

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515–2201

October 27, 2023

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Johnson,

Congratulations on your recent election as the 56th Speaker of the House! I would like to highlight a very simple and concrete step that the House can take—unilaterally—that will send a clear message of support for Israel in its current war with Hamas. As you may know, Israel last week expelled the “journalists” from the propaganda outlet Al Jazeera—which is owned and ultimately controlled by the Emir of Qatar—because it has overtly acted as the Hamas media outlet during the war, including by airing fawning interviews of top Hamas leaders (most of whom live in Doha).

At the same time, more than 100 “journalists” from Al Jazeera still enjoy almost unfettered access to Capitol Hill because of the credentials issued to them by the House Press Gallery. For numerous reasons, the House should make a simple change to its own Administrative Rules—meaning no involvement of the Senate or the White House—in order to immediately revoke the credentials of Al Jazeera from the House Press Gallery.

In March of this year, I introduced H.Res 189, which would prevent state-sponsored media outlets from obtaining press credentials from the House Press Gallery, unless they are in full compliance with U.S. law, including the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA).

This would apply to Al Jazeera because it has refused to register under FARA, despite DOJ determining back in 2020 that the outlet was acting as an unregistered agent of the State of Qatar—thus triggering its obligation to FARA-register. As you may know, more than a dozen media outlets owned and/or controlled by the Chinese Communist Party also openly flout FARA—and yet many of them, like Al Jazeera, still maintain free reign of the U.S. Capitol by virtue of credentials awarded them by the House Press Gallery.

As a retired Marine Lieutenant General, I am a firm believer in the need to follow protocol. But my experience has also taught me that there are some situations that require immediate corrective action. Given that Hamas is using Al Jazeera daily to promote blood libels against Israel—and even calling for “Jihad” against the United States and the West—there is more than sufficient justification for you to use your power as Speaker to *immediately* revoke Al Jazeera’s House Press Gallery credentials. There is recent precedent for such action: former Speaker Nancy Pelosi revoked the press credentials of an anti-CCP outlet, the *Epoch Times*, unilaterally several years ago for purely political reasons unrelated to national security.



For your reference, I am attaching a letter sent this February to your predecessor regarding my resolution. Among other things, the letter details the profound national security concerns inherent in providing an “all-access pass” for the U.S. Capitol to supposed reporters from outlets owned by despotic regimes—especially when those foreign powers have a documented history of wielding their espionage forces to target critics inside the U.S., as has been done repeatedly by China, Russia, and Qatar.

Credentialed members of the House and Senate galleries enjoy unparalleled access to the U.S. Capitol, as well as to Senators, Members of Congress, and staffers. While this access is necessary for the media to provide accurate reporting to the American public, it is also the kind of access coveted by foreign powers seeking sensitive information from inside Congress.

The most recent list of press credentials issued by Congress shows that Al Jazeera’s various subsidiaries (Al Jazeera International, Al Jazeera English, and AJ+) have 136 employees who have been credentialed by Congress. For context, the *New York Times* has 82 employees with credentials.

With Al Jazeera openly endorsing Hamas’ barbaric ideology—and the administration tacitly acknowledging the State of Qatar’s control over its own outlet when Secretary Blinken admitted asking the emirate to “tone down” its pro-Hamas coverage—there is no better time to revoke the press credentials Al Jazeera’s operatives have been awarded from the House Press Gallery.

This case is much more clearcut in demanding immediate action.

Thank you for your agent attention to this matter, and congratulations on your recent election. I look forward to working with you closely on this and other issues where we can help strengthen U.S. national security interests.

Sincerely,



Jack Bergman
Member of Congress