

BILL SUMMARY

July 2014

The United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act (S. 2673 and H.R. 938)

Senators have introduced the United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act (S. 2673), which dramatically strengthens the strategic partnership between the United States and Israel as they work to confront new threats and challenges in the Middle East. The House passed its own version of the bill (H.R. 938) on March 5 by a resounding vote of 410-1.

The legislation — authored by Sens. Barbara Boxer (D-CA) and Roy Blunt (R-MO) in the Senate and by Reps. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL) and Ted Deutch (D-FL) in the House — designates Israel a “major strategic partner” of the United States. It also expands U.S.-Israel cooperation in a variety of arenas, including defense, intelligence, homeland security, energy, science and trade.

Key Provisions

- Declares that Israel is a “major strategic partner” of the United States.
- Expands authority for forward-deployed U.S. weapons stockpiles in Israel, providing important military equipment for either to use in a crisis.
- Upgrades Israel’s trade status to expedite export licensing.
- Encourages the inclusion of Israel in the Visa Waiver Program.
- Authorizes the president to provide assistance to Israel promoting cooperation in such fields as energy, water, homeland security, and agriculture.
- Creates new mechanisms to connect America and Israel in enhanced energy cooperation, including the establishment of a U.S.-Israel Center of Excellence in energy and water engineering, and supports the development of R&D and academic partnership opportunities.
- The Senate bill adds reporting requirements to all Mideast arms sales notifications detailing how those sales will specifically affect Israel’s qualitative military edge.