



Activism Matters

The alliance between the United States and Israel, a unique relationship founded on shared interests and democratic values, has long been a cornerstone of both countries' foreign policies.

While there are numerous ways that citizen activists can support and advance this alliance, perhaps the most impactful is involvement in the American political process. By building relationships with elected officials and opinion makers, activists can educate America's leaders about the importance of Israel to U.S. interests abroad and the growing challenges facing the Jewish state.

Today, with Iran continuing its quest for nuclear weapons, Syria in chaos and Egypt falling under Islamist rule, a strong U.S.-Israel relationship is more important than ever. But the changes sweeping the Middle East are not the only reason that pro-Israel political activism is needed.

The high rate of congressional turnover presents a huge challenge for the pro-Israel community. In just the last two congressional elections, nearly one-third of both the House of Representatives and the Senate have turned over. Thus, each election brings a large number of new lawmakers with little or no background knowledge of the issues affecting the U.S.-Israel relationship.

In addition, voters are overwhelmingly focused on jobs and the economy. Foreign policy issues are not on most voters' minds, much less the specific issues affecting the U.S.-Israel relationship. It is therefore up to us as pro-Israel activists to discuss these issues with members of Congress.

And pro-Israel activism gets results. It ensures that legislative initiatives relevant to the U.S.-Israel relationship have the full support of Congress, from Israel's security assistance to joint U.S.-Israeli programs in fields such as energy and missile defense.

Thanks to this relationship building, Congress has passed critical pieces of legislation in the past few months affecting America and Israel's security. The Senate gave unanimous approval to a package of economic sanctions against the Iranian regime over its nuclear program. The House overwhelmingly passed a resolution warning about the dangers of a nuclear-capable Iran and urging President Obama to increase diplomatic and political pressure against Tehran. And the U.S.-Israel Enhanced Security Cooperation Act, which passed the House 411 to 2, recommends vital ways that the two allies can further work together to keep both nations safe and secure.

Given the results we achieve when we get involved, each of us should redouble our commitment to be active in the political process and do our part to secure the U.S.-Israel relationship.

For more on how you can have an impact, visit www.aipac.org/TakeAction.