October 21, 2020

Dear Chairmen Inhofe and Smith, and Ranking Members Reed and Thornberry,

As National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) conference negotiations commence, we are writing to draw your attention to key provisions in the FY21 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) that support the U.S.-Israel relationship. We ask that you continue to support close cooperation between the United States and our strategic ally Israel by including the below provisions in the final NDAA.

U.S.-Israel Security Assistance Authorization Act
We urge you to include Subtitle H, Sections 6290-6299 of the Senate-passed NDAA, which fully funds security assistance to Israel as agreed to in the 2016 U.S.-Israel Memorandum of Understanding, in the final bill. Additionally, we call on you to support provisions that would increase bilateral cooperation on a variety of urgent issues confronting our military and nation, such as COVID-19. Section 6299F, a version of S.3722 Expanding Medical Partnerships with Israel to Lessen Dependence on China (EMPIL-DOC) Act, directly addresses the impact of COVID-19 and establishes a viable program to develop technologies to combat the virus and prevent or mitigate future outbreaks. The House passed H.R. 1837, a bill similar to Subtitle H, in 2019 via voice vote. That bill had nearly 300 cosponsors.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Cooperation
The House NDAA contains a grant program that would increase U.S.-Israel cooperation on post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in Section 736. Including that provision will facilitate research into the diagnosis and treatment of PTSD.

U.S.-Israel Operations-Technology Working Group
Finally, we hope you will support the inclusion of Section 1286 of the Senate NDAA, which would establish a United-States-Israel Operations-Technology Working Group. The Working Group would facilitate bilateral cooperation on research and development in emerging fields of
military technology and keep U.S. innovation one-step ahead of our adversaries. Israeli expertise in critical fields such as directed energy, robotics, autonomous systems, space, and cyber only stand to benefit the U.S. military.

Expanding military and civilian cooperation between the United States and Israel will give us a leg up when countering emerging threats. We hope to work with you through the conference process to ensure these provisions are included in the final NDAA.

Sincerely,

Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator

Ted Cruz
United States Senator

Maria Cantwell
United States Senator

Jacky Rosen
United States Senator

Mike Crapo
United States Senator

Ben Sasse
United States Senator

Jerry Moran
United States Senator

Josh Hawley
United States Senator

Marco Rubio
United States Senator

/s/ Robert B. Casey, Jr.
Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator

Steve Daines
United States Senator

Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator
Cory A. Booker
United States Senator

Kelly Loeffler
United States Senator

Kevin Cramer
United States Senator