

# COMMITTEE ON ETHICS


## EMPLOYEE POST-TRAVEL DISCLOSURE FORM Original Amendment

This form is for disclosing the receipt of travel expenses from private sources for travel taken in connection with official duties. This form does not eliminate the need to report privately-funded travel on the annual *Financial Disclosure Statements* of those employees required to file them. In accordance with House Rule 25, clause 5, **you must complete this form and file it with the Clerk of the House by email at [gifttravelreports@mail.house.gov](mailto:gifttravelreports@mail.house.gov), within 15 days after travel is completed.** Please **do not** file this form with the Committee on Ethics.

**NOTE: Willful or knowing misrepresentations on this form may be subject to criminal prosecution pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 1001.**

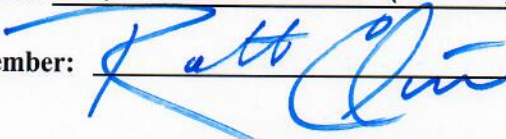
1. Name of Traveler: Robert Edmonson
2. a. Name of Accompanying Relative: \_\_\_\_\_ **OR**  None  
b. Relationship to Traveler:  Spouse  Child  Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_
3. a. Dates: Departure: 9/1/2024 Return: 9/9/2024  
b. Dates at Personal Expense, if any: \_\_\_\_\_ **OR**  None
4. Departure City: Washington, D.C. Destination: Israel Return City: Washington, D.C.
5. Sponsor(s), Who Paid for the Trip: American Israel Education Foundation, Inc (AIEF)
6. Describe Meetings and Events Attended: Met with officials from the U.S. Government, Israeli Government, civil society, and educators to learn about the bilateral U.S.-Israel relationship and larger regional security policy.
7. Attached to this form are **each** of the following, *signify that each item is attached by checking the corresponding box*:
  - a.  a completed *Sponsor Post-Travel Disclosure Form*;
  - b.  the *Primary Trip Sponsor Form* completed by the trip sponsor **prior** to the trip, **including all** attachments **and** the *Additional Sponsor Form(s)*;
  - c.  page 2 of the completed *Traveler Form* submitted by the employee; **and**
  - d.  the letter from the Committee on Ethics approving my participation on this trip.
8. a.  I represent that I participated in each of the activities reflected in the attached sponsor's agenda. *Signify statement is true by checking the box.*  
b. If not, explain: \_\_\_\_\_

**I certify that the information contained on this form is true, complete, and correct to the best of my knowledge.**

Signature of Traveler:  Date: 9/17/2024

I authorized this travel in advance. I have determined that all of the expenses listed on the attached *Sponsor Post-Travel Disclosure Form* were necessary and that the travel was in connection with the employee's official duties and would not create the appearance that the employee is using public office for private gain.

Name of Supervising Member: Rep. Robert Garcia (CA-42) Date: 9/17/2024

Signature of Supervising Member: 

# COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

## SPONSOR POST-TRAVEL DISCLOSURE FORM

Original  Amendment

This form must be completed by an officer of any organization that served as the primary trip sponsor in providing travel expenses or reimbursement for travel expenses to House Members, officers, or employees under House Rule 25, clause 5. **A completed copy of the form must be provided to each House Member, officer, or employee who participated in the trip within 10 days of their return.** You must answer all questions, and check all boxes, on this form for your submission to comply with House Rules and the Committee's Travel Regulations. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in the denial of future requests to sponsor trips and/or subject the current traveler to disciplinary action or a requirement to repay the trip expenses.

**NOTE: Willful or knowing misrepresentations on this form may be subject to criminal prosecution pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 1001.**

1. Sponsor(s) who paid or provided in-kind support for the trip: American Israel Education Foundation, Inc (AIEF)

2. Travel Destination(s): Israel

3. Date of Departure: September 1, 2024 Date of Return: September 9, 2024

4. Name(s) of Traveler(s): Robert Edmonson


*Note:* You may list more than one traveler on a form only if **all** information is **identical** for each person listed.

5. **Actual amount** of expenses paid on behalf of, or reimbursed to, each individual named in Question 4:

	Total Transportation Expenses	Total Lodging Expenses	Total Meal Expenses	Total Other Expenses (dollar amount per item and description)
Traveler	\$10,668.76	\$2,588.72	\$1,421.35	\$4,716.26
Accompanying Family Member	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

6.  All expenses connected to the trip were for actual costs incurred and not a *per diem* or lump sum payment. Signify statement is true by checking box.

**I certify that the information contained in this form is true, complete, and correct to the best of my knowledge.**

Signature:  Date: 9/17/2024 | 12:16 EDT

Name: Rachel Hirsch Title: Chief Legal Counsel

Organization: American Israel Education Foundation, Inc (AIEF)

**I am an officer of the above-named organization. Signify statement is true by checking box.**

Address: 251 H Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20001

Telephone: (202) 246-0519 Email: rhirsch@aiefdn.org

*Committee staff may contact the above-named individual if additional information is required.*

If you have questions regarding your completion of this form, please contact the Committee on Ethics at 202-225-7103.

# COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

## TRAVELER FORM

This form should be completed by House Members, officers, or employees seeking Committee approval of privately-sponsored travel or reimbursement for travel under House Rule 25, clause 5. The completed form should be submitted directly to the Committee by each invited House Member, officer, or employee, together with the completed and signed trip sponsor form(s) and any attachments. A copy of this form, minus this initial page, will be made available for public inspection.

This form and any attachments may be submitted at 1015 Longworth House Office Building or [travel.requests@mail.house.gov](mailto:travel.requests@mail.house.gov).

**Your completed request must be submitted to the Committee no less than 30 days before your proposed departure date.** Absent exceptional circumstances, permission will not be granted for requests received less than 30 days before the trip commences. **You must receive explicit approval from the Committee before you depart on this trip.**

Name of Traveler: Robert Edmonson

**NOTE: Willful or knowing misrepresentations on this form may be subject to criminal prosecution pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 1001.**

**I certify that the information contained on both pages of this form is true, complete, and correct to the best of my knowledge.**

Signature: 

Name of Signatory (if other than traveler): \_\_\_\_\_

For Staff (name of employing Member or Committee): Rep. Robert Garcia (CA-42)

Office Address: 1305 Longworth HOB

Telephone Number: (202) 225-7924

Email Address of Contact Person: robert.edmonson@mail.house.gov

Check this box if the sponsoring entity is a media outlet, the purpose of the trip is to make a media appearance sponsored by that entity, and these forms are being submitted to the Committee less than 30 days before the trip departure date.

**NOTE: You must complete all of the contact information fields above, as Committee staff may need to contact you if additional information is required.**

**KEEP A COPY OF THIS FORM.** Page 2 (but not this page) must be submitted to the Clerk as part of the post-travel disclosure required by House Rule 25. Travel Regulation § 404(d) also requires you to keep a copy of all request forms and supporting paperwork for three subsequent Congresses from the date of travel.

If there are any questions regarding this form, please contact the Committee on Ethics at 202-225-7103 or via email: [travel.requests@mail.house.gov](mailto:travel.requests@mail.house.gov).

# COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

## TRAVELER FORM

1. Name of Traveler: Robert Edmonson
2. Sponsor(s) who will be paying or providing in-kind support for the trip: American Israel Education Foundation, Inc. (AIEF)
3. City and State **OR** Foreign Country of Travel: Israel
4. a. Date of Departure: August 31, 2024 Date of Return: September 8, 2024  
b. Yes  No  Will you be extending the trip at your personal expense?  
If yes, list dates at personal expense: \_\_\_\_\_
5. a. Yes  No  Will you be accompanied by a family member at the sponsor's expense? **If yes:**
  - (1) Name of Accompanying Family Member: \_\_\_\_\_
  - (2) Relationship to Traveler:  Spouse  Child  Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_
  - (3) Yes  No  Accompanying Family Member is at least 18 years of age?
6. a. Yes  No  Did the trip sponsor answer "Yes" to Question 8(c) on the *Primary Trip Sponsor Form* (i.e., travel is sponsored by an entity that employs a registered federal lobbyist or a foreign agent)?  
b. **If yes**, and you are requesting lodging for two nights, explain why the second night is warranted:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. Yes  No  *Primary Trip Sponsor Form* is attached, including agenda, invitation, invitee list, and any other attachments and Additional Sponsor Forms.

NOTE: The agenda should show the traveler's individual schedule, including departure and arrival times and identify the specific events in which the traveler will be participating.

8. Explain why participation in the trip is connected to the traveler's individual official or representational duties. **Staff should include their job title and how the activities on the itinerary relate to their duties.**

As chief of staff, I am the primary advisor to the Congressman and this trip will deepen my understanding of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the current crisis in Gaza, and prospects for a ceasefire and release of the hostages. This directly relates to multiple bills and votes coming before the Congress, and is a key area of diplomacy and foreign affairs of the U.S. Congress.

9. **Yes  No  Is the traveler aware of any registered federal lobbyists or foreign agents involved in planning, organizing, requesting, or arranging the trip?**

10. For staff travelers, to be completed by your employing Member:

### ADVANCED AUTHORIZATION OF EMPLOYEE TRAVEL

I hereby authorize the individual named above, an employee of the U.S. House of Representatives who works under my direct supervision, to accept expenses for the trip described in this request. I have determined that the above-described travel is in connection with my employee's official duties and that acceptance of these expenses will not create the appearance that the employee is using public office for private gain.

Signature of Employing Member: 

Date: 7/30/2024

# COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

## TRAVELER FORM

1. Name of Traveler: Robert Edmonson
2. Sponsor(s) who will be paying or providing in-kind support for the trip: American Israel Education Foundation, Inc. (AIEF)
3. City and State **OR** Foreign Country of Travel: Israel
4. a. Date of Departure: ~~August 31, 2024~~ September 1, 2024 Date of Return: ~~September 8, 2024~~ September 9, 2024  
b. Yes  No  Will you be extending the trip at your personal expense?  
If yes, list dates at personal expense: \_\_\_\_\_
5. a. Yes  No  Will you be accompanied by a family member at the sponsor's expense? **If yes:**
  - (1) Name of Accompanying Family Member: \_\_\_\_\_
  - (2) Relationship to Traveler:  Spouse  Child  Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_
  - (3) Yes  No  Accompanying Family Member is at least 18 years of age?
6. a. Yes  No  Did the trip sponsor answer "Yes" to Question 8(c) on the *Primary Trip Sponsor Form* (i.e., travel is sponsored by an entity that employs a registered federal lobbyist or a foreign agent)?  
b. **If yes**, and you are requesting lodging for two nights, explain why the second night is warranted:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. Yes  No  *Primary Trip Sponsor Form* is attached, including agenda, invitation, invitee list, and any other attachments and Additional Sponsor Forms.

NOTE: The agenda should show the traveler's individual schedule, including departure and arrival times and identify the specific events in which the traveler will be participating.

8. Explain why participation in the trip is connected to the traveler's individual official or representational duties. **Staff should include their job title and how the activities on the itinerary relate to their duties.**

As chief of staff, I am the primary advisor to the Congressman and this trip will deepend my understanding of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the current crisis in Gaza, and prospetcs for a ceasefire and release of the hostages. This directly relates to multiple bills and votes coming before the Congress, and is a key area of diplomacy and foriegn affairs of the U.S. Congress.

9. Yes  No  **Is the traveler aware of any registered federal lobbyists or foreign agents involved in planning, organizing, requesting, or arranging the trip?**

10. For staff travelers, to be completed by your employing Member:

### ADVANCED AUTHORIZATION OF EMPLOYEE TRAVEL

I hereby authorize the individual named above, an employee of the U.S. House of Representatives who works under my direct supervision, to accept expenses for the trip described in this request. I have determined that the above-described travel is in connection with my employee's official duties and that acceptance of these expenses will not create the appearance that the employee is using public office for private gain.

Signature of Employing Member: 

Date: 7/30/2024

# COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

## PRIMARY TRIP SPONSOR FORM

This form should be completed by private entities offering to provide travel or reimbursement for travel to House Members, officers, or employees under House Rule 25, clause 5. A completed copy of the form (and any attachments) should be provided to each invited House Member, officer, or employee, who will then forward it to the Committee together with a *Traveler Form* **at least 30 days before the start date of the trip**. The trip sponsor should *NOT* submit the form directly to the Committee. The Committee's website (ethics.house.gov) provides detailed instructions for filling out the form. The Committee will notify the House invitees directly of its decision and will not notify the trip sponsors.

**NOTE: Willful or knowing misrepresentations on this form may be subject to criminal prosecution pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 1001. Failure to comply with the Committee's Travel Regulations may also lead to the denial of permission to sponsor future trips. Signatures must comply with section 104(bb) of the Travel Regulations.**

1. Sponsor who will be paying for the trip:

American Israel Education Foundation, Inc. (AIEF)

2.  I represent that the trip will not be financed, in whole or in part, by a registered federal lobbyist or foreign agent. Signify that the statement is true by checking box.

3. **Check only one.** I represent that:

a.  The primary trip sponsor has not accepted from any other source, funds intended directly or indirectly to finance any aspect of the trip; **OR**

b.  The trip is arranged without regard to congressional participation and the primary trip sponsor has accepted funds only from entities that will receive a tangible benefit in exchange for those funds; **OR**

c.  The primary trip sponsor has accepted funds, services, or in-kind assistance from other source(s) intended directly or indirectly to finance all or part of this trip and has enclosed disclosure forms from each of those entities.

If "c" is checked, list the names of the additional sponsors: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Provide names and titles of **ALL** House Members *and* employees you are inviting. **For each House invitee, provide an explanation of why the individual was invited** (include additional pages if necessary): \_\_\_\_\_

Please see attached.

5. Yes  No  Is travel being offered to an accompanying family member of the House invitee(s)?

6. Date of Departure: August 31, 2024 Date of Return: September 8, 2024

7. a. City of departure: Washington, D.C. or home district

b. Destination(s): Israel

c. City of return: Washington, D.C. or home district

8. **Check only one.** I represent that

a.  The sponsor of the trip is an institution of higher education within the meaning of section 101 of the Higher Education Act of 1965; **OR**

b.  The sponsor of the trip does not retain or employ a registered federal lobbyist or foreign agent; **OR**

c.  The sponsor employs or retains a registered federal lobbyist or foreign agent, but the trip is for attendance at a one-day event *and* lobbyist / foreign agent involvement in planning, organizing, requesting, or arranging the trip was *de minimis* under the Committee's travel regulations.

9. **Check only one of the following.**
- a.  I checked 8(a) or (b) above; **OR**
  - b.  I checked 8(c) above but am not offering any lodging; **OR**
  - c.  I checked 8(c) above and am offering lodging and meals for one night; **OR**
  - d.  I checked 8(c) above and am offering lodging and meals for two nights. If you checked this box, explain why the second night of lodging is warranted. \_\_\_\_\_

10.  Attached is a detailed agenda of the activities House invitees will be participating in during the travel (i.e., an hourly description of planned activities for trip invitees). *Indicate agenda is attached by checking box.*

11. **Check only one of the following.**
- a.  I represent that a registered federal lobbyist or foreign agent will not accompany House Members or employees on any segment of the trip. *Signify the statement is true by clicking the box; OR*
  - b.  *Not Applicable.* Trip sponsor is a U.S. institution of higher education.
12. For *each* sponsor required to submit a sponsor form, describe the sponsor's interest in the subject matter of the trip **and** its role in organizing and/or conducting the trip:  
AIEF is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization with a charitable and educational mission which includes, among other things, educating policy makers and opinion leaders about the U.S.-Israel relationship. AIEF is solely responsible for recruiting, coordinating, executing, and funding all aspects of this trip. \_\_\_\_\_

13. **Answer parts a and b. Answer part c if necessary:**
- a. Mode of travel: Air  Rail  Bus  Car  Other  (specify: \_\_\_\_\_)
  - b. Class of travel: Coach  Business  First  Charter  Other  (specify: charter bus)
  - c. If travel will be first class, or by chartered or private aircraft, explain why such travel is warranted:  
\_\_\_\_\_

14.  I represent that the expenditures related to local area travel during the trip will be unrelated to personal or recreational activities of the invitee(s). *Signify that the statement is true by checking box.*

15. **Check only one.** I represent that either:
- a.  The trip involves an event that is arranged or organized *without regard* to congressional participation and that meals provided to congressional participants are similar to those provided to or purchased by other event attendees; **OR**
  - b.  The trip involves events that are arranged specifically *with regard* to congressional participation. If "b" is checked:
    - 1) Detail the cost *per day* of meals (approximate cost may be provided): \$170.57
    - 2) Provide the reason for selecting the location of the event or trip: \_\_\_\_\_  
The trip is in Israel to educate congressional staff about the U.S.-Israel relationship.

16. Name, nightly cost, and reasons for selecting each hotel or other lodging facility:
- |                          |                                     |       |                  |                 |              |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------|------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Hotel Name:              | <u>Orient Hotel</u>                 | City: | <u>Jerusalem</u> | Cost Per Night: | <u>\$300</u> |
| Reason(s) for Selecting: | <u>Location &amp; Affordability</u> |       |                  |                 |              |
| Hotel Name:              | <u>David Intercontinental Hotel</u> | City: | <u>Tel Aviv</u>  | Cost Per Night: | <u>\$396</u> |
| Reason(s) for Selecting: | <u>Location &amp; Affordability</u> |       |                  |                 |              |
| Hotel Name:              | <u>The Magdala Hotel</u>            | City: | <u>Tiberias</u>  | Cost Per Night: | <u>\$336</u> |
| Reason(s) for Selecting: | <u>Location &amp; Affordability</u> |       |                  |                 |              |

17.  I represent that all expenses connected to the trip will be for actual costs incurred and not a per diem or lump sum payment. *Signify that the statement is true by checking the box.*

18. **Total Expenses for each Participant:**

<input type="checkbox"/> Actual Amounts <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good Faith Estimates	Total <b>Transportation</b> Expenses per Participant	Total <b>Lodging</b> Expenses per Participant	Total <b>Meal</b> Expenses per Participant
For each Member, Officer, or Employee	\$8,028.05	\$2499.00	\$1,194.00
For each Accompanying Family Member	n/a	n/a	n/a


	<b>Other</b> Expenses (dollar amount per item)	Identify Specific Nature of "Other" Expenses (e.g., taxi, parking, registration fee, etc.)
For each Member, Officer, or Employee	\$3,630.00	see breakdown attached.
For each Accompanying Family Member	n/a	n/a

19. **Check only one:**

- a.  I certify that I am an officer of the organization listed below; **OR**
- b.  *Not Applicable.* Trip sponsor is an individual or a U.S. institution of higher education.

20. **I certify by my signature that**

- a. **I read and understand the Committee's Travel Regulations;**
- b. **I am not a registered federal lobbyist or registered foreign agent; and**
- c. **The information on this form is true, complete, and correct to the best of my knowledge.**

Signature:  Date: 7/30/2024 | 14:15 EDT  
3634BCB643B8439  
 Name: Rachel Hirsch Title: Chief Legal Counsel  
 Organization: American Israel Education Foundation, Inc. (AIEF)  
 Address: 251 H Street NW, Washington D.C. 20001  
 Email: rhirsch@aiefdn.org Telephone: (202) 246-0519

If there are questions regarding this form, please contact the Committee on Ethics at 202-225-7103 or travel.requests@mail.house.gov.

Michael Guest, Mississippi  
*Chairman*  
Susan Wild, Pennsylvania  
*Ranking Member*

David P. Joyce, Ohio  
John H. Rutherford, Florida  
Andrew R. Garbarino, New York  
Michelle Fischbach, Minnesota

Veronica Escobar, Texas  
Mark DeSaulnier, California  
Deborah K. Ross, North Carolina  
Glenn F. Ivey, Maryland



ONE HUNDRED EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS

**U.S. House of Representatives**

COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

Thomas A. Rust  
*Staff Director and Chief Counsel*

Keelie Broom  
*Counsel to the Chairman*

David Arrojo  
*Counsel to the Ranking Member*

1015 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515-6328  
Telephone: (202) 225-7103  
Facsimile: (202) 225-7392

August 28, 2024

Mr. Robert Edmonson  
Office of the Honorable Robert Garcia  
1305 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Edmonson:

Pursuant to House Rule 25, clause 5(d)(2), the Committee on Ethics hereby approves your proposed trip to Israel,<sup>1</sup> scheduled for September 1 to 9, 2024, sponsored by American Israel Education Foundation.

You must complete an Employee Post-Travel Disclosure Form (which your employing Member must also sign) and file it, together with a Sponsor Post-Travel Disclosure Form completed by the trip sponsor, with the Clerk of the House within 15 days after your return from travel. As part of that filing, you are also required to attach a copy of this letter and both the Traveler and Primary Trip Sponsor Forms (including attachments) you previously submitted to the Committee in seeking pre-approval for this trip. If you are required to file an annual Financial Disclosure Statement, you must also report all travel expenses totaling more than \$480 from a single source on the "Travel" schedule of your annual Financial Disclosure Statement covering this calendar year. Finally, Travel Regulation § 404(d) also requires you to keep a copy of all request forms and supporting information provided to the Committee for three subsequent Congresses from the date of travel.

Because the trip may involve meetings with foreign government representatives, we note that House employees may accept, under the Foreign Gifts and Decorations Act (FGDA), gifts "of minimal value [currently \$480] tendered as a souvenir or mark of courtesy" by a foreign government. Any tangible gifts valued in excess of minimal value received from a foreign government must, within 60 days of acceptance, be disclosed on a Form for Disclosing Gifts from Foreign Governments and either turned over to the Clerk of the House, or, with the written approval of the Committee, retained for official use.

---

<sup>1</sup> Please be aware that the Committee's review of the proposed trip does not extend to either the security situation in the destination country or security related to foreign travel in general. We recommend you contact the Office of House Security (OHS) for a safety and security briefing prior to your departure. OHS may be reached at (202) 226-2044 or ohsstaff@mail.house.gov. House travelers should also register for the U.S. State Department's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program at <https://step.state.gov>.

If you have any further questions, please contact the Committee's Office of Advice and Education at extension 5-7103.

Sincerely,



Michael Guest  
Chairman



Susan Wild  
Ranking Member

MG/SW:eme

**American Israel Education Foundation (AIEF)  
Educational Seminar in Israel  
U.S. Senior Congressional Staff  
September 1-9, 2024**

**Addendum**

**4. List of Travelers**

1. Delia Kashat, Deputy Chief of Staff & Legislative Director, Office of the Honorable Don Davis (D-NC)
2. Mehgan Perez-Acosta, Chief of Staff, Office of the Honorable Byron Donalds (R-FL)
3. Deena Tauster, Chief of Staff, Office of the Honorable Andrew Garbarino (R-NY)
4. Robert Edmonson, Chief of Staff, Office of the Honorable Robert Garcia (D-CA)
5. Chris McCarthy, Chief of Staff, Office of the Honorable Sylvia Garcia (D-TX)
6. Timothy Svoboda, Chief of Staff, Office of the Honorable Glenn Grothman (R-WI)
7. Matthew Hutson, Chief of Staff, Office of the Honorable Andy Harris (R-MD)
8. Leslie Grubb, Chief of Staff, Office of the Honorable Greg Landsman (D-OH)
9. Andrea Grace, Chief of Staff, Office of the Honorable Mike Lawler(R-NY)
10. Chrissi Lee, Chief of Staff, Office of the Honorable Morgan Luttrell (R-TX)

**5. Breakdown of Other Costs**

<b>BREAKDOWN OF OTHER COSTS:</b>	
SECURITY	\$ 1,452.55
SPEAKER FEES	\$ 1,383.33
MEALS - GUESTS AND CONTRACT STAFF	\$ 437.19
ROOM RENTAL	\$ 453.42
TOUR GUIDE	\$ 342.33
HOTEL – CONTRACT STAFF	\$ 339.28
AIRPORT ASSISTANCE	\$ 120.40
TIPS	\$ 107.92
PHOTOGRAPHY	\$ 38.74
TRANSPORTATION GUESTS	\$ 19.19
MISC	\$ 7.85
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$ 4,716.26</b>

**American Israel Education Foundation  
Educational Seminar in Israel  
Senior Congressional Staff  
September 1-9, 2024**

**Itinerary**

**Sunday, September 1, 2024**

Afternoon Domestic flights / train depart

5:30 PM EL AL 2 departs JFK

9:00 PM EL AL 26 departs Newark

**Monday, September 2, 2024**

11:00 AM EL AL 2 arrives at Ben Gurion Airport

2:25 PM EL AL 26 arrives at Ben Gurion Airport

Transfer to Jerusalem  
Check-in to the Orient Hotel

6:30 – 7:45 PM **Welcome and Orientation Dinner**  
-at the hotel, Patterson Hall

8:00 – 9:00 PM **Pulse of the Nation**  
With Efrat Rosenberg Shapira  
Media Figure, Content Director, Beit Avi Chai Foundation  
-at the hotel, Wingate Hall

9:00 PM Overnight at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

**Tuesday, September 3, 2024**

8:15 – 9:00 AM Breakfast on own  
- at the hotel dining hall

9:00 – 10:00 AM **The Significance of the U.S.-Israel Relationship**  
Meeting with Stephanie Hallett  
Deputy Chief of Mission, U.S. Embassy in Israel  
-at the hotel, Wingate Hall

10:15 AM	Depart
10:30 AM– 1:30 PM	<b>Strategic Survey of Jerusalem - Part I: The Origin Stories</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ City of David</li> <li>▪ Western Wall</li> <li>▪ Church of the Holy Sepulchre</li> </ul>
1:30 – 2:30 PM	<b>Lunch</b> -at Abu Kamal
2:30 PM	Depart for hotel
3:30 -4:30 PM	<b>Israeli Politics 101</b> Session with Reuven Hazan, Professor of Political Science Hebrew University of Jerusalem -at the hotel, Wingate Hall
4:45-5:45 PM	<b>Regional Strategic Overview</b> Briefing by Brig. Gen. (Res.) Nitzan Nuriel Former Director, Counter-Terrorism Bureau at Prime Minister's Office -at the hotel, Wingate Hall
5:45 PM	Depart
6:00- 7:00 PM	<b>Paying Tribute to Israel’s Fallen Soldiers</b> A visit to Har Herzl military cemetery
7:00 PM	Depart for dinner
7:30 – 10:00 PM	Dinner -at Tali’s, Shuk Mahane Yehuda
10:00 PM	Overnight at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

**Wednesday, September 4, 2024**

7:00 – 8:15 AM	Breakfast on own -at the hotel dining hall
8:30 AM	Depart for Yad Vashem
9:00 – 11:15 AM	<b>The Significance of the Holocaust in Israeli Society</b> Guided visit to the Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum

11:30 – 11:45 AM	Depart
12:00-1:00 PM	<b>Israel's Changing Borders</b> Briefing with Mike Hollander, Tour Guide -at the Theatre Hotel, Symphony Hall
1:00 – 2:00 PM	Lunch -at the Theatre Hotel, The Opera Hall
2:00 – 3:00 PM	<b>Israel's Battle for Legitimacy in the International Arena</b> Meeting with Dr. Tal Becker Former Senior Legal Advisor, Ministry of Foreign Affairs -at the Theatre Hotel, Symphony Hall
3:15 PM	Depart for Tel Aviv
4:45 PM	Check-in to the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv
6:30 – 7:30 PM	<b>Israel's Quest for Peace: From Oslo to October 7</b> Meeting with Dr. Shany Mor Political theorist, lecturer and writer -at the hotel, The Gallery, lobby level, 3rd floor
7:45 PM	Depart for dinner
8:00 – 10:30 PM	<b>Israeli Politics and Policy</b> Dinner with Chiefs of Staff and Foreign Policy Advisors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Gili Hausner, Chief of Staff to Yair Lapid</li> <li>▪ Betty Ilovici, Media and Foreign Affairs Advisor, Defense Minister Yoav Gallant</li> </ul> -at Darya
10:45 PM	Overnight at the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv

**Thursday, September 5, 2024**

7:00 – 8:15 AM	Breakfast on own -at the hotel dining hall
8:30 – 9:00 AM	<b>The Story of October 7: Overview</b> Briefing with Tova Serkin, Missions Director - at the hotel, The Gallery, lobby level, 3rd floor (AV)

9:00 – 10:00 AM	<b>Gaza: A Situational Analysis</b> Briefing with Miri Eisin, Senior Fellow, International Institute for Counter Terrorism, Reichman University -at the hotel, The Gallery, lobby level, 3rd floor
10:30 AM	Depart for Re'im
12:00 – 12:45 PM	<b>The Story of October 7: Part I</b> Visit to the site of the Nova party Meeting with Din Tesler, survivor -at Re'im
1:00 PM	Depart for Netivot
1:15 – 2:00 PM	<b>Lunch</b> Pinah shel Ilan -at Netivot
2:15 PM	Depart for Beeri
2:30- 3:45 PM	<b>The Story of October 7: Part II</b> Visit to Kibbutz Beeri with Eliam Maor, local resident
4:00 PM	Depart
4:45– 5:30 PM	<b>Missile Defense Cooperation: U.S.- Israel Strategic Cooperation</b> Visit to an Iron Dome Battery -at Ad Halom
5:45 PM	Depart for hotel
8:00 – 10:00 PM	<b>Israeli Resiliency: Rebuilding After Destruction</b> Dinner with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Danielle Abraham, CEO, Regrow Israel</li> <li>▪ Miriam Ballin, Founder of Psychotrauma and Crisis Response Unit, United Hatzalah</li> <li>▪ Ephy Shapiro, HaGal Sheli</li> </ul> -at Hotel, Executive lounge, 3rd floor
10:00 PM	Overnight at the David Intercontinental Hotel

**Friday, September 6, 2024**

8:00 – 9:00 AM	Breakfast on own -hotel dining hall
9:00 AM	Depart
9:15 – 10:30 AM	<b>Coexistence in the Heart of Israel</b> Guided Survey of Jaffa
10:45 AM–12:00 PM	<b>Understanding the Roots of the Israeli Ethos</b> Guided Survey of Independence Trail
12:00 PM	Depart
12:15 – 1:45 PM	<b>The IDF in Israel Life: Meeting with Reservists</b> Lunch and discussion with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Naama Agmon Licht</li><li>▪ Raffi Baron</li><li>▪ Sharon Stern</li><li>▪ Nina Voss</li></ul> -at Florentina
2:00 PM	Depart
2:30 – 4:00 PM	<b>The Challenges of the Day After</b> Meeting with Haviv Rettig Gur Journalist, <i>The Times of Israel</i> -at the hotel, The Gallery, lobby level, 3rd floor
4:15- 5:15 PM	<b>A Palestinian Voice, Post October 7</b> Meeting with Samer Sinijlawi Fatah Activist, Founding Chairman, Jerusalem Development Fund -at the hotel, The Gallery, lobby level, 3rd floor
7:45 PM	Depart for dinner
8:00– 10:30 PM	<b>Reflections on the Sabbath</b> Traditional Sabbath Eve dinner hosted by Aviad and Chana Friedman -at their home
10:45 PM	Overnight at the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv

**Saturday, September 7, 2024**

8:00 AM	Breakfast on own
8:30 AM	Depart
8:45 – 9:45 AM	<b>Briefing en route: Israel's Diverse Society</b>
10:00 – 11:30 AM	<b>Shared Society During Crisis</b> Meeting with Ibrahim Abu Ahmed Community activist and writer -at Golden Steak, Restaurant, Tur'an
11:30 AM	Depart for lunch
12:00 – 1:00 PM	Lunch -at On the River
1:15 PM	Depart
2:00 – 4:00 PM	<b>Historical Significance of the Sea of Galilee</b> Guided Survey of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Mt. of Beatitudes</li><li>▪ Capernaum</li></ul>
4:00 PM	Depart for hotel
4:30 PM	Check-in to Magdala Hotel
6:00 – 7:00 PM	<b>Life on the Northern Border</b> Coffee with Nisan Zeevi Vice President, Margalit Startup City Galil and Impact Director, Jerusalem Venture Partners -at the hotel, Magdalena Hall (AV)
7:15 PM	Depart for dinner
7:30 – 9:30 PM	<b>Dinner and Reflections from the Week</b> -at Magdalena
9:30 PM	Overnight at The Magdala Hotel, Migdal

**Sunday, September 8, 2024**

7:15AM	Breakfast on own
8:15 AM	Depart
8:30 – 9:30AM	<b>Briefing en route: History of Hezbollah</b>
9:45 – 10:45 AM	<b>Israel's Northern Front: Lebanon and Hezbollah</b> Strategic briefing with Lt. Col. (ret.) Sarit Zehavi Founder and Director, Alma Research Center -at Alma Research and Education Center, Tefen
10:45 AM	Depart
10:45 AM–11:45 PM	<b>Briefing en route: Jordanian-Israeli Relations</b>
12:30 – 1:15 PM	Lunch -at Yulek Cafe
1:30 – 2:30 PM	<b>Israel's Narrow Waistline</b> Strategic briefing -at Alfei Menashe overlook
2:30 PM	Depart for Tel Aviv
3:30 – 4:00 PM	<b>Bring Them Home: The Hostages</b> Visit Hostage Square
4:15 PM	Depart for Hotel
6:00 PM	Prepare for departure, check out
6:15– 7:15 PM	<b>Humanitarian Aid Update</b> Briefing by Lt. Col. Yotam Shefer Head of Foreign Relations Department, COGAT - at the hotel, The Gallery, lobby level, 3rd floor (AV)
7:30 PM	Depart for dinner
8:15 – 9:30 PM	<b>Bringing it All Together: Closing Dinner and Reflections</b> -at Pizza Porto
9:45 PM	Depart for airport

**Monday, September 9, 2024**

1:00 AM	EL AL 25 departs Ben Gurion Airport
1:00 AM	EL AL 1 departs Ben Gurion Airport
5:45 AM	EL AL 25 arrives at Newark
5:50 AM	EL AL 1 arrives at JFK
7:55 AM	EL AL 7 departs Ben Gurion Airport
12:45 PM	EL AL 7 arrives at JFK

**American Israel Education Foundation  
Educational Seminar in Israel  
Senior Congressional Staff  
August 31-September 8, 2024**

**Saturday, August 31, 2024**

Afternoon                    Domestic flights/train depart

10:55 PM                    United Flight #90 departs Newark

**Sunday, September 1, 2024**

4:20 PM                    United Flight #90 Arrives at Ben-Gurion Airport  
Transfer to Jerusalem  
Check-in to the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

7:00 – 8:45 PM            **Welcome and Orientation Dinner**  
-at Angelica

During the welcome and orientation, staff will lead a discussion about the objectives for the week ahead.

9:00 PM                    Depart for City of David

9:00 – 10:00 PM            **Late-Night Visit: The City of David**

Jerusalem's City of David, more than any other site, represents the complexity of the Arab-Israeli conflict. The City of David is the site most archeologists agree to be the ancient city of Jerusalem that later became the capital of the united Israelite tribes under King David. This area is one of the most intensively excavated sites in the wider region. To Jewish Israelis, the site represents the beginning of their physical and emotional attachment to Jerusalem that has continued for over three thousand years. At the same time, much of the site is located in the predominantly Arab neighborhood of Silwan. The residents of Silwan, and the Palestinian Authority leadership are opposed to the archeological efforts being carried out in the City of David. In several instances, homes in Silwan were purchased and then destroyed to open up more areas for excavations. Palestinian leadership has denied the existence of any Jewish connection to Jerusalem.

10:00 PM                    Return to the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

10:15 PM                    Overnight at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

**Monday, September 2, 2024**

8:15 – 9:00 AM                      Breakfast on own  
- at the hotel dining hall

9:00- 10:00AM                      **Pulse of the Nation**  
With Efrat Rosenberg Shapira  
Media Figure, Content Director, Beit Avi Chai Foundation  
-at the hotel

Efrat Shapira Rosenberg is the current content director at Beit Avi Chai, where she creates and hosts popular podcasts about Israeli politics, current affairs and Jewish thought. Previously, Efrat was a program officer at the Avi Chai foundation, a major player in the field of Jewish renewal and education in Israel. Over the last decade she has been writing newspaper columns and hosts Radio programs on Reshet Bet and Galei Tzahal; television programs on Reshet (Channel 2) and Kan (Channel 1); and a popular podcast about Israeli politics. She is a member of the board of directors of The Sam Spiegel Film School in Jerusalem, and Chair of the "Kolech" Movement for Religious Feminism in Israel. As Israel continues to fight the war against Hamas in Gaza, as well as deal with escalating Iranian threats, Ms. Rosenberg will provide staff with a synthesis of domestic political trends, current international affairs, and the general state of mind of Israeli voters.

10:15 AM                              Depart for the Old City

10:45 AM – 12:45 PM              **Strategic Survey of Jerusalem - Part I: The Origin Stories**

- Robinson’s Arch
- Western Wall
- Church of the Holy Sepulchre

The Old City of Jerusalem is home to the holiest shrines of the three monotheistic religions, including the Temple Mount, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and the Al-Aqsa Mosque. The Holy Basin is the historic location of Jerusalem and refers to the land surrounding the Old City, including the Mount of Olives, believed to be the departure point for Jesus’ final entry into Jerusalem and the cemetery where Jews have been burying their dead for 2,500 years. The Holy Basin also includes the Western Wall, Judaism’s holiest site, and the Temple Mount (Haram al-Sharif), sacred ground for Jews, Muslims, and Christians. Control over these sensitive areas remains among the largest disputes in the Middle East. The professionally guided survey will walk through all of these sites and others, educating trip participants on their historical impact and their role in today’s political discussions.

1:00-2:00PM                      **Lunch**  
-at Abu Kamal

2:15 PM                              Depart for hotel

3:00 –4:00 PM            **Regional Strategic Overview**  
Briefing by Brig. Gen. (Res.) Nitzan Nuriel  
Former Director, Counter-Terrorism Bureau at Prime Minister's Office  
-at the hotel, Wingate Hall

In order to understand the strategic threats facing Israel, participants must understand the unique situation facing Israel at the borders with the Gaza Strip, Lebanon, and Syria, all Iranian proxies. This briefing will provide an overview of each border, as well as the malign activity from Iran contributing to unrest in the region.

6:00–7:00 PM            **Israeli Politics 101**  
With Reuven Hazan, Professor of Political Science  
Hebrew University of Jerusalem  
-at the hotel

It is critical for trip participants to understand the parliamentary system in Israel. Reuven Hazan will explain how the parliamentary party system works, how coalitions rise and fall, and how Israeli politics differ from American politics. Since the group will be visiting with government officials throughout the week, we believe it's important to provide this overview early in the seminar.

7:15 PM                    Depart for dinner

7:30 – 9:30 PM            **Israeli Politics and Policy**  
Dinner with Chiefs of Staff and Foreign Policy Advisors

- Betty Ilovici, Media and Foreign Affairs Advisor to Defense Minister Gallant
- Rony Tal, Chief of Staff to Speaker Ohana
- Yair Zivan, Diplomatic Advisor to Yair Lapid

-at Kinor Bakikar

During this dinner the participants will have the opportunity to hear from their counterparts in Israel –staffers serving different members of the Israeli Knesset. The discussion will explore the difference between the American and Israeli political systems; the role of political staffers; and the views of the various Knesset members they serve on current issues affecting the region.

9:30 PM                    Depart for hotel

9:45 PM                    Overnight at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

## **Tuesday, September 3, 2024**

7:00 – 8:15 AM Breakfast on own  
-at the hotel dining hall

8:30 AM Depart for Yad Vashem

9:00 – 11:00 AM **The Significance of the Holocaust in Israeli Society**  
Guided visit to the Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum

One cannot understand Israel's worldview without understanding the trauma of the Holocaust. Israelis view threats to its destruction in light of the events of the 1930s and 1940s, when the German government's threats to exterminate the Jewish people were not taken seriously by the international community. This museum provides an important reference point as to how Israelis interpret the threat of an Iranian nuclear program and Iranian leaders committed to Israel's destruction. Yad Vashem has become a symbol of the Jewish people and its transformation from total helplessness to self-reliance and strength. Thus, a visit to Yad Vashem provides a historical context for the Jewish state. The museum's professional docent will guide the delegation through the main exhibit hall and the children's memorial.

11:15 – 11:45 AM Depart

12:00 – 1:00 PM **A Palestinian Voice, Post October 7**  
With Ibrahim Dalalsha  
Executive Director, Horizon Center for Political Studies and Media Outreach  
-at the Theatre Hotel

Ibrahim Dalalsha is the director of Horizon Center for Political Studies and Media Outreach, a private Palestinian think tank and consultancy firm in Ramallah. The center compiles political, legal, security and economic studies and other topics related to the Israeli - Palestinian conflict. Dalalsha has played an integral role in peace negotiations across the Middle East. His former career as a senior Palestinian political advisor at the U.S. Consulate General in Jerusalem stretched across two decades. During this session he will provide an insider's view of the Palestinian political landscape.

1:00 – 2:00 PM Lunch  
-at the Theatre Hotel

2:00 – 3:00 PM **Israel's Battle for Legitimacy in the International Arena**  
Meeting with Dr. Tal Becker  
Former Senior Legal Advisor, Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
-at the Theatre Hotel

Since Israel's founding, the Jewish state has sought to reach a just and lasting solution to the Israeli Palestinian conflict. The United States has been closely involved in negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. Dr. Tal Becker is a senior member of the Israeli peace negotiation team. In this position, he is on the front lines of many of Israel's most pressing diplomatic, legal and policy challenges. He is a veteran negotiator, and key behind the scenes representative, for Israel in a wide variety of contexts. During this session, he will address the current political climate for Israel on the international stage.

3:15 PM Depart

3:30 – 4:30 PM **Paying Tribute to Israel's Fallen Soldiers**  
A visit to Har Herzl military cemetery

A critical piece of understanding Israeli society and culture, is the role of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), mandatory army service, and veterans. Mount Herzl is the site of Israel's national cemetery, named after Theodor Herzl, the founder of modern political Zionism. Israel's leaders and fallen soldiers are buried there. Every plot section in Mount Herzl has a broad plaza for memorial services. Most state memorial ceremonies for those killed in war are conducted in the National Military and Police cemetery. This visit will highlight the way Israel remembers its fallen and relates to the role of the military in as part of the fabric of the Jewish State. Since the massacre on October 7<sup>th</sup> and the ensuing war, the cemetery has seen many funerals in recent months and visiting now will help participants understand the current Israel psyche.

4:45 PM Depart to Tel Aviv, Check in at the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv

6:30 – 7:30 PM **Israel's Quest for Peace: From Oslo to October 7**  
Meeting with Dr. Shany Mor  
Political theorist, lecturer and writer  
-at the hotel

Shany Mor is a leading political theorist and policy consultant whose work brings to the fore expertise gained both as a scholar and a practitioner. He has taught politics and international relations at leading universities in Israel, Europe, and the US, and has consulted for politicians and NGO's on a host of issues drawing on his experience both as an academic and as a Director for Foreign Policy for Israel's National Security Council, where he also headed the diplomatic desk in the situation room of the Prime Minister's Office. During this session, Dr. Mor will trace the roots of the current Israel-Hamas war back to the Oslo Accords, through Camp David, the Second Intifada, and Israel's disengagement from the Gaza Strip in 2005. He will explore where the peace process stands in the wake of October 7, and what the day after might look like.

7:30 PM Depart for dinner

8:00 – 9:30 PM      **The IDF in Israel Life: Meeting with Reservists**

Dinner and Discussion with:

Dinner with:

- Naama Agmon Licht
- Sharon Stern
- Nina Voss

-at Flame

In Israel, military service is mandatory for everyone over the age of 18, with several exceptions. Most Israelis join the army right after high school and serve for three years. As such, the Israel Defense Force (IDF) is an integral part of the fabric of Israeli society. During this lunch, participants will have the chance to meet with several reservists, and hear about their experiences in the army. They will discuss the values of the Israel Defense Forces – known as Ruach Tzahal (The Spirit of the IDF). This overarching ethical code, and the guidelines and operation resulting from it, shape the mode of action applied by all IDF soldiers and units, both in peace and at war. During basic training, every IDF soldier studies and analyzes the code of ethics together with their commanders.

9:45 PM              Depart for hotel

10:00 PM            Overnight at the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv

**Wednesday, September 4, 2024**

7:00 – 8:15 AM      Breakfast on own  
-at the hotel dining hall

8:30 – 9:00 AM      **The Story of October 7: Overview**  
Briefing with Tova Serkin  
- at the hotel

Missions Director Tova Serkin will give participants a broad overview of the devastating events of October 7, the deadliest day for the Jewish people since the Holocaust. This introduction will provide the necessary context for the more in-depth topics participants will explore throughout the day, such as Hamas attacks on kibbutzim and a site visit to the Nova Festival memorial.

9:00 – 10:00 AM    **Gaza: A Situational Analysis**  
Briefing with Col. (Res.) Miri Eisin  
Senior Fellow, International Institute for Counter Terrorism, Reichman  
University  
-at the hotel

Col. (Res.) Miri Eisin is an Israeli security expert, speaking on regional geo-politics and security related issues in the media worldwide. Col. Eisin served in the Israeli intelligence community and retired from active duty at the rank of full colonel in 2004. Over her twenty-year career in the military, she served as the deputy head of the combat intelligence corps, the personal assistant to the Director of Military intelligence and as the intelligence officer in combat units and research departments.

10:15 AM Depart for Kibbutz Beerli

12:00 – 1:30 PM **The Story of October 7: Part 1**  
Tour of Beerli with local resident

On October 7, the Jewish communities living along the Gaza border were destroyed, thousands were killed, and hundreds kidnapped. During the visit to Kibbutz Be'eri, participants will bear witness to the Hamas invasion and massacre. They will hear what happened to the community on October 7, and how the IDF regained control. They will meet with an IDF spokesperson who will walk them through the events that started the war.

1:45 PM Depart, Lunch on Bus

2:15 – 2:45 PM **The Story of October 7: Part II**  
Visit to the site of the Nova Festival

When Hamas terrorists infiltrated Israel on October 7, they also massacred and kidnapped hundreds of young civilians at a music festival taking place in the Gaza envelope area. Since then, family members created a moving memorial to their loved ones that will help the participants understand the enormity of the events of the days and the trauma experienced by Israeli society.

3:00 PM Depart

4:00 – 4:30 PM **Missile Defense Cooperation: U.S.- Israel Strategic Cooperation**  
Visit to an Iron Dome Battery  
-at Ad Halom

More than a decade ago, Israel developed Iron Dome to protect its citizens from persistent and increasingly dangerous rockets fired by Iranian-backed terrorists. Since being deployed, Iron Dome has intercepted more than 90 percent of the rockets it has targeted—preventing war, saving countless lives, and reducing physical and psychological damage. Leaders in Congress have recognized the importance of Israel's missile defense system and have allocated more than \$1.6 billion for this technology. Participants will have the opportunity to visit an Iron Dome site and speak with the soldiers responsible for its operation.

4:45 PM Depart for hotel

- 7:30 PM Depart for dinner
- 8:00 – 10:00 PM **Israeli Resiliency: Rebuilding After Destruction**  
 Dinner with:
- Danielle Abraham, CEO, Regrow Israel
  - Miriam Ballin, Founder of Psychotrauma and Crisis Response Unit, United Hatzalah
  - Ephy Shapiro, HaGal Sheli
- at hotel, Nomi

Within hours of Hamas’s attack on Israel, civil society activists stepped in and used their experience and knowledge to save lives and protect their homes. In this session, participants will hear from women activists who come from organizations that exemplify Israel’s commitment to repairing the world and the start-up ethos, and in the aftermath of Oct 7 redirected their efforts to help Israeli society weather the war and its aftermath.

- 10:30PM Overnight at the David Intercontinental Hotel  
 PLEASE PREPARE FOR THE NEXT MORNING’S DEPARTURE, PACK OVERNIGHT BAG

**Thursday, September 5, 2024**

- 8:00AM Bring down overnight bags
- 8:00 – 9:00 AM Breakfast on own  
 -at the hotel dining hall
- 9:00 – 10:00 AM **Humanitarian Aid Update**  
 Briefing by Maj. Yotam Shefer  
 Head of Foreign Relations Department, COGAT  
 - at the hotel, The Gallery

The Coordination of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT) implements Israel’s civilian policy within the territories of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, in coordination and cooperation with officials from defense and government offices in various fields. During this session, Maj. Shefer will discuss the government’s efforts to provide humanitarian aid in the Gaza Strip during the Israel-Hamas war, including hundreds of aid trucks per day, medical evacuations, and other basic needs.

- 10:15 AM Depart for Alfei Menashe
- 11:00 -11:45 PM **Israel’s Narrow Waistline**  
 Strategic briefing  
 -at Alfei Menashe overlook



Nisan Zeevi is a 3rd generation resident of Kibbutz Kfar Giladi in the Galilee. Until October 6th, Nisan led one of Israel's most successful initiatives in geo-economic development, transforming the Galilee into a new vibrant "FoodTec" hub in Israel. Since October 7th, Nisan has been on reserve duty in Kfar Giladi, where his entire family has been evacuated. Within this framework, Nisan established Lobby 1701, a civil organization representing 80,000 residents of the Galilee from both the left and the right, working to ensure the security needs of this region and to implement UN Resolution 1701 - creating a demilitarized area from the Lebanon border to the Litani River. During this session, Nisan will discuss his efforts to advocate for the security needs of the Galilee region, and the importance of a demilitarized northern border.

- 6:00 PM Depart for Magdala
- 7:00 PM Check-in to Magdala Hotel, Migdal
- 7:45 PM Depart for dinner
- 8:00 – 9:30 PM **Dinner and Reflections from the Week**  
-at Magdalena

Israel Seminars Director Julie Peretz and Mission Director Tova Serkin will lead a guided discussion on the week's programming. We have found giving our participants an opportunity to reflect on the topics and perspectives presented to them during the day assists in their ability to understand the complex issues facing Israel during this time of war.

- 9:30 PM Return to hotel
- 9:45 PM Overnight at The Magdala Hotel, Migdal  
PLEASE PREPARE FOR NEXT MORNING'S DEPARTURE

### **Friday, September 6, 2024**

- 7:00AM Check-out, luggage in the lobby
- 7:00-8:15 AM Breakfast on own  
- at the hotel dining hall
- 8:30 AM Depart
- 9:00 – 11:00 AM **Historical Significance of the Sea of Galilee**  
Guided Survey of:
  - Mt. of Beatitudes
  - Capernaum

As part of the seminar's focus on the complex religious fabric of Israeli society, the delegation will be visiting several of the most sacred sites for Christians in the Holy Land. Included is a guided survey and discussion of some of the most important events in the life of Jesus by the Sea of Galilee. Just as strategic surveys in Jerusalem focused on Jewish, Muslim, and Christian history and claims to the land, the site visits to the Christian sites help provide context for the competing religious narratives for the land of Israel. For example, we will be visiting the Mount of Beatitudes, where Jesus delivered the Sermon on the Mount, the most studied and read speech of any religion in history. Our guide will also lead discussions through Capernaum and St. Peter's Church.

11:00 AM                      Depart

12:30 -2:00 PM            **Shared Society During Crisis**  
Lunch with Ibrahim Abu Ahmed  
Community activist and writer  
-at Tanduka

Approximately 22% of Israeli residents are part of the non-Jewish minority, which includes, among others, Muslims, Christians, and Druze. As a liberal, democratic state, Israel is rooted in liberty, the rule of law, free and fair elections, and full civil rights for all citizens. To provide a firsthand perspective of the minority experience, participants will meet with Ibrahim Abu Ahmed, an Arab-Palestinian-Israeli writer and lecturer. He is the Director of Alumni Relations and the Tourism Project at the Regional Organization for Peace and Economic Security (ROPES). Abu Ahmed regularly speaks to various groups including students, journalists, elected officials, and policymakers. His field of expertise includes the challenges of the Arab minority in Israel, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the war in Syria, the instability in Lebanon, and Iranian intervention in the region, among others.

2:00 PM                      Depart

2:15 – 3:15 PM            **En Route Briefing: The Strategic Importance of the Jordan Valley**

The Jordan Valley serves as the backdrop for discussion on the conflict and peace between the Israelis and the Jordanians. It is one of the key issues being negotiated by Israelis and Palestinians as part of the peace process. Understanding the geography of the West Bank—the mountains vs. the valleys, the areas with waters vs. the arid zones—is central to understanding the conflict in the region.

4:00 – 4:30 PM            **Bring Them Home: The Hostages**  
Visit Hostage Square

Among the over 240 people taken hostage by Hamas were American citizens. Their family members have visited with communities around the world to advocate for the hostage's

safe return. Participants will meet the parents of one of the Americans, Hersh Goldberg Polin, a young man who was injured and taken captive, to hear about their struggle to bring their son home.

4:30 PM Depart for hotel

7:15 PM Depart for dinner

7:45 – 10:00 PM **Reflections on the Sabbath**  
Traditional Sabbath Eve dinner hosted by Aviad and Chana Friedman  
-at their home

Israel, the only Jewish country in the world, boasts the unique tradition of honoring the Jewish Sabbath from Friday sundown until Saturday sundown. 80 percent of the Israeli population will commemorate the Sabbath, in various forms, which typically include a family dinner and special blessings. During this dinner the Friedmans will lead a discussion on their hometown of Tel Aviv, the center of the largest metropolitan area in Israel, home to most of Israel's hi-tech industry, and the country's international airport. They will describe life in Tel Aviv since October 7, including the impact on civilian life in Tel Aviv, where the population lives just hours from a war zone.

10:30PM Overnight at the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv

### **Saturday, September 7, 2024**

8:00 – 9:00 AM Breakfast on own  
-hotel dining hall

9:00 AM Depart

9:15 – 10:30 AM **Understanding the Roots of the Israeli Ethos**  
Guided Survey of Independence Trail

Tel Aviv is the first Hebrew city and reflects the diverse origins of the original Zionists who founded the city. A survey of the early neighborhoods, and visits to the major historical, cultural and political institutions will help participants understand modern Israel's ethos and approach to local and global issues. It will also be an opportunity to see the vibrant, diverse secular society in contrast to the experience of a Shabbat dinner the night before with a religious family.

10:45 AM – 12:00 PM **Coexistence in the Heart of Israel**  
Guided Survey of Jaffa

The ancient city of Jaffa, now part of the modern Tel Aviv-Jaffa Municipality has a rich history reflecting the different communities that have used it as a port city. Today, a diverse community of Jews, Christians and Muslims call it home. This tour will cover the ancient and modern city, allowing participants to have a deep understanding of different Israeli populations as well as the challenges and opportunities of a shared society.

12:00 PM Depart

12:15 – 1:15 PM Lunch  
-at Haachim

1:30 PM Depart

2:00 – 3:00 PM **Understanding Oct 7 and its Impact on Israeli Society**  
Visit to ANU Museum of the Jewish People

"October Seventh" examines how Israeli culture reacts to the war. The exhibition curates works by 25 artists whose creative activity reflects the atrocious times Israeli society is facing since October 7th. Some of them are living artists, some deceased – either murdered on October 7th or died during the ongoing war, while others are residents (or former residents) of the southern areas, who suffered the loss of their loved ones, their homes, or whose families were affected by the horrors of the massacre. The new exhibition wishes to frame a current situation and to record the unique creative burst that is well felt among Israelis since the war began.

3:15 PM Return to hotel

3:30 – 5:00 PM Pack and prepare for departure

5:00 – 6:00 PM **The Challenges of the Day After**  
Meeting with Haviv Rettig Gur  
Journalist, The Times of Israel  
-at the hotel

In this closing session, journalist Haviv Rettig Gur will bring together the different elements of the trip to help participants fully understand this challenging moment in time, the challenges Israel faces during war, and the role of the U.S.-Israel relationship. It will also lay out the complexities of “the day after” and some possibilities for how Israel can move forward both locally and regionally.

6:15 PM Depart

7:00 – 8:30 PM **Bringing it All Together: Closing Dinner and Reflections**  
-at Pizza Porto

The closing dinner provides an opportunity for participants to process the scope of the week, from the religious center of the Judeo-Christian world in Jerusalem, to the bustling economic powerhouse of Tel Aviv; and the conflict plagued borders with Gaza, Syria and Lebanon. We will process the range of topics explored, including the U.S.-Israel strategic partnership, prospects for Arab-Israeli peace, the experience of minorities in Israel, as well as greater existential threats throughout the region. Participants will also have the opportunity to share their takeaways and ask any lingering questions that weren't covered during the week.

8:45 PM                      Depart for Ben Gurion Airport

9:15 PM                      Arrive at Ben Gurion Airport

11:25 PM                     United Flight #91 Departs

**Sunday, September 8, 2024**

4:15 AM                     United Flight #91 Arrives at Newark

Morning                     Domestic Flights Depart

**American Israel Education Foundation (AIEF)  
Educational Seminar in Israel  
U.S. Senior Congressional Staff  
August 31-September 8, 2024**

**Addendum**

**4. List of Invitees**

As senior congressional staff to a U.S. Representative, these invitees are consistently engaged in issue areas relevant to the U.S. – Israel relationship. These issues include U.S. foreign policy, U.S. appropriations, refugee and immigrant issues, homeland security, cybersecurity, and veteran’s affairs. These issues—along with issues more broadly related to the strategic partnership between the U.S. and Israel—will be explored during the AIEF Israel Seminar, which is focused on educating congressional staff on events throughout the region by providing on-the-ground context.

1. Jacob Hochberg, Chief of Staff, Office of the Honorable Jasmine Crockett (D-TX)
2. Delia Kashat, Deputy Chief of Staff & Legislative Director, Office of the Honorable Don Davis (D-NC)
3. Mehgan Perez-Acosta, Chief of Staff, Office of the Honorable Byron Donalds (R-FL)
4. Deena Tauster, Chief of Staff, Office of the Honorable Andrew Garbarino (R-NY)
5. Robert Edmonson, Chief of Staff, Office of the Honorable Robert Garcia (D-CA)
6. Chris McCarthy, Chief of Staff, Office of the Honorable Sylvia Garcia (D-TX)
7. Timothy Svoboda, Chief of Staff, Office of the Honorable Glenn Grothman (R-WI)
8. Matthew Hutson, Chief of Staff, Office of the Honorable Andy Harris (R-MD)
9. Chrissi Lee, Chief of Staff, Office of the Honorable Morgan Luttrell (R-TX)

**18. Breakdown of other expenses**

<b>Other cost</b>	<b>Cost per</b>
Security	\$1,333.33
Speaker Fees	\$666.67
Room Rentals and Setup	\$400.00
Hotels for contract staff	\$400.00
Tour Guide/Yad Vashem Guide	\$320.00
Meals for contract staff & speakers	\$266.67
Airport Assistance	\$93.33
Photography	\$36.67
Transportation for contract staff & speakers	\$33.33
Entrance Fees	\$33.33
Misc.	\$33.33
Tips	\$13.33
<b>Total =</b>	<b>\$3,630.00</b>