

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

January 28, 2025

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Trump,

As Co-Chairs of the U.S.-Lebanon Friendship Caucus in Congress, we look forward to working with you and your Administration to do great things for the United States.

As you may know, we both represent active and engaged constituent communities from the Lebanese diaspora in our districts and are proud of our Lebanese American heritage. In Congress, we have led efforts to support stability in Lebanon as a U.S. partner in the Middle East, responsible funding for the Lebanese Armed Forces, and the elimination of the cancer that is Hezbollah and Iran's influence in Lebanon. In recent weeks, several generational changes have happened for Lebanon. Hezbollah and Israel have reached a ceasefire, and Lebanon has elected a new President and selected a new Prime Minister, filling a more than two-year political vacuum.

President Joseph Aoun will bring steadiness to Lebanon with the trust and support of the United States and our international partners. We were encouraged by President Aoun's inaugural speech, which emphasized the importance of building a nation under the rule of law, free from corruption and sectarian favoritism. For too long Lebanon has been beholden to political elites who corrupted the country, allowed the destruction of their economy and banking system, facilitated a humanitarian and refugee crisis, and opened the door to the malign influence of Hezbollah and Iran. Lebanon's new government must now move forward with strength, keep its commitment to the principles of democracy, and continue to gain the trust and support of the international community under U.S. leadership.

We stand ready to support your Administration's efforts in maintaining our commitment to a longstanding US partner, building on your leadership and support for peace in the region, and helping the Lebanese people move forward with trust and support in a new and functioning government. As you and your national security team discuss ongoing and additional support and engagement with Lebanon, we ask you to consider that financial or reconstruction assistance from the United States and its allies will be predicated on several, crucial policies.

Lebanon's new government must not allow any members of Hezbollah, or their political party proxies, to serve in the new government. To build on the momentum of the election of President Aoun, and the selection of Nawaf Salam as Prime Minister, Hezbollah cannot serve in

any capacity, as this would undermine Lebanese sovereignty under the new leadership of an independent president. Additionally, the Lebanese government should work to provide a balance of representation within all government agencies – focusing not on the influence of political elites, but instead on those who wish to serve the needs of the Lebanese people. Finally, as a long term, peaceful resolution to the border between Israel and Lebanon remains in focus, we continue to support efforts for lasting stability, including consideration of enforcement and compliance with existing United Nations resolutions, or other paths of negotiation.

We remain optimistic that under their new leadership the country of Lebanon will move forward as a strong, independent, and prosperous partner of the United States in the Middle East. The positive changes to their government will benefit not only the Lebanese people but support the broader influence of democracy in the region. In Congress, we remain ready to actively support your Administration's efforts in Lebanon, and the broader region, including continued support for the Lebanese Armed Forces.

We look forward to working with you to accomplish the goals of your Administration for peace through strength in the Middle East, to support our longstanding allies including Israel and Lebanon, and to promote U.S. leadership on the international stage.

Sincerely,



Darin LaHood
Member of Congress



Darrell Issa
Member of Congress

Cc/

Marco Rubio
Secretary of State

Mike Waltz
National Security Advisor

Steve Witkoff
Special Envoy to the Middle East

Morgan Ortagus
Deputy Special Envoy to the Middle East

Massad Boulos
Middle East Advisor to the President