



August 1, 2002

# Upcoming Elections Vital

## Nationwide Call to Meet with Elected Officials

**The situation of world Jewry demands our attention, involvement, and advocacy. Enclosed, please find guidelines, key issues, and publicity materials to prepare for and conduct a successful meeting with your elected officials.**

This summer, as elected officials return to their home districts for summer recess, the IPA, Synagogues Services, and the Israel Task Forces of the Orthodox Union are getting together to urge all of our member synagogues to host “Town Hall” meetings or visits with their elected officials. Now is an excellent time for synagogue Public Affairs activists, Israel Action Committees, advocacy groups, and synagogue leadership to meet with Representatives, Senators, as well as state and local elected officials in order to discuss issues of importance to the Orthodox Jewish community. Coordinate with other area synagogues and advocacy groups.

We will be very happy to answer questions and furnish further information. Please go to our website [www.ou.org](http://www.ou.org) and click on IPA for more information and to access IPA action alerts and public statements. We wish you much success as you hold your events with elected officials. Please call us at (212) 613-8124 or email [ipa@ou.org](mailto:ipa@ou.org) if you require any further information and to inform us of your events and experiences.

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## Guidelines for Meeting with Legislators

### Institute for Public Affairs

The Institute for Public Affairs of the Orthodox Union is the public policy and political advocacy wing of the nation's largest grassroots Orthodox Jewish synagogue organization. We are dedicated to ensuring that our community's interests are represented in the political arena in the public square. Most important, we are dedicated to enabling our grassroots constituency to have a stronger voice in the protection of our community's interests.

There are many issues that are not decided by the voters directly but by those whom we elect to represent us. Our communications ensure that our representatives understand and act on our views. To have an effect, we must make our opinions known and meet with our elected officials in our synagogues, visit them in Washington or communicate to them by phone, fax, or e-mail. The following information is dedicated to help you communicate with those who represent you.

### Meeting with Legislators

The best way to communicate with legislators and elected officials is through personal visits, either by inviting them to appear before your synagogue or Public Affairs committee or by visiting their offices. Legislators will appreciate that we took the time to invite and host them and to share our views. It provides the most direct means to expressing and explaining our concerns and educates the legislator on the issues most important to us. These meetings can facilitate an ongoing and constructive relationship and offer us the best opportunity for educating them and their staff on an issue.

### Step 1: Inviting your Legislator

It is not always necessary to travel to Washington, D.C. or your state capital to see your legislator. (You should, however, join the annual Institute for Public Affairs Mission to Washington, D.C. – please call us at (202) 513-6484 or (212) 613-8124 for information.) When legislators are home, take advantage of this opportunity to invite them to your synagogue.

#### **To arrange the meeting:**

1. Call his/her Washington or district office and ask for dates that the legislator will be in the home district. For Senators' district numbers call: (202) 224-3121 or visit [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov). For Representatives' district numbers call: (202) 225-3121 or visit [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov). These are also linked to our website, [www.ou.org](http://www.ou.org), click on IPA.
2. **Confirm the event by letter** – this is very important so that both you and the legislator's staff has a record of the exact time, date, and place.
3. Reconfirm by phone a few days before the meeting and be clear about the details.

Keep trying if you are unsuccessful in getting the meeting as it can be arranged for another time. If a meeting is not arranged, write a polite letter expressing your disappointment and restate your views. Please let the Institute for Public Affairs know if we can be helpful in any way by calling us at (212) 613-8124, by fax at (212) 613-0724, or e-mail to [ipa@ou.org](mailto:ipa@ou.org).

## **Step 2: Prepare for the Meeting**

The Institute for Public Affairs deals with a broad range of international and domestic issues from Israel and foreign affairs to religious freedom. We can guide you as you form a list of issues to be covered and questions to be asked and can provide information and talking points on current legislation. Be informed – in many cases, you may have important information and knowledge about your issue that he/she doesn't have, unless they sit on committees related to specific issues. Be prepared to steer the conversation in a friendly manner to the issues that you want to address.

1. Discuss their position on key issues that concern the Jewish community. Research your legislator's position before your meeting and his/her record. To obtain information on these records, you can call the IPA (212) 613-8123, your local JCRC, or local AIPAC chapter <http://www.aipac.org/documents/contactus.html>. We will also provide information on the elected officials' positions on certain issues of particular importance to the OU as well.
2. Familiarize yourself with key issues and talking points that promote continued U.S. support for Israel. See section entitled: [URGE CONGRESSIONAL SUPPORT FOR KEY LEGISLATION](#).
3. It is helpful to leave a short written statement outlining your positions with the legislator. Please include the names and addresses of those who attended the meeting.

## **Etiquette**

- Be punctual.
- Be courteous even if you do not agree with your legislator's position. If your legislator is uncommitted, don't press; politely and in a friendly manner provide good supporting facts for your statements. It helps to be specific and concise.
- Be familiar with the proposed legislation, and, if possible, refer to a recent public statement to show your awareness of the issue and his/her opinion. If your legislator is new, you have a wonderful opportunity to have a positive influence.
- Be honest. If you are asked a question that you cannot answer, say so. If your legislator wants some fact or data that you do not have with you, say that you will obtain it and send it to them... and be sure you do. Please feel free to contact us at (212) 613-8124 if you need any further information.
- Listen carefully.  
Legislators choose their words with precision and may say they will support your position or that they sympathize with your view. These are two different responses. Leave the door open for further discussion.
- Allow for the opportunity for another meeting. Let your legislator know that you will be in contact and following the status of the issue.
- Express thanks when you leave or at the end of the meeting.
- Follow up with a written thank you note. This is a chance to help reinforce the relationship as well as an opportunity to restate your views.



## **Helpful Websites**

Below is a list of some websites that can help you in your political advocacy. They are linked to many, many more.

### 1. U.S. Government Links

- [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov) - (U.S. House of Representatives)
- [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov) - (U.S. Senate)
- [www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov) - (White House)
- [www.state.gov](http://www.state.gov) - (Department of State)

### 2. Israel-related links – information, facts, etc.

- [www.mfa.gov.il](http://www.mfa.gov.il) - (Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs)
- [www.knesset.gov.il](http://www.knesset.gov.il) - (Knesset)
- [www.us-israel.org/jsource/myths/mftoc.html](http://www.us-israel.org/jsource/myths/mftoc.html) - (Myths and Facts about Israel)
- [www.newyork.mfa.gov.il](http://www.newyork.mfa.gov.il) (Consulate General of Israel in New York)
- [www.israelemb.org](http://www.israelemb.org) (Embassy of Israel in Washington)

### 3. Other helpful sites

- [www.ou.org](http://www.ou.org), click on IPA
- [www.jcpa.org/daily/index.html](http://www.jcpa.org/daily/index.html) - (Conference of Presidents Daily Alert)
- [www.aipac.org](http://www.aipac.org) (AIPAC)
- [www.ajc.org](http://www.ajc.org) (American Jewish Committee)
- [www.adl.org](http://www.adl.org) (Anti-Defamation League)
- [www.camera.org](http://www.camera.org) (CAMERA – Media monitoring)
- [www.honestreporting.com](http://www.honestreporting.com) (Media watch)
- [www.wiesenthal.com](http://www.wiesenthal.com) (Simon Wiesenthal Center)
- [www.virtualjerusalem.com](http://www.virtualjerusalem.com) (All-purpose site)
- [www.beavoter.org](http://www.beavoter.org) (Voter Registration)
- [www.idf.il](http://www.idf.il) (Israel Defense Forces)
- [www.onejerusalem.org](http://www.onejerusalem.org) (Jerusalem, News)



Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Synagogue and Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Met with Senator or Member of Congress: (name) \_\_\_\_\_

Met with Aide: (name) \_\_\_\_\_

Please Print:

1. Describe the atmosphere of the meeting:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Does or will the Member support foreign aid to Israel? Did he/she have any questions about foreign aid?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Did the Member seem knowledgeable about the Syrian Accountability Act and the Arafat Accountability Act?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. On what Israel-related or other issues did the Member or staff member seem most knowledgeable? Less knowledgeable?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. What type of information would the Members or staff members like to receive concerning Israel or other issues?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. What questions or comments did the Member or staff member raise?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Please fax this form back to IPA:  
(212) 613-0724**

## KEY ISSUES & TALKING POINTS

### URGE CONGRESSIONAL SUPPORT FOR KEY LEGISLATION

All of us are deeply concerned with current events occurring in the Middle East, the safety and security of Israel, religious freedom, education, and many, many other issues. As Israel continues to face the daily onslaught of terrorism, several Israel-related issues demand our attention and are particularly important to raise with legislators:

- **Arafat Accountability Act** – Legislation recently introduced in both Houses of Congress seeks to hold Palestinian leader Yassir Arafat and his Palestinian Authority accountable for their role in anti-Israel terrorism and to immediately impose sanctions on the Palestinians unless they cease violating their basic commitments to end violence and terror. Please see the attached Action Alert for the details and talking points you can raise with your legislators.
- **Syria Accountability Act** – Syria continues to be a major sponsor and supporter of international terrorist groups. Yet Syria is subject to fewer U.S. sanctions than any other country listed as a state-sponsor of terrorism on the State Department’s list. Urge your Senators to co-sponsor the Syria Accountability Act (S. 2215) and Representatives to co-sponsor H.R. 4483. See attached Action Alert for information and talking points.
- **Foreign Aid** – President Bush’s \$16.1 billion foreign aid request for FY 2003 includes \$2.7 billion for Israel: \$2.1 billion in military assistance and \$600 million in economic assistance. At a time when Israel faces existential threats from terrorists and countries developing weapons of mass destruction, this aid is critical in meeting Israel’s security needs. Urge your Members of Congress to support the full Israel aid request and the overall Foreign Aid Appropriations bill that provides the necessary resources to maintain U.S. global leadership. See attached sheet for talking points and information.

## Support Arafat Accountability Act (S. 2194, H.R. 1795)

At Camp David in July 2000, Israel, in good faith, attempted to negotiate an end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Instead of seizing the opportunity to make peace, Arafat began a campaign of terrorism and violence to attack innocent Israelis. Arafat released over 100 known terrorists from prison, including those responsible for the deaths of American citizens, and permitted Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and factions of the his own PLO, including the Tanzim, Force 17, and the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade to attack Israel. In the past nineteen months, more than 560 Israelis have been killed and more than 3,600 wounded. Israelis face an average of 25 live-fire attacks per day, which include homicide bombings in Israeli cities, the use of rocket-propelled grenades, and anti-tank missiles and mortars directed against Israeli civilian and military targets.

In order to convey the message that the United States will not tolerate this continuing violence and terror, bills are being circulated in the Senate and the House that would require the imposition of sanctions unless and until the Palestinians fulfill their commitments to stop terror.

The Senate bill, introduced by Senators Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) and Mitch McConnell (R-KY) is the **Arafat Accountability Act (S. 2194)** that would impose all the following sanctions immediately on the Palestinians until they cease violating their most basic commitment to end violence and terror. They include: 1) downgrading the PLO representation in the United States to its status before the Oslo peace process; 2) restricting the travel of the PLO observer to the UN; 3) seizing of PLO/PA assets and the personal assets of Yassir Arafat in the U.S.; and 4) denying visas to officials of the PLO/PA. This version is stronger than the original initiative proposed last year by Senators McConnell and Feinstein.

The bill in the House, introduced by Representatives Gary Ackerman (D-NY), Ben Gilman (R-NY) and Tom Lantos (D-CA) is called the **Middle East Peace Commitments Act of 2001 (MEPCA), H.R. 1795**. This bill imposes sanctions on the Palestinians if the President determines that they continue to violate their commitments to the United States and Israel. The President must impose one or more of the following sanctions: 1) downgrading the office of the PLO representative to the U.S.; 2) denial of visas to officials of the PLO/PA; 3) designating terrorist elements of the PLO as foreign terrorist organizations; and 4) prohibiting all but humanitarian aid to the West Bank and Gaza.

### **Urgent Action Needed: Talking Points**

**If your Representatives have already co-sponsored the legislation, thank them for doing so.**

- The Palestinians perpetrate terror and violence instead of engaging in direct negotiations as mandated by previous agreements and UN resolutions in order to achieve political aims. The Palestinians have wounded more than 3,600 Israelis and killed more than 560 in the past nineteen months. Israelis continue to face homicide bombings, rocket grenade attacks, drive-by shootings, anti-tank missiles, mortars, and attacks by Palestinian terrorists.
- The Palestinian use of violence and terror as a political tool contravenes every agreement it signed with the U.S. and Israel. It demonstrates their commitment to terror and armed conflict instead of to peace. Israel has obtained documents proving that Arafat personally approved payment to the very people orchestrating the bombings of innocent Israelis. The Palestinians attempted to smuggle over 50 tons of weapons and explosives from Iran with which to attack innocent Israeli citizens on the Karine-A.
- The Palestinians must finally know that there will be real consequences unless they cease the terror and violence. These two proposed bills, **S. 2194 and H.R. 1795**, would require American imposition of sanctions unless and until the Palestinians fulfill the commitments that they signed.

## **Support the Syrian Accountability Act, S. 2215, H.R. 4483**

Despite Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon in accordance with UN resolution 425, Hezbollah, with Syrian support, has been attacking Israel's northern border. Since Syria, one of the world's leading sponsors of international terrorism, continues to occupy Lebanon, develop weapons of mass destruction, and is listed as a terrorist state by the State Department, it should be treated like the other countries on that list and not allowed to continue its terrorist activity with impunity.

Legislation has been introduced in the House and in the Senate called the **Syrian Accountability Act**, introduced by Senators Barbara Boxer (D-CA) and Rick Santorum (R-PA) as **S. 2215** and in the House by Representatives Dick Armey (R-TX) and Eliot Engel (D-NY), **H.R. 4483**. This legislation would impose sanctions on Syria until the President certifies that Syria has ceased its support for terrorist groups, has withdrawn its forces from Lebanon, halted its development of missiles and biological and chemical weapons, and is in compliance with the UN resolutions concerning Iraq. The proposed legislation would have the following sanctions imposed:

- A ban on military and dual-use technology exports to Syria;
- A ban on any financial assistance to U.S. businesses for their investments or other activities in Syria.
- Also, the President must impose two additional sanctions from a menu of six, including a ban on U.S. exports to Syria, a ban on U.S. business investment in Syria, downgrading the U.S. diplomatic representation to Syria (at present, there is a U.S. ambassador), and travel restrictions on Syrian diplomats in the U.S., and others.

### **Immediate Action Necessary: Talking Points**

- Syria continues to be a major sponsor of international terrorist groups. Hamas, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), and at least eight more terrorist groups are headquartered in Damascus. These groups maintain offices, training camps, and other facilities on Syrian territory, operate in areas of Lebanon occupied by Syria and receive supplies from Iran through Syria. Hezbollah's recent attacks on Israel, launched with the acquiescence of the Syrian government, risk leading to a wider regional war.
- Syria continues to occupy Lebanon despite UN Security Council resolutions and despite the withdrawal of Israel from all Lebanese territory. Over 20,000 Syrian troops occupy sovereign Lebanese territory, preventing Lebanese independence and preventing Lebanon from fulfilling its obligation under Security Council resolution 425 to deploy its troops to southern Lebanon. As a result, southern Lebanon is under the control of the terrorist group Hezbollah, which has positioned 8,000 Katyusha rockets opposite Israel's northern border and has allowed Iranian Revolutionary Guards to operate freely in the area.
- Syria continues its own program to develop biological and chemical weapons. Syria's ability to strike most of Israel with its short and medium-range ballistic missiles makes Israeli population centers vulnerable to Syrian attack. Given Syria's support for terrorism and its hatred towards Israel, Syria's development of chemical and biological weapons are a major U.S. national security concern.
- Syria serves as a major conduit for illegal Iraqi oil exports in contravention of UN Security Council resolutions. Syria, which now sits on the UN Security Council, is defying that very body through its illegal Iraqi oil exports, helping to finance Saddam Hussein, and earning for itself about \$1 billion a year.
- Syria is subject to fewer U.S. sanctions than any other country listed as a state sponsor of terrorism. Unlike other nations on that list, there is no ban on trade with, or investment in, Syria. There are no travel restrictions on Syrian diplomats as there are for diplomats from other terrorist list states. The U.S. has ambassador-level relations with Syria, but not with any other terrorist state.

## **Support Foreign Aid to Israel – Talking Points**

**Foreign Aid to Israel** -- As Israel is continually attacked by ongoing Palestinian terrorist assaults, aid to Israel is more important than ever. Foreign aid presents many benefits to Israel's safety and security and to Middle East stability. It has helped secure peace between Egypt and Israel, has strengthened Israel's qualitative military edge so that it can defend itself and serve as a deterrent to aggression in the region. Foreign aid continues to advance U.S. interests in the region here and at home.

### **Talking Points**

- Foreign aid strengthens Israel's position in the world and sends a signal to Arab countries about the permanence and strength of Israel and its relations with the United States.
- Support for democracies like Israel is the essential goal of U.S. foreign policy. Foreign aid supports our only democratic ally in the Middle East, Israel.
- Foreign aid strengthens U.S. national security in a changing world. Israel is a loyal ally of the United States and can be counted on to continue to be our staunchest ally in the future.
- U.S.- Israel security cooperation is well-entrenched and has yielded tremendous benefits for both nations -- from intelligence sharing to joint military exercises to cooperative technology development to anti-terrorism efforts.
- Foreign aid is critical to maintaining Israel's qualitative edge. Israel is required to spend an inordinate amount of its budget on defense, as well as large sums on absorbing olim. Arab states have drastically outspent Israel on arms, more than 33 to 1. Billions of dollars worth of weaponry has been sold to Arab states by many countries.
- 85% of all aid to Israel is spent right here in the United States, creating jobs and boosting the economies of more than 43 states.
- Foreign aid is a vital tool for promoting U.S. economic and security interests abroad. At less than 1% of the U.S. budget, foreign aid is a cost-effective way to strengthen allies, promote democracy, achieve humanitarian goals, and protects U.S. interests overseas.
- Foreign aid opens up new markets for U.S. export. Today, exports to foreign aid recipients account for over one-third of total U.S. exports, and more than half of U.S. agriculture exports.
- See also "U.S. Assistance to Israel" at [www.aipac.org/assistance.pdf](http://www.aipac.org/assistance.pdf) - excellent summary.

### **NOTE:**

Aid to Israel is included within the overall foreign aid bill. It is important to advocate for foreign aid in general because a Member must vote for the overall foreign aid bill in order to support aid to Israel.



## **6 Political Action Ideas for Your Synagogue**

Contact the OU today & join the Israel Action Network to receive updates

212-613-8123 or [ipa@ou.org](mailto:ipa@ou.org) or visit [www.ou.org/public](http://www.ou.org/public)

For more on “How to Help Israel” see [www.ou.org/israel](http://www.ou.org/israel)

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### **1. “Monitor and Respond” Synagogue Campaign**

100 voices are more powerful than one. Let your elected officials know your entire synagogue is listening! Post the contact information for the President, Congressmen, Senators, etc. on your bulletin board. \*\*Then, identify a point person who will periodically update the synagogue with a “Time to Write” flier only when your representatives did/did not support your community’s position or before important votes, to show them we’re watching! Work with your rabbi to turn this into a synagogue campaign. This can also be done with local media outlets. Post other action and advocacy alerts, letters from Israel, and volunteer opportunities as well.

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### **2. Make Letter Writing Easier**

Provide labels or postcards with the address of the elected official to be thanked or encouraged. Make sure this information is on your shul website. It is also available at [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov) or [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov).

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### **3. Print and Distribute Articles**

Write or include a periodic column as a handout or for your synagogue's bulletin on activities of local elected officials and/or current affairs (IPA can supply information). Include articles from congregants who made Aliyah!

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### **4. Phone tree / Email List (Use conservatively!)**

Organize a synagogue phone tree and/or email list to respond to calls for immediate action. If you do not yet have an email list, this would be a valuable asset for your synagogue that could be assigned to one of your membership youth for their community service requirement. The administrators of every synagogue email list and phone tree should contact the OU to join the synagogue email network: [herzogt@ou.org](mailto:herzogt@ou.org)

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### **5. Voter Registration**

Organize a synagogue voter registration drive. This project is vital. Print out forms from [www.beavoter.org](http://www.beavoter.org) or call your local board of elections. Distribute them in the months preceding elections with encouragement in your bulletins. Contact IPA for assistance: 212-613-8399

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### **6. Form a Synagogue Committee for Public Affairs**

Meet periodically and cultivate relationships with elected officials. See the IPA manual with detailed suggestions on “how-to.” The IPA can provide other necessary materials and updates. Join the IPA Action Network online.

Call the OU-IPA at (212) 613-8123 or email [ipa@ou.org](mailto:ipa@ou.org) or visit [www.ou.org/public](http://www.ou.org/public).