

AZM's Washington Forum Promotes Bipartisan Support for Israel and Zionism

By Kol HaBiraH Staff

Jewish Republicans and Democrats united for a day of bipartisan support for Israel and Zionism at the Washington Forum of the American Zionist Movement (AZM), held at the U.S. Capitol Dec. 12.

Senate Democratic Leader Charles E. Schumer (D-NY) and Rep. Lee M. Zeldin (R-NY) delivered keynote remarks, and the program featured the first-ever joint appearance by officials of the Republican Jewish Coalition (RJC) and Jewish Democratic Council of America (JDCA). Jason D. Greenblatt, assistant to the president and special representative for international negotiations at the White House, and Daniel B. Shapiro, U.S. ambassador to Israel under President Obama, presented bipartisan diplomatic updates.

The American Zionist Movement comprises 29 national organizations and works across a broad ideological, political, and religious spectrum with the goal of linking the American Jewish community together in support of Israel, Zionism, and the Jewish people.



From left to right: AZM President Richard D. Heideman with Noah Silverman, Congressional Affairs Director, Republican Jewish Coalition; Halie Soifer, Executive Director, Jewish Democratic Council of America; and Herbert Block, AZM Executive Director. (PHOTO CREDIT: RON SACHS)

“Broad support for the State of Israel is a central tenet of the Zionism Forward campaign launched by the Amer-

ican Zionist Movement. We gathered together in the Capitol after the mid-term elections, and just prior to the new Congress, so our elected officials and community leaders could address how we can unite across party and political lines in support of Israel, whose existence continues to be threatened by her enemies,” said AZM President Richard D. Heideman and AZM Executive Director Herbert Block.

“Now more than ever, and in Israel’s

70th anniversary year, there must be a renewal of the historic broad and bipartisan U.S.’s support for Israel,” he said.

AZM presented its AZM 2018 Distinguished Leadership awards to the bipartisan current and future chairs of House Foreign Affairs Committee — Rep. Ed Royce (R-CA), Rep. Eliot Engel (D-NY), and Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL). Other Congressional speakers included Rep. Ted Deutch (D-FL), Rep. Josh Gottheimer (D-NJ), Rep. Joe Wilson (R-SC), and Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-FL), immediate past chair of the Democratic National Committee.

For the parties, Halie Soifer, executive director of JDCA, and Noah Silverman, congressional affairs director of RJC, presented together. There was a panel discussion of “U.S. Zionist Organizations Across the Spectrum” that featured Karen Paikan Barall (Hadassah), Kenneth Bob (Ameinu), and Morton Klein (ZOA). Legislation regarding Israel and antisemitism was addressed by Marvin Feuer, AIPAC director of policy and government affairs; Eric Fusfield, deputy director of B’nai B’rith International; Sarah Stern, founder and president of EMET; and Eric Gallagher, Washington representative of the Claims Conference/WJRO. Andrew Borans, CEO of AEPi led a concluding dialogue on achieving “Zero Tolerance Against Antisemitism and Anti-Zionism” in communities and on campus.

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From left to right: AZM President Richard D. Heideman, Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R – FL), and Rep. Ted Deutch (D – FL). (PHOTO CREDIT: RON SACHS)