

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 13, 2019

Her Excellency Angela Merkel
Federal Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany

Dear Madame Chancellor,

We write to you today to express our concern over the recent failed vote in the Bundestag to designate Hezbollah in its entirety as a terrorist organization. We appreciate your government's commitment to fighting terrorism, and we believe that taking the step to designate the political wing of Hezbollah will have a significant impact on Hezbollah's activity in Europe and around the globe.

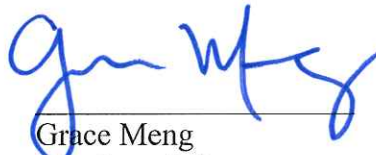
Since 2016, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and United Kingdom (UK) have labeled Hezbollah's political and military wing as a terrorist organization. Hezbollah, an Iranian proxy, has overwhelming political and military influence in Lebanon that presents an imminent geostrategic threat to Israel. Iran has provided Hezbollah with approximately \$800 million annually for military equipment and supplied over 100,000 missiles in southern Lebanon, including the capability of building more missiles. Hezbollah's leader, Hassan Nasrallah, has clearly expressed his intent to spread jihad and wipe Israel off the map. The threatening influence of Hezbollah extends beyond Israel and poses a tremendous risk to the security interests of Europe as a whole. As you know, your intelligence service has detailed that the number of Hezbollah members and supporters has increased to 1,050 in 2018. The growth of support for Hezbollah will also contribute to the rise of anti-Semitism in Europe, which has already resulted in deadly attacks against Jews. That is why we strongly urge Germany to take substantive action against Hezbollah through sanctions and other means that will hamper their ability to project influence in the region.

We support the steps that Germany has already taken by designating Hezbollah's military wing, and believe that it is critical that Germany take into full consideration the impact that designating Hezbollah's political wing will have on the terrorist organization's dangerous activities. The alliance between our two countries, whether for combating terrorism or supporting democracy, has been a cornerstone of the transatlantic relationship and NATO alliance, and our coordinated efforts have been critical to our collective national security. That is why we hope that Germany will consider this decision to once and for all, fully designate Hezbollah as a terrorist organization.

Sincerely,



Lee Zeldin
Member of Congress



Grace Meng
Member of Congress



Theodore R. Deutch
Member of Congress



Gus M. Bilirakis
Member of Congress