

## Kim Coleman for Congress: Pledge to Support Israel

As both an American and a Christian, I have long felt a special kinship with the people and nation of Israel. I've carried it in my personal life and I will carry it to the House of Representatives.

Members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (colloquially “the Mormon Church”) such as myself have long admired our Israeli brothers and sisters on the other side of the world. Indeed, Mormons have been called “the Jews of America” and our early leader Brigham Young has been called “the American Moses” for leading his people through the wilderness and establishing a safe haven after years of persecution. As a member of the Utah state legislature, I supported legislation to honor Holocaust victims.

Americans have long appreciated our alliance with Israel, a country whose values uniquely align with the United States, particularly for a region that struggles to enter the modern world:



Of all the countries pictured here, only one is a functioning democracy with Western liberties, like the freedom of speech, religion, and press. Only one nation pictured above has a robust free-market economy and women’s rights. That is the nation of Israel.

### Strategic support

The world’s oldest democracy has a responsibility to support democracies everywhere, and we will not forget that responsibility to Israel. During the Cold War, the War on Terror, and otherwise, Israel has always supported the United States’ strategic objectives – and we will reciprocate. A nation the size of New Jersey, surrounded on all side by enemies, cannot possibly protect itself alone.

The US will continue to support the Israeli economy with commerce and financial aid. Americans can say with pride that our first Free Trade Agreement ever was with Israel. I pledge to support policies and laws that continue to encourage commerce with Israel, as well as direct financial aid in the interest of Israeli security.

Regarding aid, the US Congress gives about \$3.8 Billion a year in foreign aid to Israel for mostly military purposes. I am committed to ensuring that Israel continues to receive this support and maintains its Qualitative Military Edge in the region, which will deter war, promote stability, and create lasting peace. Also, while the US has an interest in coordinating with Israel on how this aid is strategically deployed, I have no interest in micro-managing Israeli officials from the other side of the world. As one of our staunchest allies, Israel has earned the trust of the American people.

### **Counterbalance to Iran**

The hostile, extremist government which has ruled Iran for decades is a threat to the stability of the entire region and the world. The best check against Iran is a strong Israel. Two primary issues must be addressed with regards to the current Iranian regime.

The first is correcting the horrible missteps of the Obama Administration, which turned a blind eye to Iran's nuclear ambitions, or directly supported them with irresponsible financial aid. We must act decisively to demand and ensure Iran's compliance through political, and if necessary, military action.

Second, Iran and its satellite organizations Hamas and Hezbollah, are Israel's most dangerous adversary. Without our sending a strong message to Iran regarding Israel's security, we leave its people at risk. The United States cannot allow this to happen. As a member of the House of Representatives I will support appropriate actions against Iran with my voice and my vote.

### **Jerusalem: the capital of Israel**

While many in the international community have maintained that Jerusalem's final status should remain unresolved, every Israeli government since the country's founding in 1948 has reiterated Jerusalem as its capital city. In 1995, the US Congress showed its support for Israel by approving the Jerusalem Embassy Act, which declared that the American embassy in Israel should be in its capital, Jerusalem. I was delighted when President Donald Trump announced in 2017, that the United States now officially recognizes Jerusalem as Israel's capital and would place its embassy there appropriately.

### **Right to exist**

As the leader of the Free World, America has an obligation to convince hostile countries that they must finally acknowledge Israel's right to exist and sovereignty. I will make this a foreign policy priority. Success in this area is vital to helping bring peace to the region as well as uniting America's regional allies and partners against jihadist terror.

I fundamentally reject the opinion of so much of the international community that considers the Golan Heights Syrian territory held under Israeli military occupation. The Golan Heights is Israeli sovereign territory.

## **Resisting Jihadism everywhere – even at home**

While the attacks of Sept. 11 taught Americans that we were just as vulnerable to jihadist terrorism as Israel, the threat of future attacks have only increased. Both Americans and Israelis must be concerned about the growing influence of pro-jihad political movements in Western countries. Indeed, the ever-expanding influence of the so-called Council on American–Islamic Relations (CAIR) has gotten completely out of hand. Allegations of connections to Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood are so disturbing that even the United Arab Emirates – a Muslim country – has designated the group a terrorist organization. Candidates supported by CAIR must not be allowed to assume office. AIPAC and leaders such as myself must keep any such candidates out of power.

## **Squashing BDS**

Gaining ground through some far-left candidates, notably those aforementioned supported by CAIR, is the horrifying Boycotts, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement. This campaign is explicitly designed to coerce only one party to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. BDS argues that Israel is the sole party responsible for the stalemate in the peace process and therefore should be uniformly punished through boycotts, divestment, and sanctions – essentially economic terrorism. The roots of this must be ripped out of American soil.

## **Misplaced, mis-used sympathy**

Many of Israel's enemies exploit the "plight of the Palestinians" as justification for trying to wipe the country out. The status of the Palestinian people is, if we're being honest, not a priority to many of Israel's Arab neighbors who play that particular violin for the Western media.

I commend Israel for its treatment of minorities: Israel's minorities are guaranteed the same rights as the country's majority Jewish population. Israeli Arabs serve on its Supreme Court, as diplomats, as generals, and in other high-ranking government positions. Israeli Arabs are free to vote and run for office in the Knesset. In 2018, 13 Israeli Arabs (and four Druze) held seats in the Knesset.

Israel has been America's strongest ally in the region and one of its strongest in the world. When elected, I pledge to be one of Israel's strongest friends in the House of Representatives.

Kim F. Coleman