

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: Eric Schmitz
2. a. Name of Accompanying Relative: _____ **OR** ☐ None
b. Relationship to Traveler: ☐ Spouse ☐ Child ☐ Other (specify): _____
3. a. Dates: Departure: Aug 8, 2026 Return: Aug 16, 2026
b. Dates at Personal Expense, if any: _____ **OR** ☐ None
4. Departure City: Orlando Destination: Tel Aviv Return City: Orlando
5. Sponsor(s), Who Paid for the Trip: American Israel Education Foundation, Inc.
6. Describe Meetings and Events Attended: I attended a wide verity of historical, cultural, and geopolitical conversations and seminars. We got a first hand look at the complexities of the region and the importance of the US-Israel partnership.
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: Aug. 28, 2026

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: Speaker Mike Johnson Date: Aug. 28, 2026

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 8, 2026 Date of Return: August 16, 2026

4. Name(s) of Traveler(s): Eric Schmitz

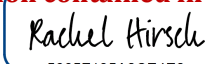
Note: You may list more than one traveler on a form only if **all** information is **identical** for each person listed.

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	\$7,636.53	\$2,951.90	\$1,396.81	\$7,311.45
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: 8/27/2026 | 12:06 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

1. Name of Traveler: Eric Schmitz
2. Sponsor(s) who will be paying or providing in-kind support for the trip: American Israel Education Foundation Inc
3. City and State **OR** Foreign Country of Travel: Israel
4. a. Date of Departure: Aug 8th 2026 Date of Return: Aug 16th 2026
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 the Director of Coalitions for the Speaker I engage with many pro-Israel & Jewish organizations that fight against anti-Semitism. Going to Israel will give me a first hand exposure on what our Jewish friends feel so attached to the country + understand why the US/Israel partnership is so important.
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: July 8, 2026

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: Eric Schmitz

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): Speaker Mike Johnson

Office Address: H-232, US Capitol, Washington, DC 20515

Telephone Number: 202-754-0209

Email Address of Contact Person: eric.schmitz@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

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 see attached.

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

6. Date of Departure: August 8, 2026 Date of Return: August 16, 2026

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 in Israel)
- 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): \$207.14

- 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: Please see addendum City: _____ Cost Per Night: _____

Reason(s) for Selecting: _____

Hotel Name: Please see addendum City: _____ Cost Per Night: _____

Reason(s) for Selecting: _____

Hotel Name: Please see addendum City: _____ Cost Per Night: _____

Reason(s) for Selecting: _____

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:**

☐ Actual Amounts ☒ Good Faith Estimates	Total Transportation Expenses per Participant	Total Lodging Expenses per Participant	Total Meal Expenses per Participant
For each Member, Officer, or Employee	\$5,500	\$2,519	\$1,450
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	\$4,166.67	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.**

DocuSigned by:
Rachel Hirsch

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Signature: _____

Name: Rachel Hirsch

Organization: American Israel Education Foundation, Inc. (AIEF)

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

Email: rhirsch@aiefdn.org

Date: 7/7/2026 | 14:59 EDT

Title: Chief Legal Counsel

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
Mark DeSaulnier, California
Ranking Member

Andrew R. Garbarino, New York
Ashley Hinson, Iowa
Nathaniel Moran, Texas
Brad Knott, North Carolina

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 4, 2026

Mr. Eric Schmitz
Office of the Speaker
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Schmitz:

Pursuant to House Rule 25, clause 5(d)(2), the Committee on Ethics hereby approves your proposed trip to Israel,¹ scheduled for August 8 to 16, 2026, 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 \$525 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 \$525] 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,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael Guest". The first letter "M" is large and stylized, with a loop that extends upwards and to the left.

Michael Guest
Chairman

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark DeSaulnier". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mark DeSaulnier
Ranking Member

MG/MD:kjf

American Israel Education Foundation (AIEF)
Educational Seminar in Israel
U.S. Congressional Staff
August 8-16, 2026

Addendum

List of Participants

As congressional staff to a U.S. Representative, these participants 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. Alex Bedwell, Legislative Assistant, Office of the Honorable Lisa McClain (R-MI)
2. Julia Block, Legislative Assistant, Office of the Honorable Diana Harshbarger (R-TN)
3. Juliana Dauchess, Legislative Director, Office of the Honorable Lloyd Smucker (R-PA)
4. Charles Gann, Legislative Director, Office of the Honorable Randy Fine (R-FL)
5. Shelby Haney, Legislative Assistant, Office of the Honorable Mike Lawler (R-NY)
6. Nate Higgins, Senior Legislative Assistant, Office of the Honorable Brad Knott (R-NC)
7. Sam Madsen, Legislative Assistant, Office of the Honorable Pat Harrigan (R-NC)
8. Cruz Perez, Legislative Director, Office of the Honorable Nathaniel Moran (R-TX)
9. Eric Schmitz, Coalitions Director, Office of the Honorable Mike Johnson (R-LA)

Explanation of Hotel Cost Differences

The difference in hotel costs among participants was due to variations in flight schedules, as some participants had later flights and required accommodations for an additional night.

Breakdown of other expenses

Other Cost	Cost per participant
Security	\$2,534.75
Speaker Fees	\$1,770.08
Room Rentals and Setup	\$787.14
Tour Guide/Yad Vashem Guide	\$607.09
Hotels for contract staff	\$603.33
Meals for contract staff and guests	\$602.47
Airport Assistance	\$248.44
Entrance Fees	\$69.73
Photography	\$43.30
Miscellaneous	\$16.79
Transportation for contract staff and speakers	\$15.00
Tips	\$13.33
Total per participant=	\$7,311.43

**American Israel Education Foundation (AIEF)
Educational Seminar in Israel
U.S. Congressional Staff
August 8-16, 2026**

Itinerary

Saturday, August 8, 2026

2:45 PM	Delta #4137 departs DCA for Haney, Block, Schmitz
3:05 PM	United #4560 departs DCA for Dauchess
4:27 PM	United #4560 arrives Newark for Dauchess
5:00 PM	Delta #5713 departs DCA for Perez
5:20 PM	United #989 departs Dulles for Higgins
5:24 PM	American Airlines #973 departs DCA for Bedwell
5:25 PM	Austrian Airlines #42 departs Dulles for Gann, Madsen
5:35 PM	Delta #4137 arrives Miami for Haney, Block, Schmitz
6:39 PM	Delta #5713 arrives JFK for Perez
8:18 PM	American Airlines #973 arrives Miami for Bedwell
11:50 PM	El Al #26 departs Newark for Dauchess
11:50 PM	El Al #8 departs JFK for Perez
11:55 PM	El Al #118 departs Miami for Haney, Block, Schmitz

Sunday, August 9, 2026

1:55 AM	El Al #122 departs Miami for Bedwell
7:20 AM	United #989 arrives Frankfurt for Higgins
8:10 AM	Austrian Airlines #42 arrives Vienna for Gann, Madsen
8:46 AM	American Airlines #1178 arrives Miami for Block

10:10 AM	Austrian Airlines #79 departs Vienna for Gann, Madsen
10:10 AM	United #9120 departs Frankfurt for Higgins
2:35 PM	Austrian Airlines #79 arrives Tel Aviv for Gann, Madsen
3:25 PM	United #9120 arrives Tel Aviv for Higgins
5:10 PM	El Al #8 arrives Tel Aviv for Perez
5:15 PM	El Al #26 arrives Tel Aviv for Dauchess
6:55 PM	El Al #118 arrives Tel Aviv for Haney, Block, Schmitz
	Transfer to Jerusalem
	Check-in to the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem
9:15 PM	Depart
9:30 – 10:30 PM	Welcome Dinner and Introductions With Yoni Leviatan Director, Educational Seminars American Israel Education Foundation (AIEF) -at Lechem Basar restaurant, Jerusalem
10:30 PM	Depart
10:45 PM	Overnight at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

Monday, August 10, 2026

7:00 – 7:45 AM	Breakfast on own -at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem
8:30 – 9:15 AM	Welcome and Orientation With Yoni Leviatan Director, Educational Seminars American Israel Education Foundation (AIEF) -at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

9:30 – 10:30 AM	Israeli Society: The Gap Between Media and Reality With Lazar Berman Diplomatic Correspondent, the Times of Israel -at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem
10:45 AM	Depart
11:15 AM – 1:15 PM	Strategic Survey of Jerusalem, Part I: The City of David Visit to archeological excavation site With Hadara Arbel, Licensed Tour Guide -at the City of David, Jerusalem
1:30 – 2:15 PM	Lunch -Abu Kamal restaurant, Jerusalem
2:30 – 3:00 PM	Strategic Survey of Jerusalem, Part II: The Holy Basin Guided survey With Hadara Arbel, Licensed Tour Guide -at the Old City, Jerusalem
3:15 PM	Depart
3:30 – 5:15	Break -at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem
5:15 – 6:15 PM	The Changing Middle East: 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
6:30 – 7:30 PM	Israel Votes: A Primer for the Upcoming Election With Yoni Leviatan Director, Educational Seminars American Israel Education Foundation (AIEF) -at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem
7:45 PM	Depart
8:00 – 10:00 PM	Dinner and Discussion ▪ Hadara Arbel, Licensed Tour Guide ▪ Yoni Leviatan, Director, Educational Seminars, American Israel Education Foundation (AIEF) -at Kedma Bakikar restaurant, Jerusalem

10:00 PM	Depart
10:15 PM	Overnight at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

Tuesday, August 11, 2026

7:00 – 8:00 AM	Breakfast on own -at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem
8:00 – 9:00 AM	Inside Israeli Politics Meeting with Amichai Stein Journalist and Political Analyst -at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem
9:15 AM	Depart
9:45 – 11:45 AM	The Israeli Psyche: The Significance of the Holocaust Guided visit -at Yad Vashem: the World Holocaust Remembrance Center
12:00 PM	Depart
12:15 – 1:15 PM	Lunch -at the Vert Hotel, Jerusalem
1:15 – 2:30 PM	China, Iran and Great Power Conflict Meeting with Haviv Rettig-Gur Columnist, The Free Press -at the Vert Hotel, Jerusalem
2:45 PM	Depart
4:15 – 5:15 PM	Check-in to the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv
5:45 – 6:45 PM	The Palestinian Perspective With Samer Sinijlawi Founding Chairman, Jerusalem Development Fund -at the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv

7:00 – 8:00 PM	Service and Innovation: Responding to Unique Challenges With ▪ Sarit Baum, Head of Philanthropic Giving, Regrow/Volcani International Partnerships (VIP) ▪ Itamar Glazer, Chief Innovation office, Regrow/Volcani International Partnerships (VIP) -at the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv
8:00 PM	Depart
8:15 – 9:45 PM	Dinner and Discussion With ▪ Hadara Arbel, Licensed Tour Guide ▪ Yoni Leviatan, Director, Educational Seminars, American Israel Education Foundation (AIEF) -at Goshen restaurant, Tel Aviv
9:45 PM	Depart
10:00 –10:15 PM	The Civilian Impact of the Iran War Visit missile impact site With Yoni Leviatan Director, Educational Seminars, American Israel Education Foundation (AIEF) -at a missile impact site, Tel Aviv
10:15 PM	Depart
10:30 PM	Overnight at the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv

Wednesday, August 12, 2026

7:30 – 8:30 AM	Breakfast on own -at the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv
8:30 – 10:00 AM	Depart
9:00 – 9:30 AM	Enroute Briefing: The History of Gaza, 1948-October 6 With Hadara Arbel, Licensed Tour Guide
10:00 –11:00 AM	October 7, Part I: Bearing Witness Experience October 7 through the eyes of Israeli survivors -at Israel-Is, Sderot

11:00 – 11:15 AM	The Proximity: Lookout into Gaza -at Tatzpit Kobi, Sderot
11:30 AM	Depart
12:00 – 12:45 PM	October 7, Part II: The Nova Party Visit the site of the NOVA music festival massacre With Mazal Tazazo, Nova Massacre Survivor -at Reim Forest
1:00 PM	Depart
1:30 – 2:15 PM	Lunch -at Hummus Shel Tehina, Sderot
2:30 PM	Depart
4:00 – 5:30 PM	U.S.-Israel Defense Cooperation Visit and briefing with Michael Edelstein Executive Vice President – Strategy and Business Development Israel, North America, Australia and New Zealand, Elbit Systems -at Elbit Systems, Holon
5:45 PM	Depart
7:45 – 9:45 PM	Citizen-Soldiers: The IDF in Israeli Society Dinner with Israel Defense Forces (IDF) Reservists -at the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv
10:00 PM	Overnight at the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv

Thursday, August 13, 2026

7:00 – 8:00 AM	Breakfast on own -at the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv
8:15 – 9:15 AM	Defending Israel on the Digital Battlefield With Rachel Lester Former Creative Director, Israel Defense Forces (IDF) Spokesperson Unit -at the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv

9:30 – 10:30 AM	The West Bank: A Situational Assessment Briefing with Col. (Ret.) Michael Milshtein Senior Fellow, International Institute for Counter Terrorism, Reichman -at the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv
10:45 AM	Depart
11:45 – 12:15 PM	Israel's Narrow Waistline Briefing with Hadara Arbel, Licensed Tour Guide -at the Alfei Menashe Overlook
12:30 – 1:15 PM	Lunch -Yulek Café, Alfei Menashe
1:30 – 2:30 PM	Humanitarian Aid in Gaza: Facts and Figures Briefing by Maj. Ross Pressner Head of the International Cooperation Section, Coordination of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT) -at the Alfei Menashe Clubhouse, Alfei Menashe
2:45 PM	Depart
4:45 – 5:45 PM	The Reality of Life for Israel's Palestinian Citizens With Ibrahim Abu-Ahmed Arab-Israeli Activist and Writer -at Michel's House, Nazareth
6:00 – 6:15 PM	Church of the Annunciation Guided survey with Hadara Arbel, Licensed Tour Guide -at the Church of the Annunciation, Nazareth
6:30 PM	Depart
7:15 PM	Check-in to the Magdala Hotel, Migdal
8:00 – 9:30 PM	Dinner and Discussion ▪ Hadara Arbel, Licensed Tour Guide ▪ Yoni Leviatan, Director, Educational Seminars, American Israel Education Foundation (AIEF) -at Magdalena restaurant, Migdal
10:00 PM	Overnight at the Magdala Hotel, Migdal

Friday, August 14, 2026

7:00 – 8:00 AM	Breakfast on own -at the Magdala Hotel, Migdal
8:15 AM	Depart
8:30 – 10:00 AM	Historical Significance of the Sea of Galilee Guided Survey With Hadara Arbel, Licensed Tour Guide -at the Mount of Beatitudes and Capernaum, Sea of Galilee
10:15 AM	Depart
10:30 – 11:00 AM	Enroute Briefing: Lebanon and Hezbollah With Hadara Arbel, Licensed Tour Guide
11:15 AM – 12:45 PM	Israel's Northern Front: Lebanon, Syria and Hezbollah Strategic Briefing with Maj. (Res.) Ilan Shulman, Northern Resident -at Kibbutz Malkia
12:45 – 1:15 PM	Lunch -at Kibbutz Malkia
1:30 PM	Depart
5:00 – 6:00 PM	Inside the U.S.-Israel Relationship Meeting with the Honorable David Brownstein Deputy Chief of Mission, U.S. Embassy Jerusalem -at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem
6:00 – 7:30 PM	Check-in to the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem
7:45 PM	Depart
8:00 – 10:00 PM	Reflections on the Sabbath Traditional Sabbath Eve dinner Hosted by Gil Troy and his family -at their home, Jerusalem
10:15 PM	Depart for the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem
10:30 PM	Overnight at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

Saturday, August 15, 2026

7:30 – 8:30 AM	Breakfast on own -at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem
8:30 AM	Depart
9:15 – 10:15 AM	Independence Trail Walking survey of Tel Aviv with Hadara Arbel, Licensed Tour Guide
10:15 AM	Depart
10:30 – 11:30 AM	Israeli Society Through Artists' Eyes Guided Survey of Israeli Street Art with Hadara Arbel Licensed Tour Guide -at the Florentin Neighborhood, Tel Aviv
11:30 AM	Depart
11:45 AM – 12:45 PM	Israel as a Jewish State: Religion, Peoplehood, and Nationality With Dr. Einat Wilf Author and former Member of the Knesset -at the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv
1:15 – 2:15 PM	Lunch -at Raisa restaurant, Tel Aviv
2:30 PM	Depart
3:00 – 3:45 PM	En route Briefing: The Importance of Latrun With Hadara Arbel, Licensed Tour Guide
3:45 – 6:30 PM	Check-out and break -at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem
6:45 – 9:00 PM	Closing Dinner: Bringing it all Together With ▪ Hadara Arbel, Licensed Tour Guide ▪ Yoni Leviatan, Director, Educational Seminars, American Israel Education Foundation (AIEF) -at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem
9:15 PM	Depart for Ben Gurion Airport, Tel Aviv
10:00 PM	Arrive at Ben Gurion Airport, Tel Aviv

Sunday, August 16, 2026

12:30 AM	El Al #27 departs Tel Aviv for Dauchess, Perez
1:00 AM	El Al #1 departs Tel Aviv for Haney
4:50 AM	United #9470 departs Tel Aviv for Higgins
4:50 AM	Luftansa #118 departs Miami for Schmitz
5:15 AM	El Al #27 arrives Newark for Dauchess, Perez
5:50 AM	El Al #1 arrives JFK for Haney
6:00 AM	Austrian Airlines #84 departs Tel Aviv for Bedwell, Block, Gann, Madsen
8:00 AM	United #3501 departs Newark for Dauchess, Perez
8:35 AM	Delta #4265 departs JFK for Haney
8:45 AM	Austrian Airlines #84 arrives Vienna for Bedwell, Block, Gann, Madsen
9:46 AM	United #3501 arrives DCA for Dauchess, Perez
10:00 AM	United #3501 arrives Munich for Higgins
10:00 AM	Luftansa #683 arrives Munich for Schmitz
10:09 AM	Delta #4265 arrives DCA for Haney
10:50 AM	Austrian Airlines #41 departs Vienna for Bedwell, Block, Gann, Madsen
12:00 PM	United #109 departs Munich for Higgins
2:35 PM	Austrian Airlines #41 arrives Dulles for Bedwell, Block, Gann, Madsen
3:05 PM	United #109 arrives Dulles for Higgins
3:05 PM	Luftansa #4544 departs Munich for Schmitz
7:50 PM	Luftansa #4544 arrives Orlando for Schmitz

American Israel Education Foundation (AIEF)
Educational Seminar in Israel
U.S. Congressional Staff
August 8-16, 2026

Addendum

4. List of Invitees

As 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. Alex Bedwell, Legislative Assistant, Office of the Honorable Lisa McClain (R-MI)
2. Julia Block, Legislative Assistant, Office of the Honorable Diana Harshbarger (R-TN)
3. Andrew Braun, Defense Policy Advisor, Office of the Honorable Mike Rounds (R-SD)
4. Juliana Dauchess, Legislative Director, Office of the Honorable Lloyd Smucker (R-PA)
5. Ross Dietrich, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Honorable Brian Mast (R-FL)
6. Josh Grant, Legislative Director, Office of the Honorable Tim Scott (R-SC)
7. Shelby Haney, Legislative Assistant, Office of the Honorable Mike Lawler (R-NY)
8. Charlie Hobbs Jr., Policy Adviser, Office of the Honorable Tedd Budd (R-NC)
9. Sarah Izaak, Senior Legislative Assistant, Office of the Honorable Valerie Foushee (D-NC)
10. Naajdah Khan, Military Legislative Assistant, Office of the Honorable Donald Norcross (D-NJ)
11. Jessica Norfleet, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Honorable Kat Cammack (R-FL)
12. Cruz Perez, Legislative Director, Office of the Honorable Nathaniel Moran (R-TX)
13. Eric Schmitz, Coalitions Director, Office of the Honorable Mike Johnson (R-LA)
14. Noah Taicher, Senior Legislative Assistant, Office of the Honorable Russell Fry (R-SC)
15. Max West, Legislative Assistant, Office of the Honorable Dave Joyce (R-OH)

8. Breakdown of other expenses

Other Cost	Cost per participant
Security	\$1,400.00
Speaker Fees	\$1,000.00
Room Rentals and Setup	\$433.33
Hotels for contract staff	\$400.00
Tour Guide/Yad Vashem Guide	\$320.00
Meals for contract staff and guests	\$306.67
Airport Assistance	\$133.33
Miscellaneous	\$66.67
Photography	\$40.00
Transportation for contract staff and speakers	\$26.67
Entrance Fees	\$26.67
Tips	\$13.33
Total per participant=	\$4,166.67

16. Hotels

City	Hotel Name	Hotel Cost	Reason for Selecting
Jerusalem	The Orient Hotel	\$407	Location and affordability
Tel Aviv	The David Intercontinental Hotel	\$418	Location and affordability
Tiberias	The Magdala	\$301	Location and affordability
Jerusalem	The Orient Hotel	\$568	Location and affordability

**American Israel Education Foundation (AIEF)
Educational Seminar in Israel
U.S. Congressional Staff
August 8-16, 2026**

Itinerary

Saturday, August 8, 2026

2:45 PM	Delta #4137 departs DCA for Haney
3:17 PM	Amtrak #168 departs Union Station for Dauchess, Dietrich
5:00 PM	Delta #5713 departs DCA for Hobbs Jr., Izaak, Perez, West
5:24 PM	American Airlines # 973 departs DCA for Bedwell
5:35 PM	Delta #4137 arrives Miami for Haney
5:50 PM	Delta #1035 departs JAX for Norfleet
6:21 PM	Amtrak #168 arrives Newark for Dauchess, Dietrich
6:39 PM	Delta #5713 arrives JFK for Hobbs Jr., Izaak, Perez, West
8:18 PM	American Airlines #973 arrives Miami for Bedwell
8:27 PM	Delta #1035 arrives JFK for Norfleet
11:50 PM	El Al #26 departs Newark for Dauchess, Dietrich
11:50 PM	El Al #8 departs JFK for Hobbs Jr., Izaak, Perez, West
11:55 PM	El Al #118 departs Miami for Grant, Haney

Sunday, August 9, 2026

1:55 AM	El Al #122 departs Miami for Bedwell
2:15 AM	El Al #14 departs JFK for Norfleet
6:00 AM	American Airlines #1178 departs DCA for Block
8:46 AM	American Airlines #1178 arrives Miami for Block

2:30 PM	El Al #18 departs Miami for Block
5:10 PM	El Al #8 arrives Tel Aviv for Hobbs Jr., Izaak, Perez, West
5:15 PM	El Al #26 arrives Tel Aviv for Dauchess, Dietrich
6:55 PM	El Al #118 arrives Tel Aviv for Grant, Haney
7:35 – 8:15 PM	El Al #14 arrives Tel Aviv for Norfleet
	Transfer to Jerusalem
	Check-in to the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem
8:15 – 8:30 PM	Depart for the First Station, Jerusalem
8:18 PM	El Al #122 arrives Tel Aviv for Bedwell
8:30 – 10:15 PM	Welcome Dinner and Introductions With Yoni Leviatan Director, Educational Seminars American Israel Education Foundation (AIEF) -at the First Station, Jerusalem
During the welcome Dinner, staff will lead a discussion about the objectives for the week ahead.	
10:15 – 10:30 PM	Depart for the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem
10:30 PM	Overnight at Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

Monday, August 10, 2026

7:00 – 8:00 AM	Breakfast on own -at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem
8:00 – 9:15 AM	Welcome and Orientation With Yoni Leviatan Director, Educational Seminars American Israel Education Foundation (AIEF) -at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

During the welcome orientation, participants will give introductions and get an overview of the program.

9:30 AM El Al #18 arrives Tel Aviv for Block

9:30 –10:30 AM **Israeli Society: The Gap Between Media and Reality**
Meeting with Matti Friedman
Author and Journalist
-at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

Matti Friedman is a renowned reporter with a career that has taken him from Lebanon to Morocco, Cairo, Moscow and Washington, D.C., and to conflicts in Israel in the Caucasus. Mr. Friedman is a dynamic and insightful speaker who will provide a journalist's perspective on how Israel's story is told by the international media, and how that media portrayal impacts the stories taking place on the ground.

10:30 –11:15 AM Depart for the Old City of Jerusalem

11:15 AM – 1:15 PM **Strategic Survey of Jerusalem, Part I: The City of David**
Visit to archeological excavation site
-at the City of David, Jerusalem

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. During this session, the guide will walk participants through one of the most intensively excavated sites in the wider region. They will discuss how, to Jewish Israelis, the site represents the beginning of their physical and emotional attachment to Jerusalem that has continued for over three thousand years. They will also share the challenges of the site's location in the predominantly Arab neighborhood of Silwan, where the residents and the Palestinian Authority leadership are opposed to the archeological efforts being carried out.

1:15 –1:30 PM Depart for Abu Kamal restaurant, Jerusalem

1:30 – 2:15 PM Lunch
-at Abu Kamal restaurant, Jerusalem

2:30 – 3:00 PM **Strategic Survey of Jerusalem, Part II: The Holy Basin**
Guided survey through the Old City of Jerusalem

- 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 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.

3:00 – 3:30 PM Depart for the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

3:30 – 5:00 PM Break at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

5:00 – 6:00 PM **Israel Votes: A Primer for the Upcoming Election**
With Yoni Leviatan
Director, Educational Seminars
American Israel Education Foundation (AIEF)
-at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

It is critical for trip participants to understand the parliamentary system in Israel. Yoni 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.

6:00 – 7:15 PM **Israeli Democracy in Action: A View from the Coalition**
Meeting with the Honorable Amir Ohana
Speaker of the Knesset, Likud Party
-at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

It is customary for delegations to meet with members of the coalition. The Honorable Amir Ohana is an Israeli lawyer, former Shin Bet official and politician who has served as the Speaker of the Knesset since 2022, and as a member of the Knesset for Likud. He previously held the posts of Minister of Justice and Minister of Public Security. He was the first openly gay right-wing member of the Knesset and the first openly gay man from Likud to serve in the Knesset. Ohana is a veteran of the acclaimed Israeli Shin Bet security agency, and an attorney. He achieved the rank of major in the IDF and continues to serve in reserve duty.

7:15 – 7:45 PM Depart for Andalucia restaurant, Jerusalem

7:45 – 9:45 PM

Policy and Politics

Dinner with:

- Jason Chadasha, Foreign Policy Advisor and Intl. Media Spokesperson, the Honorable Gidon Sa'ar, Foreign Affairs Minister of Israel
 - Tuvia Chertok, Advisor, the Honorable Amichai Chikli, Likud Party
 - Yair Zivan, 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.

9:45 –10:15 PM

Depart for the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

10:15 PM

Overnight at Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

Tuesday, August 11

7:00 – 8:00 AM

Breakfast on own
-at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

8:00 – 9:15 AM

The Changing Middle East: Regional Strategic Overview

Briefing by Brig. Gen. (Res.) Nitzan Nuriel
Former Director, Counter-Terrorism Bureau at Prime Minister's Office
-at the King David Hotel, Jerusalem

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. During this session Brig.-Gen (Res.) Nitzan Nuriel will provide an overview of each border, as well as the malign activity from Iran contributing to unrest in the region.

9:15 –10:00 AM

Depart for the Yad Vashem

10:00 –11:30 AM

The Israeli Psyche: The Significance of the Holocaust

Guided visit at 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. The museum's professional docent will guide the delegation through the main exhibit hall and the children's memorial.

11:30 – 12:15 AM Depart for the Vert Hotel, Jerusalem

12:15 – 1:30 PM **China, Iran and Great Power Conflict**
Meeting with Haviv Rettig-Gur
Columnist, The Free Press
-at Vert Hotel, Jerusalem

Haviv Rettig-Gur is an award-winning Israeli journalist and leading analyst of Middle East affairs. He will be leading a discussion on the evolving geopolitical landscape, the impact on the Middle East and U.S. interests, and what rising great power competition means for the future of international stability.

1:30 – 2:30 PM Lunch
-at Vert hotel, Jerusalem

2:30 – 4:00 PM Depart for the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv

4:00 – 5:30 PM Check-in and break at the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv

5:30 – 6:30 PM **The Israeli Economy: Facts, Figures and the Future**
With Yonatan Adiri
Former Advisor to President Shimon Peres
-at the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv

Despite ongoing geopolitical challenges, Israel remains a global leader in innovation and entrepreneurship. Yonatan Adiri is an entrepreneur, investor, and former advisor to President Shimon Peres. He will lead a discussion on the current state of the Israeli economy, the forces driving its resilience, and the opportunities and challenges that will shape its future.

6:45 – 7:45 PM **Service and Innovation: Responding to Unique Challenges**
Dinner with:
▪ Danielle Abraham, Director, Regrow/Volcani Intl. Partnerships
▪ Boaz Hochstein, Vice President, Strategic Partnerships at Restart Global
-at the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv

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 October 7, redirected their efforts to help Israeli society weather the war and its aftermath.

7:45 – 8:00 PM Depart for Goshen restaurant, Tel Aviv

8:00 – 9:30 PM **Dinner and Discussion**
-at Goshen restaurant, Tel Aviv

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.

9:30 – 10:00 PM Depart for the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv

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

Wednesday, August 12, 2026

7:30 – 8:30 AM Breakfast on own
-at the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv

8:30 – 10:00 AM Depart for Israel-Is, Sderot

9:00 – 9:30 AM **En route Briefing: The History of Gaza, 1948-October 6**

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

10:00 – 11:00 AM **October 7, Part I: Bearing Witness**
Experience October 7 through the eyes of Israeli survivors
-at Israel-Is, 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.

11:00 – 11:15 AM **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.

11:15 – 11:45 AM Depart for Reim Forest

11:45 – 12:45 PM **October 7, Part II: The Nova Party**
Visit the site of the NOVA music festival massacre
With Mazal Tazazo, Nova Massacre Survivor
-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.

12:45 – 1:30 PM Depart for Haimos restaurant, Sderot

1:30 – 2:30 PM Lunch
-at Haimos restaurant, Sderot

2:30 – 4:00 PM Depart for Tel Aviv

4:00 – 5:30 PM **U.S.-Israel Defense Cooperation**
Visit to Elbit Systems, Research and Development
-at Elbit Systems, Holon

This session will provide participants with an in-depth look at the strategic partnership between the United States and Israel in defense innovation, technology development, and security cooperation. Through a visit to Elbit Systems' Research & Development Center, the participants will gain firsthand insight into how advanced defense technologies are conceived, developed, tested, and integrated into modern military operations.

- 5:30 – 6:30 PM Depart for the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv
- 6:30 – 7:30 PM Break at the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv
- 7:30 – 9:45 PM **Citizen-Soldiers: The IDF in Israeli Society**
 Dinner with IDF Reservists
 -at Nomi restaurant, 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. Military service does not end when soldiers leave active duty — most men and many women continue serving for years as reservists (miluim), forming the backbone of the country's emergency military force. These civilians drop everything in times of war or crisis — jobs, families, and studies — to defend the country, reflecting how deeply national security is woven into everyday life. Most reservists remain on call until their early 40s (and sometimes later for officers or specialists), typically serving several weeks per year, but in wartime they can be mobilized for months, making reserve duty one of the most demanding and defining civic obligations in Israeli society. During this dinner, the group will hear from three reservists about the sacrifices they made during the war.

- 9:45 – 10:00 PM Depart for the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv
- 10:00 PM Overnight at the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv

Thursday, August 13, 2026

- 7:00 – 8:00 AM Breakfast on own
 -at the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv
- 8:00 – 9:15 AM **Humanitarian Aid in Gaza: Facts and Figures**
 Briefing by Lt. Col. Yotam Shefer
 Head of Humanitarian-Civilian Effort in Gaza, Coordinator of
 Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT)
 -at the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv

This briefing will provide an overview of humanitarian assistance efforts in Gaza, including aid coordination, delivery mechanisms, and key operational data. Lt. Col. Yotam Shefer will discuss the challenges and processes involved in facilitating humanitarian support while addressing security and logistical considerations.

9:30 – 10:30 AM **A Palestinian Voice Post-October 7**
With Ibrahim Dalalsha
Director, Horizon Center for Political Studies and 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.

10:45 – 11:45 AM Depart for the Alfei Menashe Overlook

11:45 – 1:00 PM **The West Bank: A Situational Assessment**
Briefing with Col. (Ret.) Michael Milshtein
Senior Fellow, International Institute for Counter Terrorism, Reichman
-at the Alfei Menashe Overlook

During this session Dr. Michael Milshtein will outline a number of issues related to the West Bank, in order to for participants to understand the prospects for a path forward between Israelis and Palestinians. He will focus on the makeup of Palestinian society, internal issues and security challenges inherent in the West Bank, the role of the Palestinian Authority (P.A.), and P.A. coordination with Israeli bodies.

1:00 – 1:15 PM Depart for Yulek Café, Alfei Menashe

1:15 – 2:15 PM Lunch
-at Yulek Café, Alfei Menashe

2:15 – 4:15 PM Depart for Nazareth

4:15 – 5:15 PM **Shared Society in Time of Crisis**
With Ibrahim Abu-Ahmed
Arab-Israeli Activist and Writer
-at Michel's House, Nazareth

Approximately 22% of Israeli residents are part of the non-Jewish minority, which includes, among others, Muslims, Christians, and Druze. In this session we will hear from Arab-Israeli Activist and writer Ibrahim Abu Ahmed. He will discuss the role of the Arab citizens of Israel, examining their social, cultural and economic contributions, the challenges they face, and

their unique position in shaping a shared future built on partnership and mutual responsibility.

- 5:15 – 6:30 PM Depart for the Magdala Hotel, Migdal
- 6:30 – 7:30 PM Check-in and break at the Magdala Hotel, Migdal
- 7:30 – 9:30 PM **Dinner and Discussion**
-at Magdalena, the Magdala Hotel, Migdal

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.

- 9:30 PM Overnight at Magdala Hotel, Migdal

Friday, August 14, 2026

- 7:00 – 8:00 AM Breakfast on own
-at the Magdalena Hotel, Migdal
- 8:00 – 8:30 AM Depart for the Christian Sites
- 8:30 AM – 10:00 AM **Historical Significance of the Sea of Galilee**
Guided Survey of Christian Sites
- 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.

- 10:00 – 11:15 AM Depart for Kibbutz Malkia

10:30 – 11:00 AM **En route Briefing: The 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.

11:00 AM – 12:45 PM **Israel's Northern Border: Lebanon and Hezbollah**

With Lt. Col. (Res.) Sarit Zehavi
President and Founder, Alma Research and Education Center
-at Kibbutz Malkia

This briefing from Lt. Col (Res.) Sarit Zehavi will give participants an insider's understanding of the threat Israel currently faces from Hezbollah in Lebanon and the work the IDF is doing to secure Israel's northern border. Lt. Col. (Res.) Sarit Zehavi served 15 years in the IDF in Military Intelligence – first in the Research and Analysis Branch, and later in the Northern Command. During her military service she briefed hundreds of delegations, ranging from U.S. Senators, Congressmen and politicians to global military commanders, senior journalists and visiting VIP delegations. She is the founder/director of Alma, an educational research center focusing on the security issues of Israel's northern border. Lt. Col. Zehavi will brief the delegation on security threats coming from the Lebanese border, and the role Iran plays in supporting Hezbollah terrorism against Israel. As a lifelong resident of the North, she will also share her experiences living on the border with Lebanon.

12:45 – 1:30 PM Lunch
-at Kibbutz Malkia

1:30 – 5:00 PM Depart for Jerusalem

5:00 – 6:00 PM **Inside the U.S.-Israel Relationship**
Meeting with the Honorable David Brownstein
Deputy Chief of Mission, U.S. Embassy Jerusalem
-at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

During this meeting, the Deputy Chief of Mission, the Honorable David Brownstein, will share the U.S. perspective on the current situation in Gaza, regional threats from Iranian proxies, and the potential for U.S.-Israel cooperation.

6:00 – 7:30 PM Check-in and break at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

7:30 – 8:00 PM Depart for Sabbath Dinner

8:00 – 10:00 PM **Reflections on the Sabbath**
Traditional Sabbath Eve dinner
-at a home in Tel Aviv

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. Experiencing this ritual firsthand offers insight into the social and cultural foundations that shape Israeli life.

10:00 – 10:30 PM Depart for the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

10:30 PM Overnight at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

Saturday, August 15, 2026

8:00 AM Breakfast on own
-at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

8:30 – 9:15 AM Depart for Tel Aviv

9:15 – 10:15 AM **Independence Trail**
Walking survey of Tel Aviv

This walking survey will follow Tel Aviv's Independence Trail, a roughly one-kilometer route that connects key early-20th-century sites in the first modern Hebrew city and illustrates the values on which the State of Israel was founded. As the guide leads the group past major stops such as the First Kiosk of Tel Aviv, the former site of the Herzliya Hebrew Gymnasium, the Great Synagogue, the Haganah Museum, and Independence Hall—where Israel's Declaration of Independence was proclaimed—they will discuss how these places embody the principles of freedom, justice, and equal social and political rights, as well as freedom of religion, conscience, language, education, and culture that form the basis of the relationship between the United States and Israel.

10:15 – 10:30 AM Depart for the Florentin Neighborhood, Tel Aviv

10:30 – 11:30 AM **Israeli Society Through Artists' Eyes**
Guided Survey of Israeli Street Art
-at the Florentin Neighborhood, Tel Aviv

The group will participate in a guided walk through Tel Aviv's Florentin neighborhood, a historic hub of Israeli street art and alternative culture. As they encounter murals and graffiti addressing identity, democracy, security, and civic values, participants will examine how Israeli artists translate debates over war, peace, and human rights into public visual

language, and how those themes echo in American discourse about U.S. policy toward Israel and regional stability. By connecting imagery on Florentin's walls to issues often discussed in U.S. political and educational settings, such as military assistance, human rights concerns, and the health of democratic institutions, the walk will help participants better understand Israeli society and the values and tensions that underpin the U.S.–Israel partnership.

11:30 – 11:45 AM Depart for the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv

11:45 AM – 12:45 PM **Israel as a Jewish State: Religion, Peoplehood, and Nationality**

With Dr. Einat Wilf

Author and former Member of the Knesset

-at the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv

During this session, Dr. Einat Wilf will discuss Israel as a Jewish state through the lens of religion, peoplehood, and nationality. She will examine key ideas, debates, and historical foundations shaping Jewish self-determination and Israel's national identity in a modern, democratic context. Dr. Einat Wilf is a leading intellectual and original thinker on matters of foreign policy, economics, education, and Israel and the Jewish people. A member of the Israeli Parliament from 2010-2013, Dr. Wilf is considered one of Israel's most articulate representatives on the international stage. She is the author of six books that explore key issues in Israel Society.

12:45 – 1:15 PM Depart for Raissa restaurant, Tel Aviv

1:15 – 2:15 PM Lunch
-at Raissa restaurant, Tel Aviv

2:15 – 3:30 PM Depart for Jerusalem

2:30 – 3:15 PM **En route Briefing: The Importance of Latrun**

During this enroute briefing, the guide will discuss the historical and strategic significance of Latrun, a key crossroads that shaped access to Jerusalem during the 1948 Arab–Israeli War. This session explores Latrun's military importance, its lasting impact on Israel's history, and why it remains a symbol of resilience and sacrifice.

3:30 – 6:45 PM Check out and break at the Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

6:45 – 9:00 PM **Closing Dinner: Bringing it all Together**
-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.

9:00 –10:00 PM Depart for Ben Gurion Airport, Tel Aviv

10:00 PM Arrive at Ben Gurion Airport, Tel Aviv

Sunday, August 16, 2026

12:30 AM El Al #27 departs Tel Aviv for Dauchess, Dietrich, Hobbs Jr., Izaak, Perez, West

1:00 AM El Al #1 departs Tel Aviv for Grant, Norfleet, Haney

5:15 AM El Al #27 arrives Newark for Dauchess, Dietrich, Hobbs Jr., Izaak, Perez, West

5:50 AM El Al #1 arrives JFK for Grant, Norfleet, Haney

6:00 AM Austrian Airlines #84 departs Tel Aviv for Bedwell, Block

8:00 AM United #3501 departs Newark for Dauchess, Dietrich, Hobbs Jr., Izaak, Perez, West

8:35 AM Delta #4265 departs JFK for Grant, Haney

8:45 AM Austrian Airlines #84 arrives Vienna for Bedwell, Block

8:50 AM Delta #5483 departs JFK for Norfleet

9:46 AM United #3501 arrives DCA for Dauchess, Dietrich, Hobbs Jr., Izaak, Perez, West

10:09 AM Delta #4265 arrives DCA for Grant, Haney

10:50 AM Austrian Airlines #41 departs Vienna for Bedwell, Block

11:32 AM Delta #5483 arrives JAX for Norfleet

2:35 PM Austrian Airlines #41 arrives Dulles for Bedwell, Block