



# Middle East Spotlight

## **A Broad Tent**

Just as we welcome individuals of all walks of life into our sukkah, the pro-Israel community prioritizes inclusiveness and diversity as pillars of its mission. When it comes to strengthening the bond between the United States and Israel, that broad tent is of utmost importance.

As the Jewish state faces growing threats on each of its borders, as well as the existential threat of a nuclear-armed Iran, the United States must continue to grow its support for Israel across political divisions and religious affiliations. Indeed, the fabric of the American pro-Israel movement is strongest when it is woven with a wide representation of individuals who are inspired by its core mission and who join in lock-step together.

This past August, 58 diverse members of Congress traveled to Israel on two substantive, week-long educational seminars to Israel. Almost all of the participants were freshman and most of them were visiting Israel for the first time.

Rep. Kevin McCarthy, the House Majority Leader, was the senior member of the Republican delegation, and Rep. Steny Hoyer, the House Democratic Whip, led the Democratic trip. For the first time ever – and at the request of Leader McCarthy and Whip Hoyer – the Republican and Democratic delegations overlapped for a day of bipartisan programming.

On these trips, members of Congress learned about the remarkable challenges and achievements of the Jewish state by engaging with members of Knesset, military officials, Palestinian Authority representatives, and leading journalists. They shared an emotional and uplifting luncheon on a Kibbutz near the Gaza border with young IDF soldiers. And they visited an Iron Dome battery—a joint U.S.-Israel defense program that has saved the lives of thousands of Israelis.

Following their visit to the Iron Dome battery, Leader McCarthy and Whip Hoyer released a joint statement: “As we visited the towns of Ashkelon and Sderot near Gaza, we saw firsthand that without the Iron Dome, many more people would have lost their lives. Congress stands united with Israel, not only in support of its Iron Dome defenses, but also in preserving Israel’s security and ensuring the safety of its people. In these dangerous times, Israel can always be certain that the American people are by their side.”

The pro-Israel tent is broad and open. When it comes to safeguarding the safety and security of America’s most vital ally—Israel—our elected officials in Washington demonstrate time and again that there is no room for partisanship.