

Alabama-Israel Task Force

Remembering Our Past, Shaping Our Future

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



ALABAMA-ISRAEL TASK FORCE

Alabama-Israel: A Long History and a Natural Relationship



The History - Calling For and Standing With

The state of Alabama has a [long history](#) of strong support for the state of Israel. In 1943, Alabama led the nation as the first, and possibly only, state in America to officially call for the establishment of the Jewish state and homeland. The unanimous [joint resolution](#) passed both state houses five years before Israel was reborn as a nation, urging both the United States and the United Nations to action. This call came in the midst of World War II, when the axis powers were not only waging world war against America and Europe, but also seeking the mass murder and systematic extermination of the Jews of Europe.

In the 70 years since that initial resolution, the state of Alabama has repeatedly sought to stand with Israel in times of aggression including official and public response - a unanimous joint resolution in 2002 urging support for the state of Israel after terror attacks, a proclamation from the governor in 2006 to stand with Israel, statements of support from Alabama state and congressional leaders in 2012, among other. In addition, state-to-state cooperation including sister cities, a cooperative trade agreement (1997), and a special 33rd anniversary celebration of the rebirth of the state of Israel hosted at the Alabama Governor's mansion in 1981 are but a glimpse of a deep commitment shared among the people of Alabama for the state of Israel and her people.

The Relationship - Shared Values, Shared Experience

Beyond the many national shared values being the only democratic ally of the U.S. in the Middle East, Alabama and Israel also share a commitment to deeply-held common values from the history of each shaped greatly through the influence of Biblical faith. From an embraced responsibility that we are our brother's keeper - particularly in times of need or hostility - to a belief that our neighbor is the one within our reach to help, there is a profound connection and natural bond. The same brings a sense of perceived calling to be quick to react, to defend, to protect, and to help. From a devotion to sincere hospitality, to nature's fruitful harvest, the state of Israel and the American South share much to be celebrated and grateful for.



Alabama and Israel also share the painful experience of broad and sudden destruction requiring urgent response to critical need following tragic acts or catastrophic events. Israel has endured violent acts of terror targeting innocent people, missile attacks on the civilian population, wars and conflicts erupting as acts of aggression follow repeated calls for her destruction and annihilation. Alabama has known the anguish of massive hurricanes devastating coastal lands displacing multitudes of people, and deadly tornados sweeping the state with tragic consequence. Both know the urgent need and required responsibility in such difficult times.

The Alabama-Israel Task Force (AITF) Remembering Our Past, Shaping Our Future



The Vision - Bridges and Brotherhood

Identity - With our unique and special history, our deeply shared values, and such difficult shared experience, a growing coalition of leaders and organizations in Alabama and the Israel Leadership Institute (ILI), have reached out to one another to join arms and form a special Alabama-Israel Task Force (AITF).

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.

Strategy - The AITF promotes and initiates state-to-state cooperation in areas of mutual interest including:

- Cross-leadership training and development
- Economic progress and opportunity
- Cultural understanding and community partnership
- Student exchange and academic cooperation
- Strategic workshops and forums for next generation leaders
- Joint initiatives inspired or motivated from biblical faith

The Israel Leadership Institute (ILI)

The [Israel Leadership Institute](#) (ILI) serves as the Israeli partner and co-founder of the AITF. One of Israel's most advanced and creative leadership schools, the ILI's leadership and board of directors include some of Israel's most distinguished leaders across a variety of disciplines: retired military generals, top political and strategy consultants, leadership training experts, as well as business, economic, and academic leaders. With a broad network including political and governmental institutions, economic and business institutions, local and municipal leaders, and variety of civil organizations, the ILI offers a unique opportunity for leadership development and cooperative efforts and initiatives. The ILI is a non-profit organization based in Sderot, on the Israeli-Gaza border. Its choice of location, in one of the most dangerous places in Israel, has gained the ILI an outstanding reputation in Israel - and globally - as a symbol of the struggle for democracy, freedom, and the fight against terror, and has made Sderot an "epicenter" of leadership development in Israel.



EPDR - The First Initiative

Initial Opportunity - Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Response (EPDR)



In times of crisis - whether from human acts of terror intent on mass destruction, or natural disasters leaving sweeping devastation in the aftermath - civilian population, daily activity, and vital services may be disrupted suddenly and dangerously. In these vulnerable moments, there is tremendous need for ones from among the civilian population to already be equipped and trained in Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Response to take the lead in an Emergency Task Force to help maintain continuity of crucial civilian operations.

History has shown, in times of emergency, a civilian response provides an invaluable and life-saving companion to state and government emergency response, as the latter must be mobilized and deployed, while the former is already present everywhere with immediate opportunity to rise and react. The effectiveness and impact of such an immediate civilian response can be dramatically increased with strategic training and preparation, driving the necessity of providing this opportunity for times when saving life, preserving property, or ensuring critical services may require urgent and decisive action.

The First Initiative - Establishing a Center in Israel

With this vital and timely need, the Alabama-Israel Task Force (AITF) is launching an initiative to establish an Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Response Center in Israel at ILI for the training of emerging young Israeli leaders in different aspects and tools required in emergency and disaster response. At a later stage, the center will also invite select young leaders from Alabama to be trained and share workshops with their Israeli colleagues. In accordance with the principle approach of the AITF, the center will be a gift from the people of Alabama to Israel, while both states will benefit from its vital work. The center will help Israel confront some of its most complicated challenges in a time when crucially needed, and also provide unique opportunity for cross-leadership training in a field of great interest to both states.

Alabama Celebrates Israel! Then and Now

The Time - Historic Celebration and Laying a Foundation

"A wise man's heart discerns both time and judgment" (Eccl 8:5-6)

There is a right time and right decision for every purpose under heaven. How appropriate that in 2013, the 70th anniversary of that first 1943 expression of Alabama's support for the Jewish state yet to be reborn, that the conception and establishing of an Alabama-Israel Task Force (AITF) would occur. In addition, with the deep significance of that historic resolution and the strong unwavering support and relationship that has grown through the years, it seems fitting to align the official launch of the first initiative of the Alabama-Israel Task Force (AITF) - establishing an Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Response Center at ILI - with the biblical season of Purim (book of Esther), an account reminding us of hostile times and intentions, and our calling to respond in "such a time as this." **So please join us March 25th, 2014 at the Von Braun Center Huntsville, AL for a Historic "Alabama Celebrates Israel" Statewide Gathering!** For more information and to Sign the [People's Declaration](#) of Reaffirmation, please visit www.AITF-Web.org.