

# Alabama-Israel Task Force

## *Remembering Our Past, Shaping Our Future*

LEGACY OF HONOR • MORAL RESPONSIBILITY • GENERATIONAL COMMITMENT • VITAL LEADERSHIP

### The Vision - Bridges and Brotherhood

**Mission** - The Alabama-Israel Task Force (AITF) seeks to provide a **bridge** and catalyst for **broader** cooperative efforts and help cultivate an even **stronger** and expanding state-to-state **relationship** between Alabama and Israel for the **mutual benefit** of their people.



#### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Alabama Passes Strong Legislation Bringing Deterrence and Consequence to the BDS Movement and those who Boycott Israel

May 11, 2016 (Montgomery, AL) - Alabama has a long history and very special relationship with the state of Israel, so it is very appropriate for Alabama to carry on that legacy with a strong response to the BDS movement. In February, the Alabama legislature passed a **unanimous joint resolution** (Act 2, SJR 6, 2016 Regular Session) **denouncing the BDS Movement** and **affirming support for the state of Israel** sending a strong and **clear message** regarding where Alabama stands. It came as U.S. and state-level reaction continue to grow across the nation both denouncing BDS and reaffirming we stand with our closest ally in the Middle East.

Building on that strong foundation, the Alabama Legislature has now **passed binding legislation** (SB81) that would also provide **deterrence** and **consequence** for those embracing the **BDS movement** and seeking to isolate and delegitimize our closet ally in the Middle East. While the bill does not mention Israel by name, it would prohibit state and local governments from executing public contracts with entities that boycott jurisdiction with which we have open trade (e.g. Israel). It would ensure if you boycott our friend and ally Israel, the state of Alabama will not do business with you. The legislation passed unanimously in the Alabama Senate (4/7), and overwhelmingly (84-5) in the Alabama House (4/28), sending a deeply meaningful message and making Alabama's position clear.

It is also worth noting the **significant timing** as SB81 passed the Alabama Legislature during the biblical week of **Passover**, so at a very special time indeed. In addition, it was the very week that marked the anniversary of the passage of the **San Remo Resolution** (some refer to as Israel's Magna Carta). That resolution enshrined into international law the Balfour Declaration - which established national rights for the Jewish people in the Land of Israel. The decision at San Remo was adopted by the victorious powers after World War I, later ratified by the United Nations, and remains valid to this day. After further review by the Governor's office, he signed SB81 into law (Act 312, SB81, 2016 Regular Session) late afternoon Tuesday May 10th, on the very eve of the two-day memorial and celebration of **Israel's Remembrance Day** and **Israel's Independence Day** (Yom Hazikaron and Yom Haatzmaut).

Alabama Senator Arthur Orr had introduced the bill and stated, "It is important that the State of Alabama continue in its tradition of supporting the State of Israel by refusing to do business with those companies who would boycott or divest themselves from our strongest ally in the Middle East." The bill is one of the strongest in the nation, avoiding common loopholes and including municipalities (so local city, county, and state contracts). John Buhler, Alabama-Israel Task Force Co-Chair, one of many who advocated for the bill stated, "We are deeply grateful for the overwhelming bi-partisan support of this significant legislation, and for the many leaders and organizations that worked so closely together in this effort to help protect and strengthen the Alabama-Israel relationship for the mutual benefit of our people."

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#### FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

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