

As Mamdani, Ocasio-Cortez back him for House speaker

Democratic House leader Jeffries opposes cutoff of military aid to Israel

Barry Grey
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On Tuesday, House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries (Democrat-New York) sent a “dear colleague” letter to all 214 Democratic members of the House of Representatives informing them that he will vote “no” on an amendment to eliminate \$3.3 billion in military aid to Israel.

The amendment, sponsored by Kentucky Republican Thomas Massie, is part of an annual foreign affairs spending bill slated for a vote as early as this week. The amendment does not affect \$500 million in so-called “defensive” military funding, most of which goes to Israel’s Iron Dome missile defense system.

Jeffries’ opposition to the military aid cutoff does not come as a surprise. He is a notorious defender of the Zionist regime and major recipient of campaign funding from the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC). In this, he speaks for the entire Democratic Party leadership, which is fundamentally in agreement with the Trump administration’s support for Israel’s genocide in Gaza, itself a continuation of the policy of the Democratic administration of Joe Biden.

AIPAC has raised more than \$1 million for Jeffries. In the first half of 2025, Jeffries received \$250,000 from AIPAC’s PAC to his joint fundraising committee. On May 20 of this year, AIPAC PAC sent two earmarked payments—\$87,500 and \$61,800, totaling \$149,300—to the Jeffries Battleground Protection Fund, reportedly its largest single earmarked donation ever, listed in Federal Election Commission records as an “earmark of Daniel Och,” a billionaire hedge fund investor.

In his letter, Jeffries offered rhetorical thrusts against Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and called for a “reset” of relations between the US and Israel, but

he avoided any discussion of the mass murder carried out by Washington’s chief ally in the Middle East.

As of the most recent reports (July 12, 2026), the death toll from Israel’s military campaign in Gaza has risen to 73,223, with 173,654 people injured since October 7, 2023, according to Gaza’s Ministry of Health. The Ministry of Health’s official tally does not include people who died from disease, malnutrition, or lack of medical care due to the war, and doesn’t count those still missing under the rubble.

Some 83 percent of the dead were civilians, at least 21,289 of whom were children, alongside 44,500 children injured, according to UNICEF. Save the Children reports that at least 1,009 of the children killed were under age one. The same report notes that at least 135 children have starved to death, 20 of them since famine was declared on August 22.

The genocide is ongoing. As of the most recent *Al Jazeera* tally (through July 14-15) since the October 10, 2025 “ceasefire” took effect, Israeli attacks have killed at least 1,123 Palestinians and injured 3,616.

In his letter, Jeffries demonstrates his solidarity with US imperialism’s criminal policy in the Middle East, writing that “the so-called Massie amendment would restrict our country’s ability to confront Hamas, Hezbollah and other terrorist organizations in the region who are sworn enemies of both the United States and Israel.” He declares that the US and Israel need a “new security arrangement” that will “undergird the maintenance of Israel’s qualitative military edge against Iran and other malign actors in the region.”

Three weeks before Jeffries’ letter, voters in New York City gave expression to their growing opposition to capitalism and disgust with the Democratic Party’s

complicity in the crimes of the Trump administration by voting in primary elections for congressional candidates endorsed by Democratic Mayor Zohran Mamdani, a member of the Democratic Socialists of America, in two cases ousting Democratic incumbents.

A major issue in the leftward swing, with some 125,000 New Yorkers voting for self-described “socialist” and “progressive” candidates, was opposition to the US-backed Israeli genocide. The Mamdani-backed candidates denounced the Israeli war as genocide and attacked their opponents for taking campaign money from AIPAC. Separately, a majority of surveyed Democratic voters told AP-NORC (National Opinion Research Center) pollsters they believed Israel was committing genocide in Gaza.

Jeffries’ letter expresses the contempt, hostility and fear of the Democratic Party for the mounting opposition of broad mass of the population to the existing parties and economic system and growing interest in a socialist alternative. It is of a piece with the statement released recently by “centrist” House Democrats pledging support for capitalism, law and order, austerity and patriotism.

This is the party into which Mamdani and the DSA seek to channel mass opposition so as to block the development of an independent movement of the working class. Their so-called “democratic socialism” is not socialism at all, but rather the delusion that capitalism can be reformed—that the ruling corporate-financial oligarchy does not have to be expropriated and overthrown.

The relationship of Mamdani and the DSA to Jeffries exposes the hypocrisy of their denunciations of Zionism and their claims to be in rebellion against the Democratic Party establishment. Mamdani himself has repeatedly made clear that he will support Jeffries becoming Speaker of the House should the Democrats take control of the House of Representatives in the November midterm elections. Last November, following his election as mayor, Mamdani said on *Meet the Press* that he wanted to see Jeffries become House Speaker. That came just days after Jeffries was one of the signatories of a House resolution condemning socialism.

At Mamdani’s urging, the New York City DSA voted last November against endorsing a primary run in the 8th Congressional District by DSA City Council

member Chi Ossé to unseat Jeffries. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez said Ossé’s primary challenge was “not a good idea.” Ossé obediently withdrew his candidacy, allowing Jeffries to gain the nomination unopposed. More recently, Ocasio-Cortez, who voted last year in favor of \$500 million in funding for Israel’s Iron Dome, reiterated her support for Jeffries remaining the Democratic leader.

On June 25, two days after the primary sweep of his candidates, Mamdani met privately with Jeffries. According to a *Jewish Insider* report, Mamdani framed the meeting in advance as cooperative, telling reporters he was looking forward to working with Jeffries.



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