



As a candidate for Congress it is important that all interested parties know that I believe it is vital for the United States to stand by Israel. Our two nations have enjoyed a unique relationship, based on our shared interests and common values, including a strong commitment to freedom of speech and expressions, tolerance, and respect for the dignity of every human being. Israel is a trusted ally in the war on terrorism and a beacon of hope and freedom as the only true democracy in the Middle East.

My Background and Record

My deep appreciation for the State of Israel is rooted in a family legacy of standing up for the formation and protection of their nation. I was raised on stories of my grandfather, Congressman Robert Kean. I have always been inspired by the fight he put forth urging the Roosevelt Administration to help rescue Jews in Hitler-occupied Europe and later his advocacy for the creation of the state of Israel. I am proud of the eternal flame that burns for my grandfather at the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial in Jerusalem.

When my father was governor of our state, he, upon his return from a private visit to Israel, established the New Jersey Israel Commission to further economic, scientific and cultural bonds between New Jersey and Israel. Under its auspices, scientists from Israeli Universities and Rutgers-the State University, forged valuable partnerships on a number of projects of mutual concern, such as desalination. Mutually undertaken research and cultural exchanges also resulted. The commission's work has extended and expanded through several subsequent state administrations, and I am proud to serve as a long-standing member of the Commission.

In 2006 and 2007, I had opportunities to travel to Israel, where I witnessed, at close range, the work that this small, but strategically important, nation is doing to counteract international terrorism and repel threats to its security. I also was able to witness the strides this "start-up" nation has made in medicine, high technology, and scientific research as well as partake in its stellar cultural activities. I came away greatly inspired and all the more determined to strengthen the strong bonds that exist between the people of the United States and Israel.

As a New Jersey State Senator, I have been a champion of the United States' close alliance with Israel. I have authored legislation that divested NJ from Iran by denying public contracts to firms that do business in Iran, sponsored a resolution that recognizes the 70th anniversary of establishment of the State of Israel and called on the UN to help free three Israelis held captive in violation of international law. As an attendee at the 1993 opening of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, it has been an honor to bring groups of New Jersey students on visits to this living memorial to experience firsthand this extraordinary educational opportunity. It is imperative that all generations understand how important it is to lovers of freedom everywhere that Israel both survive and flourish.

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As a United States Congressman, Israel can continue to count on my support and advocacy, especially on these prominent issues:

Two State Solution

In January of 2020, President Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu stood together and put forth their Peace to Prosperity Plan, which lays out a blueprint for a two-state solution between Israel and the Palestinians. I largely support this proposal and believe that Palestinians also have a right to live in peace and security under their own independent government. However, so that it might be achieved, it is imperative that the Palestinian Authority aggressively root out terrorism, establish and secure freedom of speech and press throughout its territory, revise its school curricula with regard to its presentation of Jews and Israelis, and undertake serious political reform. They must also agree that Jerusalem will remain Israel's undivided capital and recognize Israeli sovereignty over the entire city.

Conflict with Iran

Iran remains the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism with malign behavior not only in the Middle East but also in Europe and now in the Western Hemisphere. Iran provides financing, training and support to terrorist groups around the world including Hezbollah in Lebanon, Hamas in the Gaza Strip. It provides similar support and funding to the brutal Assad regime in Syria. Iran has provided a lifeline to the Maduro dictatorship in Venezuela by shipping it oil in violation of the Monroe Doctrine.

A nuclear Iran is a threat not only to Israel but also to the security of the entire world order. It is imperative that the international community ensure that Iran does not achieve the ability to produce nuclear weapons. I believe the Iran Deal was deeply flawed and support extensive sanctions to change Iran's behavior. We must also continue to pressure Iran to cease their exporting and funding of terrorism in the Middle East.

Foreign Aid

As a Congressman, I would support full security assistance to Israel and a robust overall foreign aid budget. As a key strategic ally in the Middle East, it is imperative for the security of the region and the world, that Israel continues to receive vital economic and military aid. We should continue to maintain and fund annual security assistance to Israel at levels in accordance with the 10-year Memorandum of Understanding to ensure that Israel, a nation under constant threat, maintains a qualitative military edge.



Fighting BDS Campaign

The BDS campaign is discriminatory against the Jewish state and undermines the prospect for peace in the Middle East. The United States and the international community must be aggressive in opposing this movement. As a NJ Senator, I cosponsored legislation in 2016 prohibiting investment of pension and annuity funds by the State in companies that boycott Israel or Israeli businesses. In early 2019, I initiated and co-authored a letter with the Democratic Senate Majority Leader to the NJ Division of Investment that brought to light AirBnB's discriminatory policy regarding the listing of Jewish-owned properties in Judea and Samaria. The letter helped lead to the Division's determination of AirBnB's ineligibility under New Jersey's BDS law and ultimately, a reversal in AirBnB's policy in regard to the listing of Israeli settlements.

The United States should use economic influence to pressure nations to engage in free-trade practices with Israel and Congress should support measures like the Combatting BDS ACT, which would give individual states the tools to fight the boycott of Israel through divestiture from companies who aid the BDS movement. As a congressman, I will always support Israel and stay determined to prevent any efforts to delegitimize it.