

Senator Meekhof offered the following resolution:

Senate Resolution No. 154.

A resolution to recognize the 70th anniversary of Israel's establishment and reaffirm the bonds of friendship and cooperation between the United States, Michigan, and Israel.

Whereas, On November 29, 1947, the United Nations General Assembly voted to partition British Mandatory Palestine into a Jewish state and Arab state, a decision welcomed by Jewish leadership and rejected by the Arab world; and

Whereas, On May 14, 1948, the people of Israel proclaimed the establishment of the sovereign and independent state of Israel, and the United States government established full diplomatic relations after Israel's first election in 1949; and

Whereas, The desire of the Jewish people to establish an independent modern state of Israel is directly linked to the existence of the historic kingdom of Israel established in the Land of Israel 3,000 years ago, with the city of Jerusalem as its capital both then and now; and

Whereas, For over 2,000 years, Jews living in other parts of the world maintained a profound spiritual and emotional connection to the Land of Israel, and there has been continuous Jewish presence in the land comprising the modern state of Israel; and

Whereas, The establishment of the modern state of Israel as a homeland for the Jewish people followed the destruction of much of European Jewry during the Holocaust; and

Whereas, Since its establishment 70 years ago, the modern state of Israel has rebuilt the nation, forged a new and dynamic society, and created a thriving economic, political, cultural, and intellectual life despite the heavy burdens of war, terrorism, and unjustified diplomatic and economic boycotts against the people of Israel; and

Whereas, The people of Israel, in the spirit of Israel's Declaration of Independence, have established a vibrant, pluralistic, democratic political system, which includes freedom of speech, association, and religion; a vigorously free press; free, fair and open elections; the rule of law; a fully independent judiciary; and other democratic principles and practices; and

Whereas, Israel has developed some of the world's leading universities; and

Whereas, The country of Israel has also developed an advanced, entrepreneurial economy, as being among the world's leaders of the high-tech industry, and is at the forefront of research and development in the fields of renewable energy sources and medicine; and

Whereas, Israel regularly sends humanitarian aid, search and rescue teams, mobile hospitals, and other emergency supplies to help victims of disasters around the world; and

Whereas, Israel has also taken in millions of Jews from countries throughout the world and sought to fully integrate them into Israeli society; and

Whereas, With courage and high ethical standards, Israel has defended itself from repeated attacks since its independence, including terrorist adversaries such as Hamas and Hezbollah that violate international law by using civilians as human shields; and

Whereas, Israel has also established peaceful, bilateral relations with Egypt and Jordan and has sought to achieve a secure peace with the Palestinians and Israel's other Arab neighbors; and

Whereas, For seven decades, the United States, Michigan, and Israel have maintained a special relationship based on mutually shared democratic and moral values, common strategic interests, bonds of friendship, and mutual respect; and

Whereas, In January 2017, Michigan became the 16th state to enact laws condemning and outlawing discrimination against Israel and Israelis; and

Whereas, Michigan organizations have made efforts to strengthen business ties between Michigan's automotive and defense industries as well as Israel's innovation and technical expertise; and

Whereas, Programs have consistently sought to bring members of the Michigan Jewish community to Israel, as well as Israelis to Michigan, in order to create new relationships and strengthen Jewish identity; and

Whereas, Michigan universities, such as the University of Michigan, have partnered with those in Israel, including Ben Gurion University in the Negev and Technion-Israel Institute of Technology, to support and foster research, innovation, and collaboration; and

Whereas, The American people and people of Michigan feel a strong affinity for the Israeli people based on common values and shared cultural heritage; and

Whereas, The United States and Michigan continue to regard Israel as a trusted ally and vital strategic partner in the volatile Middle East; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate, That we recognize the 70th anniversary of Israel's establishment and reaffirm the bonds of friendship and cooperation between the United States, Michigan, and Israel; and be it further

Resolved, That Michigan:

- Recognize the historic significance of the 70th anniversary of the reestablishment of the sovereign and independent state of Israel as a homeland for the Jewish people;
- Reaffirm the bonds of friendship and cooperation which have existed between the United States, Michigan, and Israel for the past 70 years, and commit to strengthening those bonds;
- Commend the people of Israel for their remarkable achievements in building a new state and a pluralistic, democratic society in the face of terrorism, as well as hostility, ostracism, and belligerence from many of their neighbors;
- Reaffirm its support for Israel's right to defend itself against threats to its security and existence;
- Reaffirm its enduring support for Israel as Israel pursues peace with its neighbors; and
- Extend the warmest congratulations and best wishes to the state of Israel and Israeli people for a peaceful and prosperous future.