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**2020 Candidate for US House of Representatives**  
**In Nebraska's 2<sup>nd</sup> Congressional District**  
**A position paper on Israel**  
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***Personal History –***

As a Government and International Studies major at Notre Dame, I learned of the history behind so many of the alliances we find in the world today and of the importance of diplomatic relationships across the globe. During my education, the reasons why the current state of Israel was established and its importance in the world as the only democracy in its region were highlighted.

In 2016, I had the opportunity to visit Israel with a Congressional Delegation, as a spouse when my husband was a member of Congress. And later in 2016, I had the pleasure of dining at the Israeli Embassy with Ambassador Ron Dermer and his wife, Rhoda. Both experiences helped me understand one side of the Israeli perspective on their relationship with the United States. They increased my understanding of Israel's importance, and how the Jewish state places great value on longstanding relationships: it is apparent that they reach out to support those that support them. I sensed their feelings of gratitude toward America.


The United States and Israel have a unique relationship, a relationship of mutual support. We can liken it to a deep friendship. Such friendship does not equal unconditional support for one another, however. There are times in any friendship in which one party steps over a line and it is incumbent on the other party to call them out; to pull them back.

Strong relationships demand honesty and holding one another to legal, moral, and ethical standards. On the world stage, it becomes even more complex. There are times of disagreement but that does not overshadow the foundation of a good relationship. During times of conflict, both parties must keep top of mind their commitment to one another.

***Security Assistance to Israel –***

The United States must continue to support and rely upon Israel as the lone democracy in this volatile region. We share so many common values. We must continue our partnerships in innovative security and military solutions which benefit both our nations. I support US aid to Israel and will continue to do so in Congress. It is more important than ever that the United States and Israel remain strongly committed to our strategic relationship.

The United States should not, however, act in a manner that encourages further Israeli occupation of the West Bank and additional annexation of parts of the territory. With its commitment to a strong Israel, the United States also has a moral imperative to direct its aid and assistance to a true two-state



solution. As a member of Congress, I will commit to ensuring US aid and assistance to Israel is done so with the unwavering commitment to a two-state solution.

### ***Two-state Solution-***

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict must be resolved through a meaningful two-state solution, with borders based on the 1967 lines and a capital in Jerusalem for both states. The United States must regain its role as an honest broker. It is not in the region's, nor the world's, best interest for the United States to pick winners and losers in this conflict.

It is possible for the United States to advocate for a safe, strong, and independent Israel while providing for humanitarian and political rights for the Palestinian people at the same time. The United States should resume its funding for the UNRWA at former levels and other humanitarian aid for the Palestinians.


The current US administration has made clear where its alliances lie through both subtle signals and overt actions. The US is no longer acting as an honest broker. From choosing to move the US embassy to Jerusalem overturning years of US precedent to opening the embassy at the same time as the Nakba, when Palestinians commemorate the expulsion and displacement of over 700,000 people at the time of Israel's founding, to cutting aid to Palestinians and programs for Palestinian humanitarian causes, the current US administration is tone deaf at the least.

Sadly, the Trump administration's concessions to Israel have pushed the Palestinian government toward the more ideologically fanatic attitudes of their leadership. It is rarely, if ever, productive to push a resolution to a conflict which creates more extremism.

The standards set for funding Palestinian interests were rigorous and aimed at humanitarian efforts, education, healthcare, infrastructure, people-to-people programs, agriculture, and security assistance. Removing this aid has left public projects unfinished, Palestinians concerned with worsening economic conditions, and has dismantled avenues for defusing unrest onsite. Additionally, Israel has been put in the precarious position of being unable to solely handle the increased risks at the West Bank including breakdowns in security, worsening economic conditions, and a potential humanitarian crisis.

Congress has made it clear that it wants the United States to continue funding for aid to humanitarian people-to-people projects, medical services and other initiatives that do not have a direct connection to the Palestinian Authority. Members of Congress must ensure that they use the authority of a co-equal branch of government to reinstate the United States' status as an honest broker.

I will not support actions in Congress that would permit or enable unilateral actions by either Israel or the Palestinians that create obstacles to peace. That includes increasing occupation by the Israelis on the West Bank and those settlements. It also means that I condemn inflammable behavior and language when used by Palestinian leaders. The United States must not facilitate nor should our actions be a causal factor, consciously or subconsciously, in terrorism on the part of Hamas or any other actor. Trump's 'peace plan' is a rubber stamp for annexation and offers no chance for a real Palestinian state. The US must return to its role as an honest broker and ensure that both Israelis and



Palestinians have a seat at the table when negotiating peace. I oppose unilateral annexation in any form and will reverse any policy that supports it."

*Iran-*

The JCPOA was reached on July 14, 2015, and effectively blocked Iran's pathway to a nuclear weapon and allowed the United States and our allies to deal with Iran's other malign behavior without the threat of a nuclear weapon. This was necessary for the security of Israel, the region, and the world.

The US withdrawal from the JCPOA has led to greater tensions in the region and the world as well as disarray from the remaining participants as to how to enforce the agreement. Additionally, the current situation is of the US' own making. We reached the brink of increased military interactions through our unwillingness to engage in diplomatic solutions.

In Congress I would push to bring the US back into compliance with the JCPOA and regain our seat at the table. In addition, I agree with the Congressional action earlier this year to limit the President's ability to provoke an armed conflict with Iran. Authorizations for Use of Military Force must specifically be applicable and we must adhere to the War Powers Act.

Additionally, Congress has a duty to push the administration to fully fund the State Department and US diplomatic missions across the globe. When we do not have diplomats on the ground, we face greater risk of disruption and conflict.

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