

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 28, 2019

The Honorable Nita M. Lowey
Chairwoman
House Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on State, Foreign
Operations, and Related Programs
HT-2, the Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Hal Rodgers
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on State, Foreign
Operations, and Related Programs
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Lowey and Ranking Member Rodgers:

We thank the Subcommittee for its support for programs that promote people-to-people coexistence and reconciliation around the world, and we urge you to again provide \$12 million in this type of funding for projects focused on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In addition to the funding, we urge the committee to include language that will enable these important programs to continue in light of the interpretation of the *Anti-Terrorism Clarification Act (ATCA)*, which has led to an end to those projects working with Palestinian beneficiaries.

We all hope that Israeli and Palestinian leaders will reach genuine, mutually-supported success when they restart negotiations. While a political agreement can only be achieved by negotiations between representative political leaders, sustaining any future agreements will be more effective through the strong support and buy-in of everyday people.

These programs will also help enable the success of any diplomatic solution. They bring together ordinary Israelis and Palestinians working jointly on educational outreach, business cooperation, sports activities, community development, and inter-religious dialogue. Through local organizations, people-to-people initiatives break down barriers and stereotypes, diminish the appeal of terrorism, and change attitudes, while building trust and a foundation for sustainable peace. Additionally, reconciliation efforts help reduce violence and provide an antidote to anti-U.S. propaganda. Noteworthy programs which utilize this funding include:

- The Mainstreaming Shared Society project, which builds upon Hand in Hand's growing network of Jewish-Arab bilingual schools in Israel by establishing three new integrated schools to benefit 2,500 students. The project will support local communities to establish and/or expand a constituency of Arab and Jewish families committed to building a viable, growing, and resilient shared society in Israel.
- The Training Entrepreneurs for Excellence at MEET (TEEM2) project, which provides training for 380 excelling Israeli and Palestinian youth between the ages of 15-17 in advanced technology, entrepreneurship, and leadership. This project also works on establishing networks of mutual trust, understanding, respect, and teamwork.
- The Champions for Peace project, which utilizes basketball to develop trust and cooperation among more than 640 Palestinian and Israeli young people, community

leaders, and citizens. The project works to translate grassroots support for cooperation into socio-political change for a just and lasting peace.

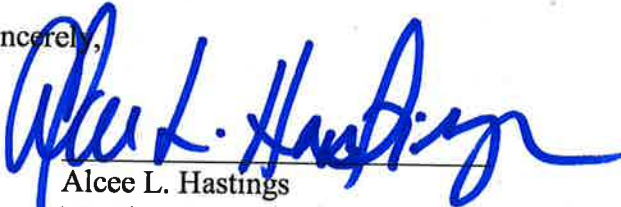
- The Olive Oil Without Borders III project, which aims to develop relationships of trust, mutual understanding, and economic cooperation among Jordanians, Israelis and Palestinians. The project targets 1,000 olive producers, mill operators, and olive oil distributors in 37 communities in Israel, the West Bank, and Jordan to expand economic cooperation, build working relationships between business and policy leaders, and develop 30 women-owned businesses through cross-border collaboration between women's cooperatives.

These programs work. They build greater trust, enhance cooperation, and decrease aggression and loneliness. Equally important, they give those who seek to address their differences peaceful and tangible ways to reject terrorism, incitement, and violence and work toward a better future.

We believe it is essential that the full portfolio of people-to-people initiatives, including those working within Israel and those working between Israelis and Palestinians, are fully funded, including restoring those affected by ATCA. Any peace plan that does not build relationships from the ground up will have little chance of success. Thus, we urge you to include language in the bill that would clarify that ATCA does not apply to this type of programming, and we are ready to work with you to achieve this goal.

We appreciate your continued strong support for Israel and the peace process, and respectfully ask that the committee include \$12 million in funding for people-to-people coexistence and reconciliation projects for Israeli-Palestinian cooperation.

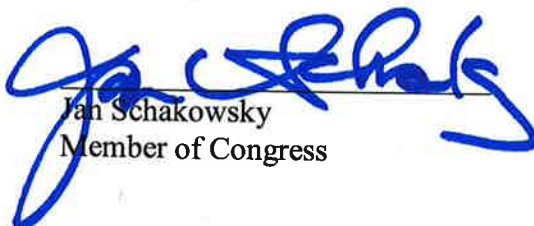
Sincerely,

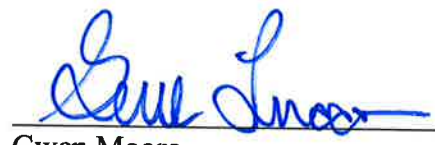

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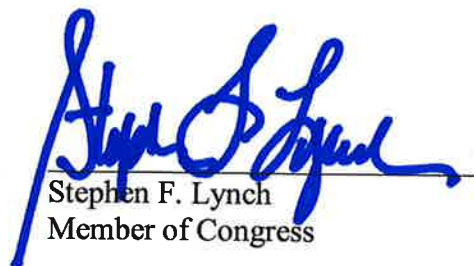

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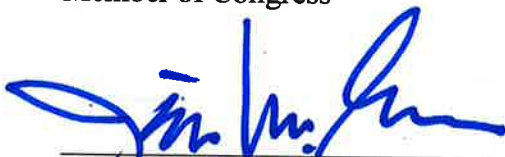
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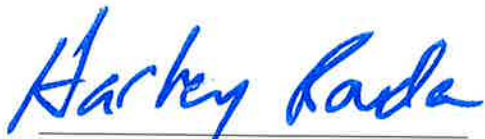
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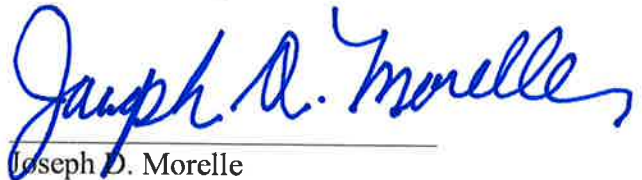
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