

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

October 28, 2020

The President  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20001

Dear President Trump,

We are writing to urge you to fully implement and enforce the Sanctioning the Use of Civilians as Defenseless Shields Act (the “Shields Act”), which you signed into law on December 21, 2018, following its unanimous passage by Congress. The Shields Act requires the President to submit to Congress an annually updated list of, and to impose sanctions on, individuals involved with the use of human shields by Hizballah and Hamas, as well as foreign persons, agencies, or instrumentalities that knowingly and materially support or direct the use of human shields by these groups.

On July 23, 2019, the Department of the Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control amended the Global Terrorism Sanctions Regulations to reflect the Shields Act. On December 22, 2019, your administration delivered to Congress its initial report pursuant to the Shields Act. We appreciate this important step, and call upon the administration to quickly and decisively build upon it by utilizing the sanctions required under the law to punish those responsible for this barbaric practice.

Recently, we have learned of Hizballah precision-guided missile (PGM) component manufacturing and storage facilities located under residential buildings in Beirut’s Laylaki and Chouaifet neighborhoods. These factories could be viewed as military targets and therefore put at risk the civilians living above them. The September 22, 2020 explosion at a facility in southern Lebanon underscores the risks posed by Hizballah’s habitual and purposeful positioning of weapons in civilian areas. The chance of a disaster at sites such as this is far too high to allow this practice to continue unchecked. In the absence of change, it is only a matter of time before Hizballah’s reckless endangerment of civilians causes even more innocent loss of life.

While the U.S. government has taken strong measures to counter Hizballah and Hamas in recent years, it has yet to sanction these entities specifically for their use of human shields. Adding human shields to existing sanctions regimes would make clear the U.S. government does not tolerate those who put civilians in harm’s way and would encourage like-minded countries to take similar measures.

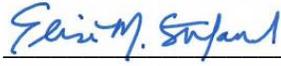
Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



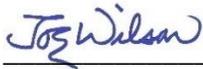
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Mike Gallagher  
Member of Congress



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Elise Stefanik  
Member of Congress



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Joe Wilson  
Member of Congress



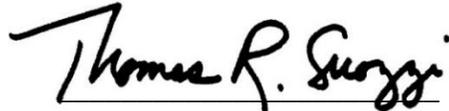
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Vicky Hartzler  
Member of Congress



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Lee Zeldin  
Member of Congress



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Thomas R. Suozzi  
Member of Congress



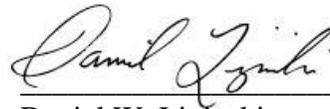
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Josh Gottheimer  
Member of Congress



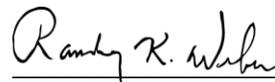
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Bradley S. Schneider  
Member of Congress



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Daniel W. Lipinski  
Member of Congress



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Randy K. Weber  
Member of Congress