Dear President Biden,

Thank you for your unwavering commitment to upholding democracy and for your considerable efforts to deter Prime Minister Netanyahu from proceeding with the judicial overhaul in Israel. Your expressions of concern for Israel’s democracy and your frank criticisms of the Israeli government’s campaign to weaken the country’s judiciary has helped buoy the popular opposition to this alarming democratic backsliding.

Sadly, we must acknowledge that warnings from the United States did not ultimately prevent the Israeli government from acting on this agenda. As a result, we now find ourselves at a critical juncture where further actions are necessary to safeguard the democratic values the US-Israel relationship is founded upon.

As American Jewish leaders who care deeply about Israel and wish to see it fulfilling its founding values of democracy, freedom, justice, and peace, we share your sentiment of deep concern for Israel’s future.

While deeply appreciative of your public expressions of concern, we are urging you to go beyond words and to take decisive action to demonstrate the seriousness of the situation.

**Mr. President, the current Israeli government’s campaign is so severe and so consequential that it merits a proportionate reaction by Israel’s chief ally, the United States of America.**

Therefore, we believe that the time has come to take concrete action to send a clear message to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s government. Going beyond words will make clear to Netanyahu’s government that its actions come with a price. Where there are fewer shared values, the special relationship becomes less special.

It is not our intention to advocate for punitive measures against Israel, neither the state nor the people. Most Israelis oppose their government’s anti-democratic campaign. Hundreds of thousands of them have been protesting the government’s insistence on weakening the Supreme Court, which works to guarantee basic rights and liberties of all Israelis. These patriots deserve praise, not punishment.

While Netanyahu’s government seems oblivious to domestic protest, it justifiably cares about Israel’s relationship with Washington. This relationship is Israel’s chief strategic asset.

To protect Israel's future and its relationship with the United States, we urge you to consider several concrete measures that your administration could take including but not limited to:
• Appointing a new Ambassador to Israel immediately, as the gravity of this crisis requires the highest levels of diplomacy
• Taking steps to reopen a separate US consulate in Jerusalem which would serve the Palestinian population in the West Bank and Gaza
• Reissuing the US customs guidance on settlement labeling to accurately reflect the distinction between Israel and the West Bank settlements, aligning with longstanding US policy
• No longer automatically preventing efforts to hold Israel accountable at the United Nations for its settlement activities and human rights violations against Palestinians
• Ensuring that Israel meets all requirements, including reciprocal treatment for all American citizens, before considering its admission into the Visa Waiver Program
• Communicating to the Israeli government that the evolving state of Israel's democracy will figure into the deliberations for the upcoming ten-year MOU between the US and Israel
• Taking efforts to elevate the Palestinian diplomatic mission in the US and foster meaningful engagement with Palestinian diplomats in the US

We firmly believe that taking these specific actions will underscore the United States' commitment to democratic values, human rights, and peace in the region. By leveraging the US-Israel special relationship, we can encourage Israel's government to reevaluate its current trajectory and uphold the founding values of democracy, freedom, justice, and peace.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter, and we stand ready to support any efforts to preserve Israel's democracy and safeguard its future.

Sincerely,

Hadar Susskind
James Klutznick
Rabbi Jill Jacobs
Ambassador Alan Solomont
Retired Congressman Alan Lowenthal
Joshua Malina
Mandy Patinkin
William Singer
Marilyn Katz

Alex Soros
Daniel Sokatch
Rabbi Rachel Tiven
Ayelet Waldman
Michael Walzer
Lisa Greer
Michael Chabon
Rabbi Sharon Brous
Letty Cottin Pogrebin
Peter Frey

Randi Weingarten
Debra Katz
Nancy Kaufman
Rabbi Sharon Kleinbaum
Rabbi Noa Kushner
Rabbi Amichai Lau-Lavie
Peter Weiss
Edward Witten
Dr. Carol Winograd
David Birenbaum
Ernest Bogen
Martin Bresler
Debra DeLee
Dan Fleshler
Aviva Futorian
Larry Gellman
Gili Getz
Rabbi Steve Gutow
Steven Kaplan
Luis Lainer
Libby Lenkinski
Mik Moore
Jo Ann Mort
Kathleen Peratis
Marcie Setlow
Mark Silverberg
Judith Tuller
Rabbi Joshua Chasan
Aliza Mazor
Rabbi Suzanne Singer
Rabbi Nate DeGroot
Rabbi Matthew Durbin
Rabbi Ora Weiss
Rabbi Jennie Rosenn
Rabbi Nancy Kreimer
Rabbi Jose Rolando Matalon
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Jessica Brown
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Talia Benamy
Elana Kahn
Rabbi Nancy Wiener
Rabbi Fred Scherlinder Dobb
Ori Nir
Rabbi Megan Doherty
Ron Skolnik
Rabbi Bob Gluck
Rabbi Laura Rumpf
Rabbi Rachel Timoner
Rabbi Michelle Dardashti
Rabbi Mira Rivera
Joe Goldman
Rabbi Felicia Sol
Rabbi Katy Allen
Toby Rubin
Elaine Reuben
Cantor Sam Rosen
Rabbi Laurence Edwards
Daniel Kohl
Rabbi Doug Alpert
Professor Paul Scham
Rabbi Eric Solomon
Ann Toback
Rabbi Janie Hodgetts
Marci Gerston
Rabbi Danya Ruttenberg
Sanford Weiner
Dov Waxman
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Judd Miner
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Daniel Bral
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