

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2748

To encourage the normalization of relations with Israel, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 21, 2021

Mr. SCHNEIDER (for himself, Mrs. WAGNER, Ms. GARCIA of Texas, Mr. MELJER, Mr. MEEKS, and Mr. MCCAUL) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

A BILL

To encourage the normalization of relations with Israel, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Israel Relations Nor-
5 malization Act of 2021”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) Support for peace between Israel and its
9 neighbors has longstanding bipartisan support in
10 Congress.

1 (2) For decades, the United States Congress
2 has promoted Israel’s acceptance among Arab states
3 and other relevant countries and regions and has en-
4 acted numerous laws opposing efforts to boycott, iso-
5 late, and stigmatize America’s ally, Israel.

6 (3) The recent peace and normalization agree-
7 ments between Israel and several Arab states—the
8 United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Sudan, and Mo-
9 rocco—have the potential to fundamentally trans-
10 form the security, diplomatic, and economic environ-
11 ment in the Middle East and North Africa and ad-
12 vance vital United States national security interests.

13 (4) These agreements build upon the decades-
14 long leadership of the United States Government
15 and other governments in helping Israel broker
16 peace treaties with Egypt and Jordan and promoting
17 peace talks between Israel and Syria, Lebanon, and
18 the Palestinians.

19 (5) These agreements also build on decades
20 long private diplomatic and security engagement be-
21 tween Israel and countries in the region.

22 (6) These normalization and peace agreements
23 could begin to transform the region by spurring eco-
24 nomic growth, enhancing technological innovation,

1 advancing understanding, and forging closer people-
2 to-people relations.

3 (7) These agreements have the potential to pro-
4 mote investment, tourism, and direct flights, and
5 promote cooperation on security, telecommuni-
6 cations, technology, energy, healthcare, culture, the
7 environment, water security and sustainable develop-
8 ment.

9 **SEC. 3. STATEMENT OF POLICY.**

10 It is the policy of the United States—

11 (1) to expand and strengthen the Abraham Ac-
12 cords to encourage other nations to normalize rela-
13 tions with Israel and ensure that existing agree-
14 ments reap tangible security and economic benefits
15 for the citizens of those countries;

16 (2) to develop and implement a regional strat-
17 egy to encourage economic cooperation among Israel,
18 Arab states, and the Palestinians to enhance the
19 prospects for regional peace, respect for human
20 rights, transparent governance, and cooperation to
21 address water scarcity, climate solutions, health
22 care, sustainable development, and other areas that
23 result in benefits for residents of those countries;

24 (3) to develop and implement a regional secu-
25 rity strategy that recognizes the shared threat posed

1 by Iran and violent extremist organizations, ensures
2 sufficient United States deterrence in the region,
3 builds partner capacity to address shared threats,
4 and explores multilateral security arrangements built
5 around like-minded partners;

6 (4) to support and encourage government-to-
7 government and grassroots initiatives aimed at nor-
8 malizing ties with the state of Israel and promoting
9 people-to-people contact between Israelis, Arabs, and
10 peoples from other countries and regions, including
11 by expanding and enhancing the Abraham Accords;

12 (5) to continue to support a negotiated solution
13 to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict resulting in two
14 states—a democratic Jewish state of Israel and a
15 viable democratic Palestinian state—living side by
16 side in peace, security, and mutual recognition;

17 (6) to implement the Nita M. Lowey Middle
18 East Partnership for Peace Act of 2020 (title VIII
19 of division K of Public Law 116–260), which sup-
20 ports economic cooperation and peacebuilding efforts
21 among Israelis and Palestinians;

22 (7) to oppose efforts to delegitimize the state of
23 Israel and legal barriers to normalization of relations
24 with Israel;

1 (8) to work to combat anti-Semitism and sup-
2 port normalization of relations with Israel, including
3 by countering anti-Semitic narratives on social
4 media and state media and pressing for educational
5 curriculum reform; and

6 (9) to encourage partnerships and collaboration
7 on climate solutions, water, health, sustainable de-
8 velopment, and other areas.

9 **SEC. 4. UNITED STATES STRATEGY TO STRENGTHEN AND**
10 **EXPAND ABRAHAM ACCORDS AND OTHER**
11 **NORMALIZATION AGREEMENTS WITH ISRAEL.**

12 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the
13 date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter,
14 the Secretary of State, in consultation with the Adminis-
15 trator of the United States Agency for International De-
16 velopment, the Secretary of Defense, and the heads of
17 other appropriate Federal departments and agencies, shall
18 develop and submit to the appropriate congressional com-
19 mittees a strategy on expanding and strengthening the
20 Abraham Accords.

21 (b) ELEMENTS.—The strategy required under sub-
22 section (a) shall also include each of the following ele-
23 ments:

24 (1) An assessment of future staffing and
25 resourcing requirements of entities within the De-

1 partment of State, the United States Agency for
2 International Development, the Department of De-
3 fense, and other appropriate Federal departments
4 and agencies with responsibility to coordinate United
5 States efforts to expand and strengthen the Abra-
6 ham Accords.

7 (2) An assessment of the bilateral and multilat-
8 eral cooperation between Israel, Arab states, and
9 other relevant countries and regions that have nor-
10 malized relations with Israel, including an assess-
11 ment of cooperation in the economic, social, cultural,
12 scientific, technical, educational, and health fields
13 and an assessment of roadblocks to increased co-
14 operation.

15 (3) An assessment of bilateral and multilateral
16 security cooperation between Israel, the United
17 States, Arab states, and other relevant countries and
18 regions that have normalized relations with Israel,
19 including potential roadblocks to increased security
20 cooperation, interoperability, and information shar-
21 ing.

22 (4) An assessment of the likelihood of addi-
23 tional Arab states and other relevant countries and
24 regions to normalize relations with Israel.

1 (5) An assessment of opportunities created by
2 normalization agreements with Israel to advance
3 prospects for peace between Israelis and Palestin-
4 ians.

5 (6) A detailed description of how the United
6 States Government will leverage diplomatic lines of
7 effort and resources from other stakeholders (includ-
8 ing from foreign governments, international donors,
9 and multilateral institutions) to encourage normal-
10 ization, economic development, and people-to-people
11 programming.

12 (c) FORM.—

13 (1) UNCLASSIFIED MATTER.—Subject to para-
14 graph (2), the report required by subsection (a) and
15 each of the elements described in paragraphs (1)
16 through (5) of subsection (b) shall be submitted in
17 unclassified form.

18 (2) CLASSIFIED ANNEX.—The report required
19 by subsection (a) shall also include a classified
20 annex, transmitted separately, that contains only the
21 matter included in the report pursuant to paragraph
22 (6) of subsection (b).

23 (d) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES
24 DEFINED.—In this section, the term “appropriate con-
25 gressional committees” means—

1 government-to-government relations between Israelis
2 and Arabs.

3 (2) Identification of existing relevant invest-
4 ment funds that support Israel-Arab state coopera-
5 tion and recommendations for how such funds could
6 be used to support normalization and increase pros-
7 perity for all relevant stakeholders.

8 (3) An assessment for creating an Abrahamic
9 Center for Pluralism to prepare educational mate-
10 rials, convene international seminars, promote toler-
11 ance and pluralism, and bring together scholars as
12 a means of advancing religious tolerance and coun-
13 tering political and religious extremism.

14 (4) An assessment of the benefit to Israel and
15 its neighbors of participating in a regional con-
16 ference on climate solutions, water, health, and sus-
17 tainable development.

18 (5) An assessment of the feasibility and benefit
19 of increasing the capacity of existing Department of
20 State and United States Agency for International
21 Development-funded programs for developing people-
22 to-people exchange programs for young people be-
23 tween Israel, Arab states, and other relevant coun-
24 tries and regions.

1 (6) Recommendations to improve Department
2 of State cooperation and coordination, particularly
3 between the Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat
4 Anti-Semitism, the Ambassador at Large for Inter-
5 national Religious Freedom, and the Director of the
6 Office of International Religious Freedom, to combat
7 the racism, xenophobia, Islamophobia, and anti-Sem-
8 itism that hinder improvement of relations between
9 Israel, Arab states, and other relevant countries and
10 regions.

11 (7) A proposal for the manner in which the
12 United States Government and others can use exist-
13 ing Federal resources to counter Holocaust denial
14 and anti-Semitism abroad.

15 (8) An assessment of the value and feasibility
16 of Federal support for inter-parliamentary exchange
17 programs among Members of Congress, of the
18 Knesset, and parliamentarians from Arab states and
19 other relevant countries and regions, including
20 through existing Federal programs that support
21 such exchanges.

22 (c) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—
23 In this section, the term “appropriate congressional com-
24 mittees” means—

1 (1) the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the
2 Committee on Appropriations of the House of Rep-
3 resentatives; and

4 (2) the Committee on Foreign Relations and
5 the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate.

6 **SEC. 6. BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS TO NORMALIZATION**
7 **WITH ISRAEL.**

8 (a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This section may be cited as the
9 “Strengthening Reporting of Actions Taken Against the
10 Normalization of Relations with Israel Act of 2021”.

11 (b) **FINDINGS.**—Congress makes the following find-
12 ings:

13 (1) The Arab League, an organization com-
14 prising 22 Middle Eastern and African countries
15 and entities, has maintained an official boycott of
16 Israeli companies and Israeli-made goods since the
17 founding of Israel in 1948.

18 (2) Longstanding United States policy has en-
19 couraged Arab League states to normalize their rela-
20 tions with Israel and has long prioritized funding co-
21 operative programs that promote normalization be-
22 tween Arab League States and Israel, including the
23 Middle East Regional Cooperation program, which
24 promotes Arab-Israeli scientific cooperation.

1 (3) While some Arab League governments are
2 signaling enhanced cooperation with the state of
3 Israel on the government-to-government level, most
4 continue to persecute their own citizens who estab-
5 lish people-to-people relations with Israelis in non-
6 governmental fora, through a combination of judicial
7 and extrajudicial retribution.

8 (4) Some Arab League states maintain draco-
9 nian anti-normalization laws that punish their citi-
10 zens for people-to-people relations with Israelis, with
11 punishments, including imprisonment, revocation of
12 citizenship, and execution. Extrajudicial punish-
13 ments by these and other Arab states include sum-
14 mary imprisonment, accusations of “treason” in gov-
15 ernment-controlled media, and professional black-
16 listing.

17 (5) Anti-normalization laws, together with the
18 other forms of retribution, effectively condemn these
19 societies to mutual estrangement and, by extension,
20 reduce the possibility of conciliation and com-
21 promise.

22 (6) Former Israeli President Shimon Peres said
23 in 2008 at the United Nations that Israel agrees
24 with the Arab Peace Initiative that a military solu-

1 tion to the conflict “will not achieve peace or provide
2 security for the parties”.

3 (7) Despite the risk of retaliatory action, a ris-
4 ing tide of Arab civic actors advocate direct engage-
5 ment with Israeli citizens and residents. These in-
6 clude the Arab Council for Regional Integration, a
7 group of 32 public figures from 15 Arab countries
8 who oppose the boycott of Israel on the grounds that
9 the boycott has denied Arabs the benefits of partner-
10 ship with Israelis, has blocked Arabs from helping to
11 bridge the Israeli-Palestinian divide, and inspired di-
12 visive intra-Arab boycotts among diverse sects and
13 ethnic groups.

14 (8) On February 11, 2020, a delegation of the
15 Arab Council to the French National Assembly in
16 Paris testified to the harmful effects of “anti-nor-
17 malization laws”, called on the Assembly to enact a
18 law instructing the relevant French authorities to
19 issue an annual report on instances of Arab govern-
20 ment retribution for any of their citizens or resi-
21 dents who call for peace with Israel or engage in di-
22 rect civil relations with Israeli citizens, and re-
23 quested democratic legislatures to help defend the
24 region’s civil peacemakers.

1 (9) On May 11, 2020, 85 leaders in France
2 published an endorsement of the Arab Council’s pro-
3 posal, calling on France and other democratic gov-
4 ernments to “protect Arabs who engage in dialogue
5 with Israeli citizens” and proposing “the creation of
6 a study group in the National Assembly as well as
7 in the Senate whose mission would be to ensure a
8 legal and technical monitoring of the obstacles which
9 Arab proponents of dialogue with Israelis face”.

10 (10) Arab-Israeli cooperation provides signifi-
11 cant symbiotic benefit to the security and economic
12 prosperity of the region.

13 (c) ANNUAL REPORTING.—

14 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after
15 the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually
16 thereafter, the Secretary of State shall submit to the
17 appropriate congressional committees a report on
18 the status of the normalization of relations between
19 Israel, Arab states, and other relevant countries and
20 regions.

21 (2) ELEMENTS.—The report required under
22 paragraph (1) shall include the following informa-
23 tion:

24 (A) The status of “anti-normalization
25 laws” in each country within the jurisdiction of

1 the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, including
2 efforts within each country to sharpen existing
3 laws, enact new or additional “anti-normaliza-
4 tion legislation”, or repeal such laws.

5 (B) Instances of prosecution of citizens or
6 residents of Arab countries for calling for peace
7 with Israel, visiting the state of Israel, or en-
8 gaging Israeli citizens in any way.

9 (C) Instances of extrajudicial retribution
10 by Arab governments or government-controlled
11 institutions against citizens or residents of Arab
12 countries for any of the actions described in
13 subparagraph (B).

14 (D) Evidence of steps taken by Arab gov-
15 ernments toward permitting or encouraging
16 people-to-people relations between their citizens
17 or residents and Israeli citizens.

18 (E) Instances where Arab governments
19 used state-owned or state-operated media out-
20 lets to promote anti-Semitic propaganda.

21 (d) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—

22 In this section, the term “appropriate congressional com-
23 mittees” means—

1 (1) the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the
2 Committee on Appropriations of the House of Rep-
3 resentatives; and

4 (2) the Committee on Foreign Relations and
5 the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate.

6 **SEC. 7. SUNSET.**

7 This Act shall cease to be effective on the date that
8 is 5 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

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