# LGBTQ+ Community Divisions Over Gaza Break Out in Fire Island



A small park in the gay resort town of Fire Island Pines became a battleground over political allegiances related to the ongoing Gaza conflict. A flag honoring Rep. Ritchie Torres, the first openly gay Afro Latino member of Congress and a supporter of Israel, was torn down by the activist group ACT-UP. They replaced it with a flag honoring queer Palestinians. Hours later, Michael Lucas, a pornographic filmmaker known for anti-Muslim statements, removed the Palestinian flag.

The incident reflects deeper tensions within the LGBTQ+ community, exacerbated by the war in Gaza, which began on October 7 following a Hamas-led attack on Israel. The conflict has resulted in thousands of casualties and widespread displacement.

While some in the LGBTQ+ community support Israel for its relatively progressive stance on gay rights in the Middle East, others accuse the country of "pink-washing" to distract from its actions in Gaza. These divisions have sparked disputes at events and venues across New York.

The Fire Island Pines Property Owner’s Association eventually removed all the contested flags, aiming to de-escalate tensions. This incident underscores the complexities of aligning LGBTQ+ advocacy with broader geopolitical conflicts within the community.