel and took 251 hostages. Hamas says that more than 43,922 Palestinians have been killed since the start of the war. The unverified figure does not distinguish between civilians and combatants [1]. Most of Gaza's 2.3 million people have been displaced and over 100 Israelis are still being held hostage in Gaza.
- ✧ The US has sent \$18 billion in military aid to Israel since the start of the war [2] and aside from pausing one planned shipment of 2,000-pound bombs, President Joe Biden has rejected calls to limit military support [3]. US law gives Congress the right to stop major foreign weapons sales by passing resolutions of disapproval [4]. The three resolutions pertained to transfers of tank rounds, mortar shells and bomb guidance kits [5].
- ✧ Senator Bernie Sanders from Vermont asserted the military aid to Israel violates US law barring weapons sales to human rights abusers [6]. The White House came out publicly against the resolutions before the vote [7] however, 19 Senate Democrats ultimately voted in favor of some or all resolutions. All Republican senators present voted against the measures.
- ✧ If the bills had passed the Senate, they would have needed to be approved by the House of Representatives and the President. A presidential veto can be overturned with a two-thirds majority in the House and Senate [8]. Congress has never succeeded in blocking any arms sales with joint resolutions [9].
- ✧ This week, the Biden administration vetoed a United Nations Gaza cease-fire resolution since no mention was made about the Israeli hostages held in Gaza. In January, Republicans will control both houses of Congress and President-elect Donald Trump is expected to more closely embrace Israel. Trump has called on Netanyahu to bring the Gaza war to a quick close but offered few specifics on how to do so [10].

Conversation Points:

- ✧ Is the tradition of strong bipartisan support for Israel fading?
- ✧ Why would Sanders want to prevent Israel from having the technology needed for more precise weapons?
- ✧ How would these resolutions have exacerbated the situation in Gaza instead of mitigating it?

Notes:

1. [Senate motions blocking arms sales to Israel fail, but pick up Democrat support](#), Jacob Magid, Times of Israel, November 21st, 2024
2. [19 Senators back limiting offensive weapons to Israel in key vote](#), Brad Dress, The Hill, November 20th, 2024
3. [Senate rejects effort from Bernie Sanders to block some weapons for Israel over Gaza deaths](#), ELLEN KNICKMEYER, AP News, November 20th, 2024
4. [Nineteen Senate Democrats vote to block US aid to Israel](#), Marc Rod & Emily Jacobs, Jewish Insider, November 20th, 2024
5. [Senate motions blocking arms sales to Israel fail, but pick up Democrat support](#), Jacob Magid, Times of Israel, November 21st, 2024
6. [Nineteen Senate Democrats vote to block US aid to Israel](#), Marc Rod & Emily Jacobs, Jewish Insider, November 20th, 2024
7. [US Senate rejects bids to block military sales to Israel](#), Patricia Zengerle, Reuters, November 20th, 2024
8. [Senate rejects effort from Bernie Sanders to block some weapons for Israel over Gaza deaths](#), ELLEN KNICKMEYER, AP News, November 20th, 2024
9. [19 Senators back limiting offensive weapons to Israel in key vote](#), Brad Dress, The Hill, November 20th, 2024
10. [Senate rejects effort from Bernie Sanders to block some weapons for Israel over Gaza deaths](#), ELLEN KNICKMEYER, AP News, November 20th, 2024

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