

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, 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: Ryan Altman
2. a. Name of Accompanying Relative: _____ **OR** None
b. Relationship to Traveler: Spouse Child Other (specify): _____
3. a. Dates: Departure: 8/16/2025 Return: 8/24/2025
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
6. Describe Meetings and Events Attended: We met with a host of Israeli officials, citizens, and groups who spoke about the many issues they are facing throughout the country.
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: 9/3/2025

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: Brad Finstad Date: 9/3/2025

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: August 16, 2025 Date of Return: August 24, 2025

4. Name(s) of Traveler(s): Ryan Altman

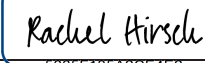
Note: You may list more than one traveler on a form only if **all** information is **identical** for each person listed.

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	\$4,760.88	\$2,282.75	\$1,550.59	\$3,771.98
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: 9/3/2025 | 15:58 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.

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: Ryan Altman

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): Brad Finstad

Office Address: 2418 Rayburn HOB

Telephone Number: (202) 225-2472

Email Address of Contact Person: Ryan.Altman@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.

COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

TRAVELER FORM

1. Name of Traveler: Ryan Altman
2. Sponsor(s) who will be paying or providing in-kind support for the trip: American Israel Education Foundation
3. City and State **OR** Foreign Country of Travel: Israel
4. a. Date of Departure: August 16, 2025 Date of Return: August 24, 2025
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? n/a
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 Deputy Chief of Staff, this will help my work to support my boss on the House Armed Services Committee, as well as on issues related to foreign affairs
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: _____

Bud Lister

Date: 7/15/25

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.
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 find attached
5. Yes No Is travel being offered to an accompanying family member of the House invitee(s)?
6. Date of Departure: August 16, 2025 Date of Return: August 24, 2025
7. a. City of departure: Washington, D.C.
 b. Destination(s): Israel
 c. City of return: Washington, D.C.
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 in Israel)
- c. If travel will be first class, or by chartered or private aircraft, explain why such travel is warranted:
n/a

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): \$176

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</u>	City:	<u>Jerusalem</u>	Cost Per Night:	<u>\$332/\$439 (FRI)</u>
Reason(s) for Selecting:	<u>location and affordability</u>				
Hotel Name:	<u>David Interncontinental</u>	City:	<u>Tel Aviv</u>	Cost Per Night:	<u>\$450</u>
Reason(s) for Selecting:	<u>location and affordability</u>				
Hotel Name:	<u>Magdala</u>	City:	<u>Tiberias</u>	Cost Per Night:	<u>\$290</u>
Reason(s) for Selecting:	<u>location and 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 Transportation Expenses per Participant	Total Lodging Expenses per Participant	Total Meal Expenses per Participant
For each Member, Officer, or Employee	\$5,501.81	\$2,293	\$1,238
For each Accompanying Family Member	n/a	n/a	n/a

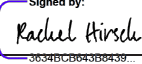
	Other Expenses (dollar amount per item)	Identify Specific Nature of “Other” Expenses (e.g., taxi, parking, registration fee, etc.)
For each Member, Officer, or Employee	\$3,920	Please find attached
For each Accompanying Family Member	n/a	n/a

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.**

Signed by:  Date: 7/15/2025 | 14:05 EDT
 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.

**American Israel Education Foundation (AIEF)
Educational Seminar in Israel
U.S. Congressional Staff
August 16-24, 2025**

Addendum

4. Name of Travelers

Anna Adamian, Communications Director, Office of the Honorable Andy Harris (R-MD)
Ryan Altman, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Honorable Brad Finstad (R-MN)
Nora Blalock, Deputy Chief of Staff/Legislative Director, Office of the Honorable Kathy
Castor (D-FL)

Cameron Erickson, Legislative Director, Office of the Honorable Abe Hamadeh (R-AZ)
Amanda Farnan, Communications Director, Office of the Honorable Eugene Vindman
(D-VA)

Zachary Freiman, Senior Legislative Assistant, Office of the Honorable Yassamin
Ansari (D-AZ)

Christofer Horta, Legislative Director, Office of the Honorable David Scott (D-GA)

Mary Hrinkevich, Legislative Director, Office of the Honorable Nick LaLota (R-NY)

Zachary Kahan, Legislative Director, Office of the Honorable Luz Rivas (D-CA)

Nicholas Keddy, Legislative Assistant, Office of the Honorable Andrew Garbarino (R-
NY)

Angelle Kwemo, Deputy (Acting) Chief of Staff, Office of the Honorable Sheila
Cherfilus-McCormick (D-FL)

Shine Lee, Legislative Director, Office of the Honorable Young Kim (R-CA)

Samuel Luna, Legislative Director, Office of the Honorable Anna Paulina Luna (R-FL)

Kyle Pierre, Legislative Assistant, Office of the Honorable Cleo Fields (D-LA)

Zev Siegfeld, Legislative Director, Office of the Honorable Claudia Tenney (R-NY)

George Wang, Senior Legislative Assistant, Office of the Honorable John Larson (D-CT)

5. Breakdown of other expenses

Other Cost	Cost per participant
Security	\$1,319.53
Speaker Fees	\$918.41
Room Rentals and Setup	\$366.45
Meals for contract staff and guests	\$300.97
Hotels for contract staff	\$296.88
Tour Guide/Yad Vashem Guide	\$290.00
Airport Assistance	\$147.12
Entrance fee	\$50.17
Photography	\$35.18
Miscellaneous	\$31.55
Transportation for contract staff and speakers	\$8.82
Tips	\$6.91
Total per participant	\$3,771.98

**American Israel Education Foundation
Educational Seminar in Israel
U.S. Congressional Staff
August 16-24, 2025**

Tuesday, August 12, 2025

2:00 PM Amtrak #94 departs Washington, D.C. (Zachary Freiman)
4:57 PM Amtrak #94 arrives Newark (Zachary Freiman)
11:50 PM El Al #26 departs Newark (Zachary Freiman)

Wednesday, August 13, 2025

5:15 PM El Al #26 arrives Tel Aviv (Zachary Freiman)

Thursday, August 14, 2025

5:05 AM American Airlines #1148 departs Washington, D.C. (Cameron Erickson)
7:40 AM American Airlines #1148 arrives Miami (Cameron Erickson)
12:00 PM El Al #18 departs Miami (Cameron Erickson)

Friday, August 15, 2025

6:55 AM El Al #18 arrives Tel Aviv (Cameron Erickson)

Saturday, August 16, 2025

3:20 PM Amtrak #168 departs Washington, D.C. (Anna Adamian, Ryan Altman, Amanda Farnan, Mary Hrinkevich, Nicholas Keddy, Angelle Kwemo, Shine Lee, Samuel Luna, Zev Siegfeld)
5:00 PM Delta #5713 departs Washington, D.C. (Christofer Horta, Kyle Pierre)
5:10 PM JetBlue #1579 departs Washington, D.C. (Zachary Kahan)
5:15 PM Delta #5666 departs Washington D.C. (Nora Blalock)
6:21 PM Amtrak #168 arrives Newark (Anna Adamian, Ryan Altman, Amanda Farnan, Mary Hrinkevich, Nicholas Keddy, Angelle Kwemo, Shine Lee, Samuel Luna, Zev Siegfeld)
6:39 PM Delta #5713 arrives JFK (Christofer Horta, Kyle Pierre)
7:07 PM Delta #5666 arrives Boston (Nora Blalock)
7:52 PM JetBlue #1579 arrives Fort Lauderdale (Zachary Kahan)

11:50 PM El Al #26 departs Newark (Anna Adamian, Ryan Altman, Amanda Farnan, Mary Hrinkevich, Nicholas Keddy, Angelle Kwemo, Shine Lee, Samuel Luna, Zev Siegfeld)

11:50 PM El Al #8 departs JFK (Christofer Horta, Kyle Pierre)

11:50 PM El AL #116 departs Boston (Nora Blalock)

11:55 PM El Al #22 departs Fort Lauderdale (Zachary Kahan)

Sunday, August 17, 2025

5:22 AM Amtrak #160 departs Union Station (George Wang)

8:21 AM Amtrak #160 arrives Newark (George Wang)

1:30 PM El Al #28 departs Newark (George Wang)

4:50 PM El AL #116 arrives Tel Aviv (Nora Blalock)

5:10 PM El Al #8 arrives Tel Aviv (Christofer Horta, Kyle Pierre)

5:15 PM El Al #26 arrives Tel Aviv (Anna Adamian, Ryan Altman, Amanda Farnan, Mary Hrinkevich, Nicholas Keddy, Angelle Kwemo, Shine Lee, Samuel Luna, Zev Siegfeld)

6:50 PM El Al #22 arrives Tel Aviv (Zachary Kahan)

Sunday, August 17th

4:50 – 6:50 PM Flights arrive Tel Aviv
Transfer to Jerusalem
Check-in to the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

8:15 PM Depart for Dinner

8:30 –10:00 PM **Welcome Dinner and Orientation**
-at Eucalyptus restaurant

10:15 PM Depart for the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

10:30 PM Overnight at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

Monday, August 18th

6:55 AM El Al flight #28 arrives Tel Aviv (George Wang)

7:30 AM Breakfast on Own
-at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

8:30 – 9:30 AM	Pulse of the Nation With David Horowitz Founding Editor, Times of Israel -at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem
9:30 AM	Depart
10:00 AM – 1:00 PM	Strategic Survey of Jerusalem: The Holy Basin Guided visit through the Old City of Jerusalem
1:15 – 2:00 PM	Lunch -at Luciana restaurant
2:15 PM	Depart for the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem
2:45 PM	Arrive at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem
3:15 – 4:15 PM	Israeli Politics 101 With Prof. Reuven Hazan Professor of Political Science, Hebrew University of Jerusalem -at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem
4:30 – 5:30 PM	Regional Strategic Overview Briefing by Brig. Gen. (Res.) Nitzan Nuriel Former Director, Counter-Terrorism Bureau at Prime Minister's Office -at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem
5:45 PM	Depart for the Mount Herzl Military Cemetery, Jerusalem
6:00 – 6:45 PM	The Israeli Psyche pt. I: Israel's Fallen Soldiers Visit to the Mount Herzl Military Cemetery, Jerusalem
6:45 PM	Depart
7:00 – 9:15 PM	Politics and Policy in Israel <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tom Sagiv, Political Advisor, the Honorable Benny Gantz, National Unity Party • Ariel Segal, Senior Political Advisor to the Leader of the Opposition, the Honorable Yair Lapid, Yesh Atid Party • Tuvia Chertok, Advisor to the Honorable Amichai Chikli, Likud Party -at Andalucia restaurant
9:30 PM	Depart for the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem
10:00 PM	Overnight at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

Tuesday, August 19th

7:30 AM	Breakfast on own -at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem
8:30 AM	Depart
9:00 –11:00 AM	The Israeli Psyche: The Significance of the Holocaust Guided visit to Yad Vashem: The World Holocaust Remembrance Center
11:15 AM	Depart
11:45 AM –12:45 PM	A Palestinian Voice Post-October 7 Meeting with Ibrahim Dalalsha Executive Director, Horizon Center for Political Studies & Media Outreach -at the Vert hotel, Jerusalem
12:45 –1:30 PM	Lunch -at the Vert Hotel, Jerusalem
1:30 PM	Depart for Tel Aviv
2:45 PM	Check-in to the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv
3:00 – 3:45 PM	Israeli Democracy in Action, Part I: The Coalition Meeting with Topaz Luk Former spokesperson for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu -at the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv
4:00 – 5:15 PM	Break
5:30 PM	Depart for the Link Hotel, Tel Aviv
6:00 – 6:45 PM	Israeli Democracy in Action, Part II: The Opposition Meeting with Yair Zivan Foreign Policy Advisor to the Honorable Yair Lapid, Yesh Atid party -at the Link Hotel, Tel Aviv
6:45 PM	Depart for dinner
7:00 – 9:15 PM	Activism in Israeli Society: Minorities and Diversity Dinner with: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ibrahim Abu Ahmed, Israeli Arab Activist• Ashager Arraro, Ethiopian Community Activist -at Goshen restaurant
9:30 PM	Return to the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv
9:30 PM	Overnight at the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv

Wednesday, August 20th

7:00 AM	Breakfast on Own -at the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv
8:30 – 9:15 AM	October 7, Part. I: How It Unfolded Gabi Duec, Israel Seminars Leader -at the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv
9:30 AM	Depart for the Gaza Envelope
9:30 –10:30 AM	Enroute Briefing: The History of Gaza, 1948-October 6
10:45 –11:45 AM	October 7, Part II: Hamas in Southern Israel Experience October 7 through the eyes of Israeli survivors -Israel-Is Center, Sderot
12:00 PM	Depart
12:15 –12:45 PM	Lunch -at Haimos restaurant, Sderot
12:45 PM	Depart
1:15 –1:45 PM	October 7, Part III: The Nova Festival Visit the site of the music festival -at Reim
1:45 – 2:00 PM	Understanding October 7: The Story of the Bomb Shelters Visiting Aner & Hersh’s shelter -at Reim
2:00 PM	Depart
3:00 – 4:30 PM	U.S.-Israel Partnership: Developing Multilayer Air Defense Systems Site visit at Israel Test-Bed, ITB With Major Netta Blum, Head of the Technological Division Israel’s Ministry of Defense -at Elbit Systems, Holon
4:45 PM	Depart for Tel Aviv
5:15 PM	Arrive at the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv
7:00 – 9:00 PM	Service and Innovation: Responding to Unique Challenges Dinner with: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Boaz Hochstein, Vice President, Strategic Partnerships at Restart Global• Sivan Cohen Shachari, CEO, DeserTech & Climate Innovation Center -at Nomi Restaurant, the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv

9:15 PM Overnight at the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv

Thursday, August 21st

7:30 AM Breakfast on Own
-at the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv

8:45 – 9:45 AM **International Law and IDF Ethics**
Briefing with Major (Res.) Ben Wahlhaus
Former Head, International Negotiations and Agreements
International Law Department, Israel Defense Forces
-at the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv

10:00 –11:00 AM **Status Update: Humanitarian Aid During ‘Swords of Iron’**
Briefing by Lt. Col. Yotam Sheffer
Head of the Foreign Relations Branch, Coordinator of Government Affairs in the
Territories (COGAT)
-at the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv

11:15 AM Depart

11:45 AM – 12:45 PM **Israel-Iran War: A New Geopolitical Reality**
Briefing by Yonah Jeremy Bob
Journalist and Author
-at Tetto restaurant, Tel Aviv

12:50 –1:10 PM **Visit an Iran attack site**
-at Sarona, Tel Aviv

1:15 – 2:15 PM Lunch
-at Tetto restaurant

2:15 PM Depart for Alfei Menashe

2:30 – 3:00 PM **En Route Briefing: West Bank Settlements**

3:15 – 3:45 PM **Israel’s Quest for Defensible Borders**
Strategic briefing overlooking Israel’s population center
-at the Alfei Menashe overlook

3:45 – 4:45 PM **West Bank Strategic Implications: Looking Forward**
With Lt. Col. (Res.) Jonathan Conricus
Former International Spokesperson of the Israel Defense Forces
-at the Alfei Menashe overlook

4:50 PM Depart for Northern Israel

5:00 – 5:45 PM **En Route Briefing: History of Hezbollah**

6:45 PM Check-in to the Magdala Hotel, Migdal

7:30 PM Depart

7:45 – 9:30 PM **Dinner and Discussion**
-at Pagoda restaurant, Migdal

9:45 PM Depart for the Magdala Hotel, Migdal

10:00 PM Overnight at the Magdala Hotel, Migdal

Friday, August 22nd

7:30 AM Breakfast on Own
-at the Magdala Hotel, Migdal

8:30 AM Depart

8:45 –10:00 AM **Historical Significance of the Sea of Galilee**
Guided Survey of Christian Sites

10:00 AM Depart

10:00 –10:30 AM **En route briefing: The History of Syrian - Israeli relations**

10:45 AM – 11:15 AM **Strategic Survey of the Syrian Border**
Briefing with Maj. (Res.) Ilan Schulman
-at the Syrian Border

11:30 AM Depart

11:45 AM – 12:45 PM **Israel's Northern Front: Looking Forward in Lebanon and Syria**
Briefing with Maj. (Res.) Ilan Schulman
-at the Merom Golan Kibbutz

1:00 PM Depart

2:30 – 3:30 PM **Shared Society During Times of Crisis**
With Mohammad Darawshe, Director of Strategy at Givat Haviva
-at his home in Iksal

3:45 PM Depart

5:45 PM Check-in to the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

7:30 PM Depart

7:45 – 9:45 PM **Reflections on the Sabbath**
 Traditional Sabbath Eve dinner
 Hosted by the Mercer Family
 -at their home, Jerusalem

10:00 PM Depart

10:15 PM Overnight at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

Saturday, August 23rd

7:30 AM Breakfast on Own
 -at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

8:15 – 9:00 AM Depart for the Dead Sea

8:15 – 9:00 AM **Enroute Briefing: The Strategic Importance of Jordanian-Israeli Relations**

9:00 AM –10:00 AM **Antiquity and Modernity: Unearthing the Dead Sea Scrolls**
 -at Qumran

10:15 AM Depart

10:30 –11:30 AM **Exploration of the Dead Sea Region**
 -at Kalia Beach

11:45 AM Depart

11:45 AM –12:15 PM **En Route Briefing: Druze minority in Israel**

12:15 –1:15 PM Lunch
 -at City View restaurant, Jerusalem

1:30 – 2:30 PM **The View from Mount Scopus: Coexistence of Abrahamic Religions**

2:30 PM Depart for the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

3:00 PM Return to the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

6:15 – 8:15 PM **Closing Dinner: Reflections on the Week**
 -at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

8:30 PM Depart for Ben Gurion Airport, Tel Aviv

9:30 PM Arrive at Ben Gurion Airport, Tel Aviv

Sunday, August 24th

12:15 AM El Al #17 departs Tel Aviv (Angelle Kwemo)

12:30 AM El Al #27 departs Tel Aviv (Anna Adamian, Ryan Altman, Nora Blalock, Amanda Farnan, Zachary Freiman, Christofer Horta, Mary Hrinkevich, Nicholas Keddy, Shine Lee, Samuel Luna, Kyle Pierre, Zev Siegfeld)

1:00 AM El Al #25 departs Tel Aviv (Cameron Erickson, Zachary Kahan, George Wang)

5:15 AM El Al #27 arrives Newark (Anna Adamian, Ryan Altman, Nora Blalock, Amanda Farnan, Zachary Freiman, Christofer Horta, Mary Hrinkevich, Nicholas Keddy, Shine Lee, Samuel Luna, Kyle Pierre, Zev Siegfeld)

5:45 AM El Al #25 arrives Newark (Cameron Erickson, Zachary Kahan, George Wang)

6:30 AM El Al #17 arrives Miami (Angelle Kwemo)

8:00 AM United #4500 departs Newark (Anna Adamian, Ryan Altman, Nora Blalock, Cameron Erickson, Amanda Farnan, Zachary Freiman, Christofer Horta, Mary Hrinkevich, Zachary Kahan, Nicholas Keddy, Shine Lee, Samuel Luna, Kyle Pierre, Zev Siegfeld, George Wang)

9:21 AM United #4500 arrives Washington, D.C. (Anna Adamian, Ryan Altman, Nora Blalock, Cameron Erickson, Amanda Farnan, Zachary Freiman, Christofer Horta, Mary Hrinkevich, Zachary Kahan, Nicholas Keddy, Shine Lee, Samuel Luna, Kyle Pierre, Zev Siegfeld, George Wang)

9:54 AM American Airlines #1612 departs Miami (Angelle Kwemo)

12:33 PM American Airlines #1612 arrives Washington, D.C. (Angelle Kwemo)

Michael Guest, Mississippi
Chairman
Mark DeSaulnier, California
Ranking Member

John H. Rutherford, Florida
Andrew R. Garbarino, New York
Ashley Hinson, Iowa
Nathaniel Moran, Texas

Deborah K. Ross, North Carolina
Glenn F. Ivey, Maryland
Sylvia R. Garcia, Texas
Suhas Subramanyam, Virginia



ONE HUNDRED NINETEENTH CONGRESS

U.S. House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

Thomas A. Rust
Staff Director and Chief Counsel

Jordan Downs
Chief of Staff to the Chairman

David Arrojo
Counsel to the Ranking Member

1015 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-6328
Telephone: (202) 225-7103
<https://ethics.house.gov>

August 12, 2025

Mr. Ryan Altman
Office of the Honorable Brad Finstad
2418 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Altman:

Pursuant to House Rule 25, clause 5(d)(2), the Committee on Ethics hereby approves your proposed trip to Israel,¹ scheduled for August 16 to 24, 2025, 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.

¹ 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



Mark DeSaulnier
Ranking Member

MG/MD:eme

**American Israel Education Foundation (AIEF)
Educational Seminar in Israel
U.S. Congressional Staff
August 16-24, 2025**

Addendum

4. List of Invitees

1. Anna Adamian, Communications Director, Office of the Honorable Andy Harris (R-MD)
2. Ryan Altman, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Honorable Brad Finstad (R-MN)
3. Jack Berson, Legislative Assistant, Office of the Honorable Johnny Olszewski (D-MD)
4. Emery Boylan, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Honorable Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA)
5. Ethan Dodd, Legislative Assistant, Office of the Honorable Jimmy Gomez (D-CA)
6. Amanda Farnan, Communications Director, Office of the Honorable Eugene Vindman (D-VA)
7. Zachary Freiman, Senior Policy Advisor, Office of the Honorable Yassmin Ansari (D-AZ)
8. Francesco Hanson, Legislative Assistant, Office of the Honorable Nellie Pou (D-NJ)
9. Christofer Horta, Legislative Director, Office of the Honorable David Scott (D-GA)
10. Mary Hrinkevich, Legislative Director, Office of the Honorable Nicholas LaLota (R-NY)
11. Zach Kahan, Legislative Director, Office of the Honorable Luz Rivas (D-CA)
12. Niko Keddy, Legislative Director, Office of the Honorable Andrew Garbarino (R-NY)
13. Shine Lee, Legislative Director, Office of the Honorable Young Kim (R-CA)
14. Sam Luna, Legislative Director, Office of the Honorable Anna Paulina Luna (R-FL)
15. Kyle Pierre, Legislative Assistant, Office of the Honorable Cleo Fields (D-LA)
16. Zev Siegfeld, Legislative Director, Office of the Honorable Claudia Tenney (R-NY)
17. George Wang, Legislative Assistant, Office of the Honorable John Larson (D-CT)

8. Breakdown of other expenses

Other Costs	Cost Per Participant
Security	\$1,333.33
Speaker Fees	\$1,000.00
Hotels for contract staff	\$400.00
Tour Guide	\$320.00
Meals for contract staff & guests	\$300.00
Room Rentals and Setup (Mics)	\$266.67
Airport Assistance	\$133.33
Misc.	\$66.67
Photography	\$33.33
Transportation for contract staff & speakers	\$26.67
Entrance Fees	\$26.67
Tips	\$13.33
Total Per Participant=	\$3,920.00

**American Israel Education Foundation
Educational Seminar in Israel
U.S. Congressional Staff
August 16-24, 2025**

Itinerary

Tuesday, August 12, 2025

2:00 PM Amtrak #94 departs Washington, D.C. (Zachary Freiman)

4:57 PM Amtrak #94 arrives Newark (Zachary Freiman)

11:50 PM El Al #26 departs Newark (Zachary Freiman)

Wednesday, August 13, 2025

5:15 PM El Al #26 arrives Tel Aviv (Zachary Freiman)

Saturday, August 16, 2025

3:20 PM Amtrak #168 departs Washington, D.C. (Anna Adamian, Ryan Altman, Amanda Farnan, Mary Hrinkevich, Nicholas Keddy, Shine Lee, Samuel Luna, Karina Mariotti, Zev Siegfeld)

5:00 PM Delta #5713 departs Washington, D.C. (Christofer Horta, Kyle Pierre)

6:21 PM Amtrak #168 arrives Newark (Anna Adamian, Ryan Altman, Amanda Farnan, Mary Hrinkevich, Nicholas Keddy, Shine Lee, Samuel Luna, Karina Mariotti, Zev Siegfeld)

6:39 PM Delta #5713 arrives JFK (Christofer Horta, Kyle Pierre)

11:50 PM El Al #26 departs Newark (Anna Adamian, Ryan Altman, Amanda Farnan, Mary Hrinkevich, Nicholas Keddy, Shine Lee, Samuel Luna, Karina Mariotti, Zev Siegfeld)

11:50 PM El Al #8 departs JFK (Christofer Horta, Kyle Pierre)

Sunday, August 17, 2025

5:10 PM El Al #8 arrives Tel Aviv (Christofer Horta, Kyle Pierre)

5:15 PM El Al #26 arrives Tel Aviv (Anna Adamian, Ryan Altman, Amanda Farnan, Mary Hrinkevich, Nicholas Keddy, Shine Lee, Samuel Luna, Karina Mariotti, Zev Siegfeld)

5:15 PM Flights arrive in Tel Aviv
Transfer to Jerusalem
Check-in to the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

8:15 PM Depart for Dinner

8:30 –10:00 PM **Welcome Dinner and Orientation**
-at Eucalyptus restaurant

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

10:15 PM Depart for the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

10:30 PM Overnight at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

Monday, August 18, 2025

7:30 AM Breakfast on Own
-at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

8:30 – 9:30 AM **Pulse of the Nation**
With David Horowitz
Founding Editor, Times of Israel
-at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

During this session David Horovitz will provide staff with a synthesis of domestic political trends, current international affairs, and the general state of mind of the Israeli voters. David Horovitz is the founding editor of Times of Israel, the leading current affairs website in Israel.

9:30 AM Depart

10:00 AM –1:00 PM **Strategic Survey of Jerusalem: The Holy Basin**

- Old City of Jerusalem
- 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

developing a national policy for border protection, cargo and aviation security, and advanced technology for public security. He is a veteran of the “Golani” Infantry Corp; he held command positions in the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and South Lebanon. Today he is a Fellow at the International Institute for Counter-Terrorism at IDC Herzliya.

6:45 PM Depart for Dinner

7:00 – 9:15 PM **Politics and Policy in Israel**

- Tom Sagiv, Political Advisor, The Honorable Benny Gantz, National Unity Party
- Ariel Segal, Senior Political Advisor, The Honorable Yair Lapid, Yesh Atid Party
-at Andalucia restaurant

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

10:00 PM Overnight at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

Tuesday, August 19, 2025

7:30 AM Breakfast on Own
-at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

8:30 AM Depart for Yad Vashem: The World Holocaust Remembrance Center

9:00 –11:00 AM **The Israeli Psyche, Part I: The Significance of the Holocaust**
Guided visit to Yad Vashem: The World Holocaust Remembrance Center

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 AM Depart

11:45 AM –12:45 PM **A Palestinian Voice Post-October 7**

Meeting with Ibrahim Dalalsha
Executive Director, Horizon Center for Political Studies & Media Outreach
-at the Vert Hotel, Jerusalem

This session will focus on Palestinian voices in a post-October 7th Israel. 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.

12:45 –1:30 PM Lunch
-at the Vert Hotel, Jerusalem

1:45 PM Depart

2:00 – 3:00 PM **The Israeli Psyche Part II: Israel's Fallen Soldiers**
Mount 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.

3:15 PM Depart for Tel Aviv

5:00 PM Check-in to the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv

6:00 – 6:45 PM **Israeli Democracy in Action, Part II: The Opposition**
Meeting with The Honorable Shelly Tal Meron
Member of Knesset, Yesh Atid Party
-at the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv

During this session, the group will meet with a member of the opposition. The Honorable Shelly Meron entered the Knesset in February 2023. She previously served in the Israeli Air Force for six years in various roles, including as a spokesperson, a flight instructor for Bell AH-1 Cobra pilots, and as an officer. She also worked for a technology company in Southeast Asia.

6:45 PM Depart

7:00 – 9:15 PM **Activism in Israeli Society: Minorities and Diversity**
Dinner with:
▪ Ibrahim Abu Ahmed, Israeli Arab Activist
▪ Ashager Arraro, Ethiopian Community Activist
-at Goshen restaurant

This briefing will provide information on the current makeup of Israel’s population and how each group is an integral part of the fabric of Israeli society and broader identity. Israeli Arab Activist Ibrahim Abu Ahmed and Ethiopian Community Activist Ashager Arraro will provide insight into the Israeli population, what governs the perspective and decisions of various sectors and how each of the sectors fits into Israeli society and informs the collective national narrative.

9:30 PM Overnight at the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv

Wednesday, August 20, 2025

7:00 AM Breakfast on own
-at the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv

8:30 – 9:15 AM **October 7, Part. I: How It Unfolded**
with Gabi Duec, Educational Seminar Leader
-at the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv

Gabi Duec 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.

9:30 AM Depart for the Gaza Envelope

9:45 –10:15 AM **Enroute Briefing: The History of Gaza, 1948-October 6**

During this en route briefing, the tour guide will provide a brief history of the Gaza Strip, the small, coastal territory that shares borders with Egypt and Israel.

10:45 –11:45 AM **October 7, Part II: Hamas in Southern Israel**
Experience October 7 through the eyes of Israeli survivors
-at Israel-Is Center, Sderot

On October 7, the Jewish communities living along the Gaza border were destroyed, nearly 1,200 Israelis were killed, and 251 were kidnapped. During the visit to Sderot, 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.

11:45 AM –12:00 PM **The Proximity: Lookout into Gaza**

-at Tatzpit Kobi, Sderot

This session will provide a status update on the Israel-Hamas war at an overlook into the Gaza Strip. Participants will hear about Israel's efforts to remove Hamas from Gaza, as well as efforts to provide humanitarian aid to the civilian population.

12:15 PM Depart for Re'im

12:45 –1:30 PM **October 7, Part III: The Nova Festival**

Visit the site of the music festival

-at Reim Forest

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.

1:45 PM Depart for Lod

3:30 – 4:45 PM **U.S.-Israel Partnership: Developing Multilayer Air Defense Systems**

Site visit at Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI)

-at Lod, Israel

Israel Aerospace Industries is Israel's major aerospace and aviation manufacturer, producing aerial and astronautic systems for both military and civilian usage. During this session, the participants will hear about the latest aerospace technology and innovation, and how it can serve the United States and Israel.

5:00 PM Depart for Tel Aviv

6:00 PM Arrive at the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv

7:00 – 9:00 PM **Service and Innovation: Responding to Unique Challenges**

Dinner with:

- Sivan Cohen Shachari, Vice President, Innovation at DeserTech
 - Boaz Hochstein, Vice President, Strategic Partnerships at Restart Global
- at Nomi Restaurant

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 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.

9:15 PM Overnight at the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv

Thursday, August 21, 2025

7:30 AM Breakfast on own
-at the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv

8:45 – 9:45 AM **International Law and IDF Ethics**
Briefing with Major (Res.) Ben Wahlhaus
Former Head, International Negotiations and Agreements
International Law Department, Israel Defense Forces
-at David International Hotel, Tel Aviv

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 soldiers 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.

10:00 –11:00 AM **Status Update: Humanitarian Aid During ‘Swords of Iron’**
Briefing by Lt. Col. Yotam Sheffer
Head of the Foreign Relations Branch, Coordinator of Government Affairs in the Territories (COGAT)
-at David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv

During this session the participants will receive a humanitarian update from Lt. Col. Yotam Sheffer, the Head of Foreign Relations and Coordinator of Government Affairs in the Territories. Lt. Col. Sheffer will provide insight into Israel’s ongoing efforts to mitigate civilian harm, facilitate humanitarian aid, and navigate the complex realities on the ground.

11:15 AM Depart

11:30 –12:45 PM **Start Up Nation: Israeli Solutions on the Global Stage**
Site visit
-at the Peres Center for Peace and Innovation

Israel is a giant when it comes to innovation: a global leader in R&D spending and Venture Capital investment, and home to global R&D centers for the likes of Google, Apple and IBM. This session will include a discussion with entrepreneurs representing Israeli innovation and ingenuity that has had enormous impact both in Israel and abroad.

- 1:00 PM Depart for Lunch
- 1:30 – 2:15 PM Lunch
-at Tetto restaurant
- 2:45 – 3:45 PM **Israel-Iran War: A New Geopolitical Reality**
Briefing by Yonah Jeremy Bob
Journalist and Author
-at Tetto restaurant

In this session, journalist and author Yonah Jeremy Bob will update the participants on the recent Israel-Iran war. He will discuss the shifting regional alliances, global power dynamics, and how this conflict could reshape the Middle East.

- 3:45 PM Depart
- 4:00 – 4:30 PM **En Route Briefing: West Bank Settlements**

During this briefing, the guide will provide an opportunity for the participants to learn about Israeli settlement policy, the differing views among Israeli citizens, and the role settlements play in the current political climate.

- 4:45 – 5:15 PM **Israel’s Quest for Defensible Borders: West Bank Strategic Implications**
Strategic briefing overlooking Israel’s population center
-at the Alfei Menashe overlook

After scores of suicide bombings and daily terrorist attacks against its civilians launched following the breakdown of the Camp David II talks in 2000, Israel began construction of a security barrier near the pre-1967 “Green Line” between Israel and the West Bank to prevent Palestinian terrorists from infiltrating into Israeli population centers. Since its construction, the number of attacks declined by more than 90% and the number of Israelis murdered and wounded decreased by more than 70% and 85%, respectively. The barrier is approximately 455 miles long. To Israel, the security barrier serves as a necessary obstacle to protect its people. To the Palestinians and others in the world, the barrier represents a physical and symbolic divide. This seminar will survey the security barrier at different points along its route to see first-hand the barrier’s construction, the operation of crossing points in and out of Palestinian areas, and the technology that facilitates its operation. Both en route to the barrier and at the barrier itself, the delegation will explore the competing arguments raised by the Israelis, Palestinians and the international community.

- 5:30 PM Depart for Northern Israel
- 5:45 – 6:15 PM **En Route Briefing: History of Hezbollah**

During the drive to Israel's border with Lebanon, the guide will provide a history of Hezbollah, the Iranian-backed terrorist group based in Lebanon dedicated to Israel's destruction. The terrorist group's influence in Lebanese politics, massive weapons arsenal and use of Lebanese civilians as human shields made the Iranian proxy a serious threat to Israel leading up to the current war. Hezbollah has a global reach and has killed more Americans than any terrorist group other than al-Qaeda.

6:45 PM Check in to the Magdala Hotel, Midgal

7:30 PM Depart for Dinner

7:45 – 9:30 PM **Dinner and Discussion**
-at Pagoda restaurant

We will use this dinner as an opportunity to discuss the speakers and topics we have been exposed to thus far. We have found giving our participants an opportunity to reflect on the topics and perspectives presented to them assists in their ability to understand Israel's complexities.

9:45 PM Depart for the Magdala Hotel, Midgal

10:00 PM Overnight at the Magdala Hotel, Midgal

Friday, August 22, 2025

7:30 AM Breakfast on own
-at the Magdala Hotel, Midgal

8:30 AM Depart for Christian Sites

8:45 – 10:00 AM **Historical Significance of the Sea of Galilee**
Guided Survey of Christian Sites

- Mount 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.

10:00 AM Depart

10:00 –10:30 AM **En route briefing: The History of Syrian - Israeli relations**

During this en route briefing, the guide will provide overview of Syrian-Israeli relations, from early wars to peace efforts and regional shifts over time.

10:45 AM –12:00 PM **Israel's Northern Front: Looking Forward in Lebanon and Syria**

Strategic Briefing with Maj. (Res.) Ilan Schulman
-at the Merom Golan Hotel, Golan Heights

During this session, Maj. Ilan Shulman will brief the group on the recent developments in Lebanon and Syria since the fall of the Assad regime. After a brutal civil war, Syria is now a chaotic assembly of disparate tribes, ruled by Ahmed Hussein al-Sharaa (known as al-Julani), a Syrian politician and former rebel commander serving as the president of Syria since January 2025. Shulman will discuss the implications of al-Julani's leadership on the country of Syria, Israel's unique relationship with the Druze community, and the potential for Syrian relations with Israel. He will also discuss Israel's border with Lebanon, where Israeli residents faced years of rocket fire from terror group Hezbollah.

12:15 – 12:45 PM **Strategic Survey of the Syrian Border**

Overlook with Maj. (Res.) Ilan Schulman
-at Booster, Golan Heights

With the fall of the Assad regime, the situation in Syria is one of the most important stories in the Middle East. Maj. Ilan Shulman will discuss the implications for Israel's security while uncertainly reigns there. This outlook will give participants an opportunity to see the proximity to Syria and better understand the physical terrain.

1:00 PM Depart

2:30 – 3:30 PM **Shared Society During Times of Crisis**

With Mohammad Darawshe
Director of Strategy at Givat Haviva
-at his home in Iksal

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. Our speaker, Mohammad Darawshe is currently the director of planning, equality and shared living at Givat Haviva Educational Institute –a non-profit organization founded in 1949 as the national education center of the Kibbutz Federation in Israel. His focus throughout his career is promoting coexistence and quality among Israel's Jewish and Arab-Israeli citizens.

3:45 PM Depart for Jerusalem

3:45 – 4:30 PM **En route briefing: Religion and State in Israel**

During this en route briefing the guide will give an overview of the relationship between religious institutions and the Israeli state. She will discuss how these dynamics influence law, identity, and public life.

5:45 PM Check in to the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

7:30 PM Depart for Shabbat Dinner

7:45 – 9:45 PM **Reflections on the Sabbath**
Traditional Sabbath Eve dinner
Hosted by the Mercer Family
-at their home, Jerusalem

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. The Sabbath is especially significant in Jerusalem, home to the holiest site for Jews worldwide - the remains of the First and Second Temple. The dinner will include a discussion on the importance of Jerusalem to the Jewish, Christian and Muslim populations; the potential for a final status agreement on Jerusalem (arguably the most sensitive final status issue); and the diplomatic challenges faced by Israel and the United States regarding Israeli urban development in the area.

10:00 PM Depart

10:15 PM Overnight at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

Saturday, August 23, 2025

7:30 AM Breakfast on own
-at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

8:15 AM Depart for the Dead Sea

8:15 – 8:45 AM **Enroute Briefing: The Strategic Importance of Jordanian-Israeli Relations**

The tour guide will discuss the Jordanian-Israeli relationship throughout the drive through the Dead Sea to explore several topics related to Israel's eastern neighbor: specifically, Israeli-Jordanian strategic cooperation, as well as the implications of the Syrian civil war on the Kingdom. The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan became the second Arab country after Egypt to recognize Israel when it signed a comprehensive peace agreement that ended nearly five decades of warfare. Shepherded by United States President Bill Clinton, the accord signed on Oct. 6, 1994, marked the

onset of a new era of economic, cultural, and political dialogue and cooperation between the two countries.

9:00 AM–10:00 AM **Antiquity and Modernity: Unearthing the Dead Sea Scrolls**
-at Qumran

During our trip to the Negev, we will visit Qumran, where the famous Dead Sea Scrolls were found. Qumran is believed to be the home of the Essenes, a Jewish, religious sect that flourished in the Negev region between 2 BCE and 1 CE. The Dead Sea Scrolls – hundreds of Hebrew manuscripts and religious texts – were discovered on the shores of the Dead Sea in 1947, marking one of the most important finds in modern archaeology. The scrolls have helped inform scholars about Judaism and early Christianity.

10:15 AM Depart

10:30 –11:45 AM **Exploration of the Dead Sea Region**
-at Kalia Beach

During our visit to the Dead Sea, our tour guide will discuss a variety of issues integral to understanding this desert region, and relations with both the Palestinians and Jordanians. For decades, Israel has been developing the agricultural potential of the desert. While the Middle East is suffering from water shortages, Israel, through modern technology and water conservation policies, including the recycling of over 80 percent of water used for domestic purposes and transferring it to agriculture, has literally “made the desert bloom.” The key regional players also face serious environmental issues in the Dead Sea region. One of the major environmental concerns is the receding of the Dead Sea and the appearance of sinkholes, which cause the earth above to collapse. Roads, fields and buildings have collapsed due to this phenomenon, and experts are concerned the tourist infrastructure along the Jordanian and Israeli shores of the Dead Sea are in danger. This issue has led to unprecedented cooperation between Israelis, Jordanians and Palestinians and serves as a model for regional cooperation.

11:45 AM Depart for Mount Scopus

11:45 AM –12:15 PM **En Route Briefing: Druze minority in Israel**

During this en route briefing the guide will discuss the history, identity, and unique role of the Druze community within Israeli society. The Israeli Druze are a unique religious and ethnic minority among Arab citizens of Israel. There are approximately 150,000 Druze living in Israel. Male members of the Druze community serve in the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), and many have attained top positions in Israeli politics and public service.

12:15 –1:15 PM **Lunch**
-at City View, Jerusalem

1:30 – 2:15 PM **The View from Mount Scopus**
Jerusalem Overlook

Overlooking Jerusalem, Mount Scopus has been strategically important as a base from which to attack the city since antiquity. During the Great Jewish Revolt, the 12th Roman Legion camped there in 66 CE. In 70, at the conclusion of the same war that led to the destruction of the Jewish Temple, Mount Scopus was used as a base to carry out the final siege of the city.

2:30 PM Depart for the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

3:00 PM Return to the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

6:15 – 8:30 PM **Closing Dinner: Reflections on the Week**
-at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

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

Sunday, August 24, 2025

12:30 AM El Al #27 departs Tel Aviv (Anna Adamian, Ryan Altman, Amanda Farnan, Zachary Freiman, Christofer Horta, Mary Hrinkevich, Nicholas Keddy, Shine Lee, Samuel Luna, Karina Mariotti, Kyle Pierre, Zev Siegfeld)

5:15 AM El Al #27 arrives Newark (Anna Adamian, Ryan Altman, Amanda Farnan, Zachary Freiman, Christofer Horta, Mary Hrinkevich, Nicholas Keddy, Shine Lee, Samuel Luna, Karina Mariotti, Kyle Pierre, Zev Siegfeld)

8:00 AM United #4500 departs Newark (Anna Adamian, Ryan Altman, Amanda Farnan, Zachary Freiman, Christofer Horta, Mary Hrinkevich, Nicholas Keddy, Shine Lee, Samuel Luna, Karina Mariotti, Kyle Pierre, Zev Siegfeld)

9:21 AM United #4500 arrives Washington, D.C. (Anna Adamian, Ryan Altman, Amanda Farnan, Zachary Freiman, Christofer Horta, Mary Hrinkevich, Nicholas Keddy, Shine Lee, Samuel Luna, Karina Mariotti, Kyle Pierre, Zev Siegfeld)