118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. ______

To restore funding for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. CARSON introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on ____________________

A BILL

To restore funding for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “UNRWA Funding Emergency Restoration Act of 2024”.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) The humanitarian crisis in Gaza has reached a catastrophic emergency level, with two
million Palestinian civilians suffering daily due to escalating conflict and deprivation.

(2) The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) has warned of imminent famine in northern Gaza if humanitarian assistance, including food, water, and medicine, are not immediately provided to Palestinian civilians. Hostilities hindering the delivery of aid in southern Gaza threaten to create a similar situation. United States Agency for International Development Director Samantha Power testified that famine is currently underway in parts of Gaza.

(3) The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) has since 1949 played a vital and central role in providing shelter, education, healthcare, and financial assistance to millions of Palestinians living in vulnerable refugee communities across Gaza, the West Bank, Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan.

(4) UNRWA’s aid operations are essential to meeting the humanitarian needs of Palestinian civilians in Gaza and beyond. U.S. United Nations Alternative Representative for Special Political Affairs Robert Wood expressed to the United Nations Security Council that UNRWA is critical to averting a
famine in Gaza, stating “Other United Nations agencies and humanitarian organizations have reiterated they are not equipped to replace UNRWA, as UNRWA performs essential government-like functions their organizations do not have the capacity or structure to deliver.”.

(5) UNRWA remains the primary distributor of aid in Gaza and is essential to accommodating any humanitarian aid surge to the besieged population.

(6) Following allegations of direct involvement by individual UNRWA employee involvement in the devastating terrorist attacks of October 7, 2023, UNRWA Commissioner-General Lazzarini acted swiftly and decisively, fully cooperating with Israeli authorities, publicly disclosing the allegations, and immediately terminating all the employees involved.

(7) United Nations Secretary-General Guterres has taken additional corrective steps, including launching an investigation into the allegations by the United Nation’s highest oversight body, the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS).

(8) In April 2024, an independent, outside review concluded that UNRWA has established a significant number of mechanisms and procedures to ensure compliance with humanitarian principles with
an emphasis on the principle of neutrality. This re-
view included recommendations for steps to
strengthen neutrality policies, all of which UNRWA
immediately agreed to implement.

(9) Almost all parties, including the European
Union, United Kingdom, Germany, Sweden, Japan,
France, Switzerland, Canada, The Netherlands,
Australia, Italy, Austria, Finland, Iceland, Romania,
and Estonia have already restored funding to
UNRWA following these strong actions taken by the
United Nations and the commitments made by
UNRWA toward complete accountability and reform.

(10) Ireland, Portugal, Spain, Belgium have
since provided resources to UNRWA above their
original commitments.

(11) The United States has historically been
the largest funder of UNRWA, and plays a pivotal
role in supporting the agency’s critical mission, and
represents 87 percent of suspended funding to
UNRWA.

(12) Properly vetted funding for UNRWA re-
 mains in the comprehensive strategic interests of the
United States, and its allies.

SEC. 3. STATEMENT OF POLICY.

Congress—
(1) recognizes that preventing further erosion of civilian conditions in Gaza remains in the strategic and moral interests of the United States;

(2) supports UNRWA’s unique and indispensable contribution to immediately addressing urgent humanitarian needs in Gaza, especially in mitigating and stopping the spread of famine;

(3) urges the Government of Israel to assist the United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) investigation team in its critical work;

(4) urges the Administration—

(A) to join United States allies in restoring funding to UNRWA given the responsible actions taken by the United Nations and UNRWA as well as the commitments made by UNRWA toward additional accountability, transparency, and reform; and

(B) to ensure continued funding to UNRWA is assessed based on UNRWA’s ongoing execution of the recommendations of the independent OIOS investigation;

(5) recognizes implementation of some of the independent outside review recommendations will require United Nations member state cooperation, including additional funding, and urges the United
States and Israel to assist UNRWA in its implementation efforts; and

(6) supports appropriating critical funds to UNRWA for fiscal year 2025.

SEC. 4. RESTORATION OF FUNDING FOR UNRWA.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Effective on the date of the enactment of this Act—

(1) title III of division G of the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024 (Public Law 118–47) is hereby repealed;

(2) section 308 of the Israel Security Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2024 (division A of Public Law 118–50) is hereby repealed; and

(3) the Secretary of State shall, notwithstanding any other provision of law and as soon as practicable—

(A) rescind the temporary pause in funding for UNRWA as described in the press statement entitled “Statement on UNRWA Allegations” issued on January 26, 2024; and

(B) resume the provision of funding to UNRWA under current authorities of the Department of State.

(b) REPORTS.—Not later than 90 days after the enactment date of the enactment of this Act, and quarterly
thereafter through December 31, 2027, the Secretary of State shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees of jurisdiction a report on the steps UNRWA is taking to implement any recommendations made by the United Nations’s Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) investigation team and the United Nation’s independent outside review group.