

By Senator Cowin

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Senate Memorial No. ____

A memorial to the Congress of the United States, expressing solidarity with Israel in its fight against terrorism.

WHEREAS, the ongoing threat of terrorism since September 11, 2001, has harmed the economies of Florida and the United States; damaging tourism and travel among the states and creating a negative economic atmosphere hurting business and producing job losses, and

WHEREAS, the ongoing threat of worldwide terrorism at home and abroad has forced local, state, and federal resources in the United States to be diverted from other critical domestic programs for the purpose of enhancing public security, and

WHEREAS, the United States and Israel are now engaged in a common struggle against terrorism and are on the front-lines of a conflict thrust upon them against their will, and

WHEREAS, hundreds of innocent Israelis and Palestinians have died tragically in violence since September 2000, and

WHEREAS, Palestinian organizations are engaging in an organized, systematic, and deliberate campaign of terror aimed at inflicting as many casualties as possible on the Israeli population, including through the use of suicide terrorist attacks, and

WHEREAS, Israel has lost nearly 700 innocent lives, which as a percentage of population is commensurate with America losing over 30,000 lives in the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington on September 11, 2001, and

1 WHEREAS, Yasser Arafat and members of the Palestinian
2 leaders have failed to abide by their commitments to
3 nonviolence made in the Israel-PLO Declaration of Principles
4 (the Oslo Accord) of September 1993, including their pledges
5 to adhere strictly to a peaceful resolution of the conflict;
6 to resolve all outstanding issues relating to permanent status
7 through negotiations; to renounce the use of terrorism and
8 other acts of violence; and to assume responsibility over all
9 PLO elements and personnel in order to assure their compliance
10 with the commitment to nonviolence, prevent violence, and
11 discipline violators, and

12 WHEREAS, the continued terrorism and incitement
13 committed, supported, and coordinated by official arms of the
14 Palestinian Authority are a direct violation of these
15 commitments, and

16 WHEREAS, forces directly under Yasser Arafat's control,
17 particularly, the al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, which is part of
18 Arafat's Fatah organization and has been designated a Foreign
19 Terrorist Organization by the United States Government, have
20 murdered scores of innocent Israelis, and

21 WHEREAS, Yasser Arafat was directly involved in the
22 Palestinian Authority's thwarted attempt to obtain 50 tons of
23 offensive weapons shipped from Iran in the Karine-A, an effort
24 that irrefutably proved Arafat's embrace of the use and
25 escalation of violence, and

26 WHEREAS, documents from the offices of the Palestinian
27 Authority demonstrate the crucial financial support the
28 Palestinian Authority continues to provide for terrorist acts,
29 including suicide bombers, and

30 WHEREAS, the ongoing violence has hurt the economics of
31 both Israel and the Palestinian territories, damaging tourism

1 in both regions, thereby creating a negative economic
2 atmosphere hurting business and producing job losses, and

3 WHEREAS, President George W. Bush declared at a joint
4 session of Congress on September 20, 2001, that "from this day
5 forward any nation that continues to harbor or support
6 terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile
7 regime," and

8 WHEREAS, President Bush recently stated that he "fully
9 understands Israel's need to defend herself" and that he
10 "respects" the fact that Israelis have "seen a wave of suicide
11 bombers coming to the heart of their cities and killing
12 innocent people," and

13 WHEREAS, President Bush, in his speech of April 4,
14 2002, stated that "the situation in which Arafat finds himself
15 today is largely of his own making," that Arafat "missed his
16 opportunities, and thereby betrayed the hopes of the people
17 he's supposed to lead," and that "given Arafat's failure, the
18 Israeli government feels it must strike at terrorist networks
19 that are killing its citizens," and

20 WHEREAS, Israel's military operations are an effort to
21 defend itself against the unspeakable horrors of ongoing
22 terrorism and are aimed only at dismantling the terrorist
23 infrastructure in the Palestinian areas, an obligation Arafat
24 himself undertook but failed to carry out, and

25 WHEREAS, Israel has made clear its intention to
26 withdraw from Palestinian areas and has already begun to do
27 so, NOW, THEREFORE,

28

29 Be It Resolved by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

30

31 That the Florida Legislature:

- 1 (1) Stands in solidarity with Israel as it takes
2 necessary steps to provide security to its people by
3 dismantling the terrorist infrastructure in the Palestinian
4 areas;
- 5 (2) Remains committed to Israel's right to
6 self-defense and supports additional United States assistance
7 to help Israel defend itself;
- 8 (3) Condemns Palestinian suicide bombings;
- 9 (4) Condemns the ongoing support and coordination of
10 terror by Yasser Arafat and other members of the Palestinian
11 leadership;
- 12 (5) Demands that the Palestinian Authority at last
13 fulfill its commitment to dismantle the terrorist
14 infrastructure in the Palestinian areas, including any such
15 infrastructure associated with PLO and Palestinian Authority
16 entities tied directly to Yasser Arafat;
- 17 (6) Is gravely concerned that Arafat's actions are not
18 those of a viable partner for peace;
- 19 (7) Urges all Arab states to declare their unqualified
20 opposition to all forms of terrorism, particularly suicide
21 bombing;
- 22 (8) Commends the President for his leadership in
23 addressing the Israeli-Palestinian conflicts, particularly the
24 efforts of the Administration to engage countries throughout
25 the region to condemn and prevent terrorism and to prevent a
26 widening of the conflict;
- 27 (9) Urges all parties in the region to vigorously
28 pursue efforts to establish a just, lasting, and comprehensive
29 peace in the Middle East; and
- 30 (10) Will work as an elected body to promote tourism,
31 economic trade, and cultural exchange with the State of

1 Israel, keeping relations healthy now and into the future for
2 the benefit of Florida and Israel.

3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
4 dispatched to the President of the United States, to the
5 President of the United States Senate, to the Speaker of the
6 United States House of Representatives, and to each member of
7 the Florida delegation to the United States Congress.

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