# Biden Administration Proceeds with $1 Billion Arms Sale to Israel Amidst Political Tensions



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WASHINGTON – The Biden administration has informed key lawmakers about its plan to proceed with a $1 billion sale of arms and ammunition to Israel, according to three congressional aides. This marks the first significant arms shipment to Israel since the administration paused another transfer earlier this month due to concerns over civilian casualties in Gaza.

The new package includes about $700 million for tank ammunition, $500 million in tactical vehicles, and $60 million in mortar rounds. This sale comes as President Biden faces criticism domestically over his administration's support for Israel's seven-month-long conflict with Hamas in Gaza.

While some Democrats urge Biden to restrict offensive weapon transfers to pressure Israel on protecting Palestinian civilians, Republicans criticize any halt in support, arguing it weakens Israel's defense capabilities. The House, led by Republicans, plans to advance a bill mandating the delivery of offensive weaponry to Israel, which Biden has threatened to veto.

The proposed arms deal includes weapons that may take years to deliver, and leaders in Congress hold the power to block it by placing a hold on the package. Despite concerns, the administration reiterates its commitment to ensuring Israel has the military means to defend itself, though it seeks to prevent the use of specific American weapons in crowded areas to reduce civilian casualties.

Previously, the administration paused a shipment of bombs to prevent their use in Rafah, a densely populated area in Gaza. Despite these partial restrictions, the White House maintains strong overall support for Israel's defense, emphasizing the importance of aiding the country amidst ongoing threats from Hamas and other groups.

Lily Greenberg Call, a special assistant at the Interior Department, and the first Jewish political appointee to resign over Biden's stance, labeled the administration's support as disastrous. In her resignation, she referenced Biden's remarks at a White House Hanukkah event and at Washington's Holocaust Memorial, expressing her distress over what she described as Biden's justification of US policy using Jewish identity.

As the crisis continues, Biden's handling of the conflict, particularly among young voters and diverse demographics, could influence the approaching 2024 election. The unfolding political and humanitarian concerns underscore the complexity of US foreign policy in the region.