

JEWISH INSIDER

Bernie Moreno is a Republican candidate for U.S. Senate in Ohio.



1) What is the one policy issue or area that you are most passionate about?

We've got to stop Socialism, and the related cancel culture, from taking root in the United States. We must restore America to its founding principles. I came to America, legally, from Colombia, South America where we were surrounded by socialist dictators that destroyed their countries. We can't let the Democrats do that to America. We have to stand up and fight back against the radical liberal agenda coming from the Biden administration. That means pursuing an American First policy agenda, disentangling our economy from China by bringing back our industrial base, stopping the invasion at our southern border and preserving individual liberty in our country.

2) Which organizations or leaders do you consult with for advice on policy? Are there any whose views particularly align with yours?

I came to America and lived the American dream. I started as an intern at General Motors and eventually owned dealerships that did \$1 billion a year in sales. Then I started a technology company in Cleveland, Ohio. Through it all I've met and worked with great people and teams. I talk to other business leaders all the time about the challenges they're facing. I talk to workers on how the government is taking over their lives. Ric Grenell, a member of President Donald J. Trump's cabinet, is chairing my campaign. He provides great council on foreign policy. I've also been endorsed by many of President Trump's ambassadors. I'll always surround myself with smart people, but I'll never forget that it's the American worker that every policy should focus itself around.

3) Recent statistics from the FBI indicate that Jews are the victims of more than half of all religiously motivated hate crimes in the U.S. This uptick in antisemitism coincides with a robust debate about the role of policing in American society, with some arguing for abolishing or defunding the police, while others advocate for limited reforms or preserving the status quo. What is your position on police

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reform and — in light of that — how do you believe the government should address violent antisemitism?

The defund the police movement has had a devastating impact on law enforcement across the country. We see it in rising crime rates across the country. The movement has emboldened the radical, anti-Semitic left. Neither the defund the police movement nor anti-Semitism can be tolerated. Violent anti-Semitism must be investigated and prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law possible.

In recent years, we have seen a troubling rise in anti-Semitism in different parts of the world, including right here in the United States, even from some Members of the United States Congress. So-called “progressive” politicians (led by Alexandria Ocasio Cortez, Rashida Tlaib, and Ilhan Omar) openly promote anti-Semitic views and policies, borrowing lines that could have come right from Hamas talking points. They have repeatedly turned their back on Israel and the Jewish people in a way that is both incomprehensible and reprehensible. That needs to stop. Democrats must take a clear stand and unequivocally denounce their members when they spew anti-Semitic rhetoric.

There is also a rise in anti-Semitic hate crimes throughout the United States, and yet those attacks receive very little attention. All of this must be stopped now because we cannot allow anti-Semitism sentiments to gain a footing in American politics or society because such hate runs directly counter to the values we cherish as Americans.

Organizations like the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement, for instance, want nothing more than to “cancel” Israel and all that it stands for. Ironically, while they encourage protests in Israel, the United States, and other free societies, calling for boycotts, divestment, and sanctions against Israel, they are silent about the fact that millions of people are not able to freely express any dissenting views, much less protest against their government, in the streets of the Palestinian-controlled territories, Syria, and Iran. Why are these radical organizations not concerned about those being oppressed by the Palestinian Authority and the governments of Syria and Iran? During my time as Chair of the Board of Cleveland State University, we rejected attempts by radical groups to bring the BDS movement to campus. Boards of all Universities throughout American higher education must act with similar resolve. As Senator, I will always oppose the BDS movement, which is nothing but a radical leftist campaign to undermine the Jewish State, and

4) Do you believe that Israel’s role and location in the Middle East is a strategic asset to the United States? Why or why not

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Yes, Israel is our best line of defense against extremism in the region and around the globe. A peaceful, secure, and prosperous Israel is of utmost importance to the United States and the Middle East, but it also essential to the future of the Jewish people. That is why I believe that our unyielding support for the Jewish people in Israel must be complemented by our equally unyielding determination to fight anti-Semitism and violence against the Jewish people in the United States and around the world.

In addition to the many reasons why our support for Israel helps to advance our most critical national security and economic interests, the United States has a moral obligation to support the strongest democracy in the region; a country with whom we share our most basic values as a society: a commitment to democracy, the free enterprise system, the rule of law, religious liberty, and freedom of thought and expression, among others.

5) On September 23, 2021, the United States House of Representatives voted 420-9, with two members voting present, to provide \$1 billion to Israel to replenish the Iron Dome missile defense system. . If you were in Congress, how would you have voted and why?

The Iron Dome missile defense system is one of the best examples of cooperation between the United States and Israel. It is not a well known fact but the United States has purchased Iron Dome batteries and will use them to protect Americans across the globe. It was created with US funding and Israel ingenuity and has proven to be incredibly effective in protecting Israeli civilians from missile attacks from Palestinian terrorists in Gaza. The misguided Members of Congress who voted against Iron Dome replenishment ignore the fact that this system protects innocent Palestinian lives too. If Iron Dome did not protect Israeli cities and horrific missile attacks landed in schools, homes and hospitals (ironically, the places that terrorists hide their own missile salvos) and killed civilians then the response from the Israelis, in order to create deterrence would need to be overwhelming. The Iron Dome protects innocent Israelis from terror rockets that aim to kill them. As a US Senator, I would vote in support of the \$1 billion replenishment package.

6) Should the U.S. increase, maintain or decrease the amount of foreign aid to Israel and other countries in the Middle East? Should the U.S. condition its foreign aid based on specific results?

The United States should work with Israel to make sure it has the resources it needs to defend its very existence. To fight against extremism and terrorism in the Middle East, and prevent it from spreading its pernicious influence to the United States and around the world, we need a strong Israel. That is why we must continue to work closely with our Israeli partners to fight against Iran's proxies, Hamas and Hezbollah. Terrorist groups thrive on promoting violence and

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terrorism and have regularly relied on bloodshed in their cowardly attempts to break the will of the Israeli people. I will always support Israel's right to defend itself in the ways its leadership sees fit. The current Memorandum of Understanding between our government and Israel provides \$3.8 billion annually for Israel's defense and I join an overwhelming majority of Congress that supports that MOU.

7) What is your view of the Abraham Accords, which has brought Arab countries including the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Morocco and Sudan into a warm peace with Israel? Do you believe there will be more peace in the Middle East? If so, what will it take?

I believe that having a stable and peaceful Middle East is of critical importance to the United States. For decades, American politicians, of both parties, have pursued the same stale, ineffective policies to try to help stabilize and bring peace to the region. Their failed efforts (even if well-meaning) have yielded few tangible results.

As an outsider unafraid to try new things, President Trump believed in pursuing a different approach. Career politicians promised, time and again, to move the U.S. Embassy in Israel to Jerusalem, the eternal capital of Israel, and a special place unlike any other on earth. They repeatedly talked about the importance of doing so but failed to deliver. President Trump got it done. Those same politicians also believed that the key to the peace process was to pursue a U.S.-led agreement between the Israelis and the Palestinians, which would then lead to a normalization of relations between Israel and its Arab neighbors. President Trump believed that it was entirely possible to bring Israel's neighbors to the table to negotiate a peace deal with Israel first. Once again, President Trump got it done. The result: The Abraham Accords. For the first time in decades, Israel normalized relations with an Arab country; in fact, it did it with three countries: The United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, and Morocco. President Trump also brokered a deal for Kosovo to open up its Embassy in Jerusalem, another historic recognition from a Muslim-majority country. Other similar agreements were in the works when President Trump left office.

Like President Trump, I believe in thinking outside the box to come up with innovative and creative policy solutions to try to solve society's most complex problems. I am convinced that as more Arab countries experience the benefits of peaceful relations and free, open, and fair trade with Israel, such efforts will put increased pressure on the intransigent leadership of the Palestinian Authority to come to the negotiating table to explore ways to peacefully co-exist with Israel. That can only happen, however, when the Palestinian Authority recognizes the legitimate right of the Israeli people to live in a free, democratic, and prosperous Jewish state.

8) Do you support a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?

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In an ideal world, a two-state solution has the potential to bring long-term peace and stability to the region. However, the only path to that two-state solution is through a bilateral agreement based on an existing legal framework. However, the Palestinian Authority has routinely demonstrated an unwillingness to honor the conditions laid out in previous agreements. The Palestinian Authority must meet its written obligations to collect illegal weapons; pursue terrorists; cooperate with Israeli security forces; change the Fatah Constitution, which still calls for the complete eradication of the State of Israel; and stop inciting terrorism.

I am opposed to any proposal to create a Palestinian state based on 1967 borders, leaving major settlements in the West Bank outside Israeli borders. This is a reckless and unfair precondition that threatens the security of Israel and ignores decades of history in the process. Additionally, the United States must reject any Palestinian Authority attempts to demand concessions as preconditions for peace talks with Israel. In peace talks, Israel has continually demonstrated that it is a fair and honest party willing to make major concessions to secure a lasting peace. A two-state solution will only become a reality when the Palestinian Authority is willing to do the same.

As Senator, I will support meaningful efforts to bring a lasting peace to the region, but I will never pressure Israel to make compromises or concessions that threaten the security of the Jewish State. The core issues separating the Israelis and Palestinians can only be resolved by negotiations between the two parties, not by international organizations. I oppose spending any U.S. taxpayer dollars in the form of foreign aid to the Palestinian Authority until it publicly recognizes the legitimate right of Israel to exist as a Jewish state, renounces all forms of terrorism, and has new elections.

9) Do you support or oppose a return to the 2015 nuclear deal with Iran? In your view, what is the role of “leverage” in these negotiations and is the U.S. using its leverage effectively?

As the world’s leading sponsor of terrorism, the government of Iran poses an existential threat to global stability. I will always fight to make sure we do everything in our power to prevent the Iranian Regime from acquiring a nuclear weapon. A nuclear Iran should never be an option. The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the Iran Nuclear deal, was a complete disaster. It did absolutely nothing to deter the Iranian Regime’s nuclear ambitions or limit its aggressive behavior against Israel, while it gave the Regime billions of dollars and allowed it to gain international legitimacy. The Iranian Regime consistently denies its own people basic freedoms and the people of Iran deserve better. President Trump was right to get rid of the JCPOA and stand in support of the Iranian people.

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I oppose the current administration's return to that failed "deal," which effectively paves the path for Iran's nuclear ambitions. The facts on the ground that existed in 2015 do not exist today therefore a return to that exact agreement would be wrong. The Regime in Iran needs to be held accountable for its belligerence and support for terrorism. That is why I support imposing sanctions on Iran. As Senator, I will be relentless in my commitment to making sure we stop Iranian aggression. The JCPOA has been the focal point of the conversation around Iran for the last 6 years but we need to remember why a nuclear Iran is a danger to the world. Iran is the leading state sponsor of terrorism with one of the worst human rights records and they do not hide their intentions when they shout Death to Israel and Death to America. Similarly, I will stand with Israel against the Syrian regime's use chemical and biological weapons, its sponsorship of terrorism, and its efforts to further destabilize the region and destroy the Jewish state.

Highlight the one answer you agree with most

10) Government entities should not have to do business with entities that engage in immoral practices or espouse values that are inconsistent with society's

Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Other

11) I support public efforts to divest from companies that engage in BDS

Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Other

12) Anti-Zionism is a form of antisemitism

Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Other

13) The United States should use all means available to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon

Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Other