

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-7012

June 15, 2009

President Barack Obama
The White House
Washington, DC

Dear Mr. President:

I am writing in support of your decision to make the Middle East a priority for your administration. I also applaud you for reiterating during your recent speech in Cairo the importance of America's "unbreakable" bond with Israel.

Like you, I am deeply committed to bringing peace to this critical, but troubled, region. I believe negotiations will be successful only with a renewed commitment from the Palestinians to be a true partner in peace. Arab states in the region must also act to support the peace process. All parties must recognize Israel's right to exist, end terrorism, and respect previous agreements made with Israel.

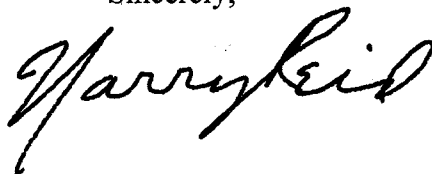
The pursuit of peace is never easy. Many difficult decisions lie ahead. I hope your administration will work behind the scenes with all involved on the steps they must take to move forward.

As these discussions continue, it is also vital this process not take away from your commitment to deal with the ongoing threat from Iran. Iran has continued to call for Israel's destruction while repeatedly defying the international community with its nuclear program. I believe that resolving the problem of Iran's nuclear program will help facilitate the Arab-Israeli peace process you and I both seek to promote.

Last year, the Senate passed my bipartisan resolution to proudly celebrate the 60th Anniversary of the modern state of Israel and recognize the historic kingdom of Israel, which was established more than 3,000 years ago. Today, we must once again stand with our ally and ensure the continuation of the Jewish state.

I look forward to working closely with you to achieve the goal of a long and lasting peace in the Middle East, one in which a Palestinian state is willing to live side-by-side in peace with a strong and secure Israel.

Sincerely,



HARRY REID
United States Senator
Nevada