

Governor Phil Murphy

Governor Murphy Announces Sweeping Set of Appointments to New Jersey – Israel Commission

04/14/2021

77 Members Appointed on 73rd Israeli Independence Day

TRENTON – Governor Phil Murphy today announced the appointments of 77 public members to the New Jersey – Israel Commission. The appointments to the Commission are being announced on Israel's 73rd Independence Day, in celebration of the friendship and longstanding relationship between New Jersey and Israel.

"I am proud to announce these appointments to the New Jersey-Israel Commission," **said Governor Murphy**. "New Jersey has had a special relationship with Israel dating back decades, one that Tammy and I were honored to continue with an official visit to Israel in 2018. I am confident that Mark, Karin, Andrew, and the members of the Commission will continue to strengthen our friendship with the Israeli people and provide further opportunities for collaboration on economic, educational, and cultural initiatives."

"In December of 2019 I had the incredible opportunity to visit Israel and see the richness of its land and people up close. Israel remains one of New Jersey's most important friends and partners, and I am truly proud to join Governor Murphy in welcoming the new members of the New Jersey-Israel Commission," **said New Jersey Secretary of State Tahesha Way**. "I look forward to interacting with all of them as they bring our two states ever closer together."

"I am enthused with the announcement and release today by the Governor of the names of the incoming members of our New Jersey Israel Commission. The breadth of talent, expertise and individual commitment to Israel, our state of New Jersey and the New Jersey Israel relationship of each and every one of our new Commission members is truly beyond compare," **said Co-Chair Mark Levenson**. "I am also especially delighted with the naming of my incoming co-chair Karin Elkis whom I have known for over twenty years. Karin has had a long and distinguished career in both government service and the private sector as well as significant community involvement and I couldn't be more pleased to have her join me in working with our tremendously effective and energetic executive director Andrew Gross in carrying out the inspirational, important and needed work of the Commission."

"I am honored to serve as Co-Chair of the New Jersey-Israel Commission," **said Co-Chair Karin Elkis**. "New Jersey's relationship with Israel is truly special and I thank the Governor for nominating me to serve as a steward of this tremendous effort to strengthen our ties and promote economic and cultural exchange. I look forward to working with the Governor, Secretary of State Way, my Co-Chair Mark Levenson, and our Executive Director Andrew Gross on efforts to grow and continue our friendship with the Israeli people."

"New Jersey and Israel stand together in countless ways, and today's announcement on Israel's Independence Day reflects that incredibly special relationship as we usher in a new era with these outstanding Commission Members," **said New Jersey-Israel Commission Executive Director Andrew Gross**. "Together with Mark, Karin, and all our members, I look forward to advancing opportunities across business, culture, academia, and beyond that captures the remarkable ingenuity of the State of Israel and pairs it with our state's exceptional innovative ecosystem."

"The State of Israel's friendship with our friends in New Jersey becomes more of a meaningful partnership year after year. But this year, this has been especially true with the establishment of the new dual degree programs from the New Jersey Institute of Technology and Ben Gurion University," **said Acting Consul General of Israel in New York, Israel Nitzan**. "On behalf of the Consulate General of Israel, we thank Governor Murphy for making this relationship a priority and we offer the new and veteran members of the New Jersey-Israel Commission our congratulations as you work to enhance our friendship in ways that can only make Israel and New Jersey stronger in every way."

The New Jersey-Israel Commission was established in 1989 to promote the development of trade, culture and educational exchanges; encourage the development of capital investment and joint business ventures; and foster a spirit of cooperation between the citizens of the State of Israel and the State of New Jersey. The Commission is under the purview of the Secretary of State and its Executive Director, with members appointed directly by the Governor. The members include leaders in business, journalism, music, diplomacy, civics, religion, technology, medicine, academia, and other sectors, representing the true spirit of the Commission's mission. Additionally, Senators Loretta Weinberg, James Beach, Tom Kean, Jr., Robert Singer, and Assembly Members Gary Schaer, Valerie Vainieri Huttler, Jon Bramnick, and John DiMaio serve as legislative representatives to the Commission.

The new appointments reflect an incredible cross-section of individuals who have shown leadership in New Jersey's special connection with Israel and a dedication to deepening this relationship across the Jewish community and other communities. This major reform of the Commission will move it to a Co-Chair model, with current Chairman Mark Levenson serving as Co-Chair alongside Karin Elkis. The appointments to the Commission set the bar higher for the future and usher in a new era of bilateral cooperation focusing on future technologies and the needs of the state.

The Commission has seen many recent achievements. In March, the Governor announced the Institute for Future Technologies with the Presidents of the New Jersey Institute of Technology and Ben Gurion University, which will focus on cyber security and environmental engineering in Newark and Jersey City. In April, the Commission facilitated a relationship bringing Israel Aerospace Industries, the Israel's largest aviation company, to demonstrate new technologies at Atlantic City Airport designed to keep air travel safe from viruses like COVID-19.






APPOINTMENTS

- **Co-Chair:** Karin Elkis
- Ambassador Dani Dayan
- Ambassador Michael Oren
- Dr. Ravit Barkama
- Ms. Allison Nagelberg
- Ms. Lori Sackler
- Mr. Bruce Brafman
- Ms. Betsy Fischer
- Dr. Margaret McMenamin
- Ms. Leslie Dannin Rosenthal
- Ms. Debra Tantleff
- Ms. Shari Blecher

- Ms. Laura Herschlag
- Ms. Ginger Gold Schnitzer
- Ms. Tal Shuster
- Ms. Miri Ben-Ari
- Ms. Archie Gottesman
- Ms. Lori Klinghoffer
- Ms. Angelica Berrie
- Mr. Elias Mattar
- Mr. Yoram Elgrabli
- Hon. Phil Goldfeder
- Mr. Michael Cohen
- Mr. Michael Pock
- Mr. Nathan Herzog
- Mr. John Frankel
- Mr. Yoram Behiri
- Mr. Michael Feldstein
- Mr. Calvin Souder
- Mr. Alex Rosemberg
- Mr. Ido Zairi
- Dr. Craig Gotsman
- Mr. Pinakin Pathak
- Mr. Bob Bendeon
- Mr. Ari Rabban
- Mr. Joe Shamie
- Deputy Mayor Jason Ravitz
- Mr. Howard Joffe
- Mr. Leon Sokol
- Dr. Vivian Fuhrman
- Mr. Yuri Piltser
- Ms. Paula Gold
- Ms. Audrey Wilf
- Mrs. Sharon Levine Corzine
- Prof. Janice Harrington Knopf
- Mr. Norman Rokeach
- Mr. Daniel Straus
- County Commissioner Tracy Zur
- Mayor Michael Wildes
- Council President Ora Kornbluth
- Ms. Sarri Singer
- Mr. Jonathan Frenkel
- Professor Gary Minkoff
- Mr. Harry Silver
- Ms. Ariella Steinreich
- Ms. Sheri Goldberg

REAPPOINTMENTS

- **Co-Chair:** Mark Levenson
- Ambassador Daniel Kurtzer
- Ms. Marlene Herman
- Ms. Wendy Lazarus
- Ms. Sarah Biser
- Ms. Karen Small
- Ms. Harriet Sepinwall
- Mr. Jason Shames
- Rabbi Yosef Carlebach
- Rabbi Menachem Carlebach
- Mr. Roy Tanzman
- Mr. Jacob Toporek
- Rabbi Aaron Kotler
- Mr. Andrew Getraer
- Mr. Ralph Zucker
- Rabbi David-Seth Kirshner
- Mr. Steven Goldstein
- Mr. Jerold Zaro
- Hon. Herbert Klein
- Mr. Lawrence Lerner
- Mr. Abe Halberstam

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