

President Biden, Governor, State Comptroller, Issue Statements On Murder Of 6-Year-Old Palestinian-American Wadea Al-Fayoume

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WILL COUNTY - President Joe Biden, Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker and Illinois Comptroller Susana A. Mendoza made strong statements about the recent murder of six-year-old Palestinian-American Wadea Al-Fayoume as an apparent hate crime in reaction to the conflict going on in Israel.

Biden said the following: "Jill and I were shocked and sickened to learn of the brutal murder of a 6-year-old child and the attempted murder of the child's mother in their home yesterday in Illinois. The child's Palestinian Muslim family came to America seeking what we all seek - a refuge to live, learn and pray in peace."



The mother and child were allegedly attacked by their landlord Joseph Czuba, 71, who now faces charges of two counts of a hate crime, one count of first-degree murder, one count of attempted murder and one count of aggravated battery.

The charge states that Czuba allegedly came at them with a knife and the mother ran to the bathroom and called 911. The woman was stabbed more than a dozen times and the son was stabbed 26 times, the Will County Sheriff's Office said.

Pritzker forcefully condemned the killing of a 6-year-old Muslim boy in a community southwest of Chicago on Sunday, calling the alleged hate crime slaying “nothing short of evil.”

“To take a six year old child’s life in the name of bigotry is nothing short of evil,” Pritzker [said in a statement](#) Sunday evening. “This wasn’t just a murder — it was a hate crime.”

Mendoza said: "Horrific. Barbaric. Heartbreaking.

"Joseph Czuba's vicious and bigoted hate-fueled murder of an innocent 6-year-old Illinois boy, Wadea Al-Fayoume, and the attempted murder of his mother, Hanaan Shahin, for being Palestinian Muslims was pure evil at work. This savagery has no place in America.

"Wadea’s family came to America and to Illinois to live in a country that, among other freedoms, stands for freedom of religion; where you can and are encouraged to pray to the God of your beliefs. It is fundamental to who we are as Americans.

"I pray for Wadea to rest in God's peace and eternal glory and for his mother, Hanaan, to recover, but I know there are no words that could bring comfort to her and her family. I cannot even begin to imagine the pain she is going through, far beyond that of the physical. I pray the family finds strength and comfort in the memories of Wadea and I pray the full weight of the law falls heavily upon his murderer.

"We welcome and treasure Illinois' vibrant, hard-working and peaceful Muslim community. Violence and hate against our Muslim brothers and sisters cannot be tolerated and must be unequivocally condemned."

[Click here for a related story on Governor Pritzker's heightened statewide alert for threats on places of worship.](#)