



Amnesty International

Group 524

May 2026



May Meeting One Day Later!! Death Penalty Issues Gaza- Block the Bombs Bill ICE Family Detention

Welcome

This month's meeting will be held one day later than usual. It will be **Wednesday May 20**. The focus this month is on the prohibition of the death penalty and immigrant family detention. We hope to see you on **Wednesday May 20** 6pm at the Commons.

PA Death Penalty Legislation

There is bipartisan legislation to abolish the death penalty in PA. See pages 2 and 3.

Block The Bombs

Arms that are fueling the devastation in Gaza are provided by the US. Please see pages 4 and 5.

May 20 National Day of Action

Amnesty has scheduled a National Day of Action on May 20 concerning ICE funding and immigrant family detention. See pages 6 and 7.

California Death Penalty Commutations

Governor Newsom can commute 550 death sentences before he leaves office. See pages 8 and 9.

Amnesty International Group 524

Meeting Schedule: Third Tuesday of the month, at 6:00 p.m.

Meeting Location: The Commons Residence Providence Heights
9000 Babcock Blvd.

Contact John Belch (joheb@aol.com or 412-766-1894) for more information on material in this mailing, or visit the Amnesty USA web site (www.amnestyusa.org)





Tell House Leadership: It's Time to Abolish the Death Penalty in PA!

We have a critical opportunity to make history in Pennsylvania. Recently, the House Judiciary Committee took a historic step by passing House Bills 99 and 888—bipartisan legislation that would finally abolish the death penalty in our Commonwealth.

However, these bills are now at a standstill. As House Majority Leader, Representative Matt Bradford holds the sole power to "calendar" these bills. Without his direct action to schedule them for a floor vote, this momentum will stall, and Pennsylvania will remain the only state in the Northeast that still allows capital punishment.

We need you to mobilize to call Leader Bradford's office today and ask him to move HB 99 and HB 888 to the House floor for a vote immediately. As leaders, your voices carry the weight of your entire community. Let him know that Pennsylvanians are ready to replace this broken, irreversible system with more equitable forms of justice.

Capitol Address

- **Matthew D. Bradford**
- 110 Main Capitol Building
- P.O. Box 202070
- Harrisburg, PA 17120-2070
- **(717) 772-2572**

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Representative Matt Bradford
110 Main Capitol Building
P.O. Box 202070
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2070

Dear Representative Bradford,

We have a critical opportunity to make history in Pennsylvania. Recently, the House Judiciary Committee took a historic step by passing **House Bills 99 and 888**—bipartisan legislation that would finally abolish the death penalty in our Commonwealth.

As House Majority Leader, you hold the sole power to "calendar" these bills. Without your direct action to schedule them for a floor vote, this momentum will stall, and Pennsylvania will remain the only state in the Northeast that still allows capital punishment.

Pennsylvanians are ready to replace this broken, irreversible system with more equitable forms of justice.

We urge you to move HB 99 and HB 888 to the House floor for a vote immediately.

Sincerely,



HELP BLOCK THE BOMBS WITH THIS LIFESAVING BILL



Internally displaced Palestinian women sheltering inside a tent at Nuseirat refugee camp following an overnight Israeli strike on March 9, 2026.

Urge U.S. leaders now: **BLOCK THE BOMBS**. Act now to stop the transfer of weapons to Israel that are being used to commit grave human rights violations.

Amnesty International's latest research exposes the devastating toll this crisis is taking on Palestinian women and girls in Gaza — and the near total collapse of maternal and neonatal health care.

We spoke with pregnant and breastfeeding women displaced in Gaza City, Al-Mawasi, Deir al-Balah, and Nuseirat. They described surviving without clean water, without adequate food, without basic medical care.

22-year old Hind*, displaced and living in a tent, gave birth to her son in January. She told us:

"I lost a lot of weight; I weighed only 97 pounds... and they told me that I am suffering from malnutrition. My baby was born with a lung infection in both lungs; he still cannot breathe properly on his own and is in an incubator. I am afraid he will get sicker because I live in a tent by the sea... and there is no way to keep warm."

And still — women in Gaza are holding families and communities together under conditions designed to break them: they are the teachers providing schooling to children in tents, the doctors and nurses working in field hospitals often without pay, and the caregivers fighting tirelessly to keep their families alive.

Call on the U.S. government to **BLOCK THE BOMBS** and help stop the flow of weapons fueling this devastation.



Dear Representative,

I am writing to you as a member of Amnesty International USA with deep concern about Israel's ongoing genocide against Palestinians in the occupied Gaza Strip – which has not stopped, even after the announcement of a so-called ceasefire.

As Israel's top arms supplier, the U.S. government is uniquely positioned to bring an end to Israel's genocide.

Amnesty International's research has concluded that Israeli authorities have committed and are continuing to commit genocide against Palestinians in Gaza, including by deliberately inflicting conditions of life calculated to bring about their physical destruction. Civilians continue to be unlawfully attacked, lifesaving aid is still being blocked, and children are starving and freezing amid mass forced displacement and destruction.

The U.S. House of Representatives has both the power and the responsibility to act. I urge you to co-sponsor the Block the Bombs Act (H.R. 3565), which would prohibit the sale or transfer of specific U.S. weapons: including bunker-busting bombs, JDAMs, artillery ammunition, and white phosphorus that Amnesty has documented being used in unlawful attacks and war crimes in Gaza. Continuing to supply these weapons places the U.S. at serious risk of complicity in genocide and other serious violations of international law. Congress must enforce its oversight to ensure the U.S. complies with its obligations under U.S. and international law, including the Genocide Convention.

If you already support the Block the Bombs Act, I thank you and urge you to continue pressing for its passage and for an immediate suspension of all sales and transfers of U.S. weapons, munition, and military/security equipment to Israel, including the provision of training and other military and security assistance.

I urge you to stand on the right side of history by supporting the Block the Bombs Act and working to end Israel's genocide, the illegal occupation of Palestinian territory, and apartheid.

Sincerely,



**National Day of
Action: May 20**



We are calling on members across the country to take part in a National Day of Action on May 20 to demand an end to family detention and insist that not one more dollar goes to ICE and CBP. Together, we will call for a shutdown of the mass detention and deportation machine and all of the systems that uphold its cruelty and human rights abuses. Amnesty International USA, in coalition with partner organizations, will host a rally in Washington, DC, followed by a story hour and a lobby day on Capitol Hill. If you are outside the Washington DC area, we encourage you to participate by raising your voice to your Representatives and Senators.

See the next page for a sample letter.



Dear [Representative/Senator LAST NAME]

ICE is currently detaining hundreds of parents and children in Dilley, where conditions are horrific. People with chronic health conditions or medical emergencies are being denied the care they need, infants are experiencing alarming weight loss, and families are denied access to adequate clean drinking water, forced in many cases to drink tap water at the facility that is foul-smelling and known to cause upset stomachs.

Detention also interrupts children's education. After being ripped away from their neighborhoods, homes, friends, toys, and familiar routines, children detained in Texas are being denied access to quality, grade-appropriate educational opportunities and frequently even lack crayons to play with. ICE is depriving children of the opportunities to learn, play, and create that every child deserves. These deprivations place families' health and safety at risk and leave lasting psychological scars.

Shockingly, some families are being held in these appalling conditions for weeks on end, in violation of the Flores Settlement Agreement, which sets out minimum standards for the treatment of migrant children in government custody, including limits on the length of time that children can be detained. Most families never get to speak with an attorney or appear before a judge before they are deported, and many are sent back to dangerous, life-threatening conditions.

As a constituent, it is unacceptable to me that billions of taxpayer dollars continue to flow to ICE so that it can continue terrorizing communities, separating families, committing human rights abuses, and locking up parents and children in unsafe and unsanitary conditions.

As my member of Congress, I am asking you to stand up for the safety and well-being of immigrant children and families by ending the heartless policy of family detention.

Additionally, as long as families remain detained in Dilley or anywhere else, I urge you to use Congressional oversight authority to uphold the law—and human rights—and put a stop to the widespread abuse and neglect that children and adults are experiencing in ICE custody. Demand that immigration officials provide these families with adequate opportunities to consult with counsel, clean drinking water, hygienic conditions, access to healthcare, and educational opportunities for children.

Detention is no place for children. I will continue to follow this situation closely, and I look forward to your response. Thank you for your time and attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Urge Governor Newsom to Commute All Death Sentences in California Before It's Too Late!

Over 550 people remain on death row in California. Right now, there is a clear and concrete path to change that. Before Governor Newsom leaves office in January 2027, he has the power to take a historic step toward ending the death penalty in California. He can commute many death sentences directly, and for the rest, he can ask the California Supreme Court to act.

This is not symbolic. This is not abstract. There is a real path forward and a real opportunity for human rights impact. But it will only happen if Governor Newsom sees visible, growing pressure from people in California, across the country, and around the world. That is where you come in: Take action today and add your voice.

Help make the call to end California's death row impossible to ignore.

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Governor Gavin Newsom
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Newsom,

California holds more than 550 individuals serving a death sentence, the highest number of people living under a sentence of death in the United States. A death sentence imposed on them by a system that you described as “unfair, unjust, wasteful, protracted and [which] does not make our state safer”, in which “death sentences are unevenly and unfairly applied to people of color, people with mental disabilities, and people who cannot afford costly legal representation.”

Progress has been made in recent years, but the job is not done. I urge you to do everything in your power to commute all death sentences in California before leaving office.

Show the country, and the world, that human rights must come first and this cruel, degrading, and inhuman punishment has no place in rights-respecting societies.

Yours sincerely,