

**TESTIMONY OF AVIVA KLOMPAS IN SUPPORT OF H.R. 2701, THE “FALLEN
SERVICEMEMBERS RELIGIOUS HERITAGE RESTORATION ACT” BEFORE THE
DISABILITY ASSISTANCE AND MEMORIAL AFFAIRS SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE
HOUSE VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

JUNE 24, 2025

Chairman Luttrell and Ranking Member McGarvey, as an educator, writer, and the CEO of Boundless—a think tank committed to revitalizing Israel education and confronting antisemitism—I’m honored to offer my strong support for H.R. 2701, the Fallen Servicemembers Religious Heritage Restoration Act.

This legislation addresses a quiet but profound injustice: the burial of hundreds of Jewish American soldiers under Latin crosses in overseas U.S. military cemeteries, rather than under the Star of David, the symbol of their identity and faith. These errors may have been unintentional, but they are more than historical footnotes—they are omissions that distort our collective memory and deny these fallen heroes their full dignity.

Having served as a speechwriter for Israel’s ambassador to the United Nations, I know the power of narrative—how we tell our stories shapes how we understand who we are. The work of Operation Benjamin to restore these headstones is a powerful act of historical restoration. H.R. 2701 ensures that this work can continue with institutional support and that the sacrifices of Jewish service members are acknowledged with the truth and respect they deserve.

At a time when Jew-hatred is once again rearing its head around the globe, it is more important than ever that we preserve and amplify the stories that reflect the long-standing Jewish contribution to American freedom and democracy. These soldiers were not just heroes—they were Jewish heroes. That matters.

I urge Congress to pass H.R. 2701 and affirm that remembrance must always reflect reality.

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