

OU Leaders Meet with American Policy Makers During Mission to Washington, DC

One hundred national lay and rabbinic leaders of the Orthodox Union traveled to the nation's capital this past May for the OU's annual Leadership Mission to Washington. The two-day mission, which was arranged by the OU's Institute for Public Affairs, included a visit to the Israeli Embassy, meetings with America's policy makers and a series of briefings by high-level White House officials.

"The Union's work on behalf of the Orthodox Jewish community's values and interests in the arena of public policy is one of many critical roles the organization plays in its work to serve American Orthodox Jewry," stated OU President Stephen J. Savitsky. Moishe Bane, chairman of the IPA, added that "as representatives of the Orthodox Jewish community, we are very appreciative of the time the White House officials, senators and representatives spent with us discussing critical issues. We cherish the fact that this country affords us the opportunity to engage with them, as Orthodox Jews, on policy matters."



1. Mr. Bane, Mr. Savitsky and IPA Director Nathan Diamant speak with White House Chief of Staff Joshua Bolten prior to Mr. Bolten's addressing mission attendees at the White House.

2. Deputy National Security Adviser Elliott Abrams discussing Mideast policy with mission attendees at the White House. In his speech, Abrams underscored President Bush's deep personal commitment to Israel's security.

3. Many senators addressed the OU leadership at the mission's annual senate luncheon, including Senator Tom Coburn (R-OK) (right), pictured here with IPA committee members Howard Rhine (left) and Aron Raskas.



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- 4. Senator Susan Collins (R-ME), pictured here with Mr. Savitsky, was presented with the OU's "Friend of the Synagogue" award at the luncheon for her leadership in making homeland security funds available to protect synagogues and other at-risk nonprofits.
- 5. Senator Hillary Clinton (D-NY) converses with Henry I. Rothman, an OU vice president, before addressing the senate luncheon.
- 6. Senator Barbara Mikulski (D-MD) receives the "Friend of the Synagogue" award from RCA President Rabbi Dale Polakoff, Mr. Savitsky and Mr. Bane.
- 7. Rabbi Zev Shandalov of Chicago and Mr. Diament with Senator Barack Obama (D-IL).
- 8. Senator Bill Nelson (D-FL) speaks with Rabbi Neal Turk, rabbi of Beth Israel Congregation in Miami Beach, and Stanley Weinstein, an OU vice president.

Photos: Lloyd Wolf