

# [***Pelosi praises Schumer's speech on Israel, says 'Israel's reputation is at risk'***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BK2-XHY1-DY7V-G00V-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

(CNN) &#8212; Former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi on Sunday said [*Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer's recent remarks calling for a new election in Israel*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/03/15/politics/schumer-israel-speech-analysis/index.html) "should be listened to because Israel's reputation is at risk" as the humanitarian crisis in Gaza deepens.

Speaking to CNN's Dana Bash on "State of the Union," Pelosi noted that Schumer, the highest-ranking Jewish elected official in the US, was "concerned about the weakness of the Palestinian Authority and the very, very dangerous attitude of the right-wing Israeli government."

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told Bash earlier Sunday that Schumer's comments were "totally inappropriate" and refused to commit to new elections.

"The prime minister's presentation proved the necessity of Chuck Schumer's speech. Chuck Schumer's speech was an act of courage, an act of love for Israel," Pelosi said.

Her latest comments underscore a shift in rhetoric among top American leaders in recent weeks. [*President Joe Biden said last week that Netanyahu*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/03/11/middleeast/netanyahu-biden-rift-widens-rafah-gaza-mime-intl/index.html) was "[*hurting Israel more than helping Israel*](https://www.cnn.com/middleeast/live-news/israel-hamas-war-gaza-news-03-10-24/h_29ee33596e2d1296c741a8c9d8a5bf6a)" and called a possible invasion of Rafah a red line, though he clarified that crossing it would not result in punitive measures against Israel.

The White House and congressional Democrats are most critical of the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Gaza as [*Palestinians increasingly face deadly violence in their search for aid*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/03/14/middleeast/blasts-kill-palestinians-food-aid-gaza-intl/index.html).

Pelosi said Netanyahu must "be unaware or ill-informed" of the humanitarian situation in Gaza after the prime minister claimed Israel was taking proper steps to increase aid corridors. The California Democrat called it a "very sad situation" [*as aid organizations warn of a famine looming in the region.*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/03/06/middleeast/israel-gaza-starvation-siege-mothers-babies-intl/index.html)

A growing number of children in Gaza are dying of starvation and dehydration, according to the World Health Organization and Palestinian officials, while [*UNICEF says that thousands of newborns are at risk of dying of hunger*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/03/06/middleeast/israel-gaza-starvation-siege-mothers-babies-intl/index.html) in the next month. [*Aid agencies have accused Israel*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/03/01/middleeast/gaza-aid-israel-restrictions-investigation-intl-cmd/index.html) of imposing arbitrary and contradictory criteria that obstruct the entry of relief into the war-ravaged territory.

"When we give assistance to a country, we insist they do not interfere with our giving humanitarian aid," Pelosi said.

Pelosi also criticized Netanyahu for attacking Schumer over his suggestion that Israel hold new elections, considering that Netanyahu has previously inserted himself into US ***politics***.

"It's curious to me to see Netanyahu talk the way he does when he tried to interfere in American elections," Pelosi said, referring to Netanyahu criticizing then-President Barack Obama and the Iran nuclear deal in front of the US Congress.

[*In that 2015 address*](https://www.cnn.com/2015/02/26/politics/democrats-missing-netanyahu-whip-list/index.html), Netanyahu framed Iran as a major terrorist threat to the US and Israel, comparing it to ISIS and North Korea. He argued that the deal then in the works to prevent the nation from gaining nuclear weapons would in fact "guarantee" that it secures them - "lots of them."

Former President Donald Trump withdrew the United States from the deal in 2018.

Trump attacked Schumer on Sunday for about calling for new elections in Israel and went on to criticize Israel's loyalty to Democrats.

"The Democrats are very bad for Israel. Israel sticks with them. I guess Israel's loyal maybe to a fault because they stick with these guys," he said in an interview on Fox News.

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Trump briefly mused that maybe Schumer had "forgotten" the lives lost in the Hamas attacks on October 7, before pushing back on that suggestion and saying the New York Democrat is simply making a political calculation.

"He doesn't forget it. He looks at, 'Where do I get more votes?' And I guess he's seeing, you know, the Palestinians and he's seeing the marches, and they are big. And he says, 'I want to go that way instead of Israel,'" Trump said.

Trump said his message to Netanyahu would be, "You have to finish it up and do it quickly and get back to the world of peace." He again vowed to bring peace to Ukraine and the Middle East if elected president.

Democratic Rep. Adam Schiff of California, meanwhile, toed a middle ground on Sunday's "State of the Union" when discussing Schumer's recent comments.

"I agree with Leader Schumer's comments regarding the necessity of reducing civilian casualties in Gaza," Schiff said. "I wouldn't go as far as the leader in setting out the timing of elections."

CNN's Alison Main and Andrew Millman contributed to this story.

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