Dear ... ,

I am a US citizen deeply concerned about the fragile state of democracy in Israel. It is of US national interest to maintain a strong and vibrant democracy in Israel, and I am writing to urge you and Congress to take prompt action to protect it.

Democracy in Israel is very much at risk. Israel’s new coalition government is currently advancing a range of far-reaching constitutional and legal changes that would:

1. grant the majority in Israel’s Parliament, the Knesset, absolute control over the appointment of judges and justices to all courts;
2. prevent effective judicial review of Knesset legislation;
3. dilute judicial review of the executive power of the government and its ministers; and
4. significantly diminish the role of the Attorney General and government legal advisors as gatekeepers.

Should this dangerous judicial reform be passed by the government of Prime Minister Netanyahu (who himself is currently under trial for bribery, fraud and breach of trust), it would make Israel a non-democracy in the mold of Hungary, Turkey and Poland. Citizens would no longer have protections from arbitrary government decisions, and the system of checks and balances, inherent to all democracies, will have been destroyed. Israel does not have a constitution and the legislative and executive branch is as one, so the judiciary is the only real independent mechanism for checks and balances.

A strong democratic Israel is important for America. I urge you and your congressional colleagues to stand firm in expressing concern for the proposed judicial reform. I ask that Congress reiterates its support for a fully democratic Israel and to call upon President Biden to make it clear to Prime Minister Netanyahu that these reforms are damaging to the long-term relationship between the US and Israel.

The Israeli government falsely claims that recent elections demonstrate public support for its plan. Polls consistently show a strong majority opposing the judicial reforms, and in recent weeks hundreds of thousands of Israelis have flooded the streets, demanding that the government rescind its plans. Many prominent Israeli and US-based judicial experts, including Esther Hayut, Israel’s Supreme Court Chief Justice, have publicly identified the proposed reform as a plan to instill an unchecked government, that will undermine and destroy Israel’s democracy.

The Israeli government is rushing its plans through Parliament. Therefore, time is of the essence; I urge you to act now.

Thank you.