

2017 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 125

BY REPRESENTATIVE HODGES

A RESOLUTION

To commend Israel upon the fiftieth anniversary of the reunification of Jerusalem, to recognize the cordial and mutually beneficial relationship between Israel and the state of Louisiana and the contributions of Israel to humankind, and to express support for the people of Israel and for their right to defend themselves and to live in freedom.

WHEREAS, since the time of King David, except for the nineteen years between 1948 and 1967, there has always been a Jewish presence in the ancient city of Jerusalem, the capital of Israel; and

WHEREAS, Jerusalem was divided during the 1948 War of Independence and was reunited in the Six Day War in June of 1967; and

WHEREAS, 2017 marks the fiftieth anniversary of this war and the reunification of Jerusalem, which was a seminal event in the history of Israel; and

WHEREAS, the reunification of Jerusalem was also a fundamental moment in the history of religious tolerance, opening the city of Jerusalem to worshipers of all faiths, permitting Jews to return to the Western Wall and other holy sites, and allowing Israeli Muslims and Christians to visit those sacred places in eastern Jerusalem from which they had been barred since the division of the city; and

WHEREAS, on June 7, 1967, Defense Minister Moshe Dayan marked this historic occasion with these words: "This morning, the Israel Defense Forces liberated Jerusalem. We have united Jerusalem, the divided capital of Israel. We have returned to the holiest of our holy places, never to part from it again"; and

WHEREAS, the land of Israel is the birthplace of the Jewish people, where their spiritual, religious, and national identity has been formed, where they have achieved independence, and where they have created a culture of national and universal significance; and

WHEREAS, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob promised in Genesis 12:3 to bless those who bless Israel through the promise He made to Abraham: "And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curseth thee: and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed"; and

WHEREAS, the claim and presence of the Jewish people in Israel has remained constant throughout more than three thousand years of history; and

WHEREAS, when exiled from Israel, the Jewish people remained faithful to Israel in all the countries of their dispersion, never ceasing to pray and hope for their return and the restoration of their national freedom; and

WHEREAS, the legal basis for the establishment of the modern state of Israel was a binding resolution under International Law, which was unanimously adopted by the League of Nations in 1922 and subsequently affirmed by both houses of the United States congress; and

WHEREAS, the resolution affirmed the establishment of a national home for the Jewish people in the historical region of the land of Israel, including the areas of Judea, Samaria, and Jerusalem; and

WHEREAS, Article 80 of the United Nations charter recognizes the continued validity of the rights granted to states or peoples which already existed under international instruments; therefore, the 1922 League of Nations resolution remains valid, and the six hundred fifty thousand Jews currently residing in the areas of Judea, Samaria, and eastern Jerusalem reside there legitimately; and

WHEREAS, under the leadership of David Ben-Gurion, the modern state of Israel was established on May 14, 1948, and Israel has had to defend herself and her right to exist since her founding; and

WHEREAS, Israel declares that she will be based on the precepts of liberty, justice, and peace taught by the Hebrew prophets; will uphold the full social and political equality

of all her citizens, without distinction of race, creed, or sex; and will guarantee full freedom of conscience, worship, education, and culture; and

WHEREAS, Israel is the foremost leader in the Middle East and a shining example for the rest of the world relative to the recognition of the basic equality and dignity of women, providing full and equal opportunities for women to vote, hold elected office, own property, and pursue and engage in any occupation, profession, or trade; and

WHEREAS, Israel is a great friend and ally of the United States in the Middle East, and 2015 marked the thirtieth anniversary of the United States-Israel Free Trade Agreement, which was the first free trade agreement entered into by the United States; it continues to serve as the foundation for expanding trade and investment between the United States and Israel by reducing barriers and promoting regulatory transparency; and

WHEREAS, the state of Louisiana and Israel have long enjoyed a special friendship that strengthens with each passing year; and

WHEREAS, Israel and Louisiana also have strong economic ties, and numerous Louisiana companies have experienced the benefits of doing business with Israel; and

WHEREAS, exports sustain thousands of Louisiana businesses, and foreign investment creates Louisiana jobs; the tradition of trade between Israel and Louisiana remains strong and has a positive impact on both economies; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the strong economic ties between Israel and Louisiana, the people of Israel and Louisiana have a rich history of shared values and mutual interests, and government officials from Louisiana have visited Israel on numerous occasions, furthering collaboration and cooperation; and

WHEREAS, the people of Israel have been persecuted throughout history, and there are still those who express a strong desire for the destruction of Israel, which faces continued threats to her safety; and

WHEREAS, it is appropriate to commend and congratulate the people of Israel upon the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the reunification of Jerusalem, to express support for Israel's freedom and security, and to recognize the genuine and abiding friendship between Israel and the state of Louisiana.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend Israel upon the fiftieth anniversary of the reunification of Jerusalem, does hereby recognize the cordial and mutually beneficial relationship between Israel and the state of Louisiana and the contributions of Israel to humankind, and does hereby express support for the people of Israel and for their right to defend themselves and live in freedom.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a suitable copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Ambassador Eitan Levon, Consul General of Israel to the Southwest, and to Ron Dermer, Ambassador of Israel to the United States.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES