

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 20, 2018

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Senate Majority Leader
Room S-320, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Senate Minority Leader
Room S-221, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Leaders McConnell and Schumer:

We write today to bring to your attention a disturbing development concerning the anti-Israel and anti-Semitic movement known as Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS). Regrettably, in recent days, future members of the U.S. House of Representatives have publicly expressed support for this extreme movement.

We urge you to issue a joint statement publicly condemning BDS and to prioritize legislative efforts in the next session of Congress to counter this destructive trend. We note there were bipartisan legislative efforts, including the Combating BDS Act (S.170) and the Israel Anti-Boycott Act (S.720), which were introduced in the 115th Congress.


Israel is our country's most steadfast ally in a highly volatile region of the world. The State of Israel has proven itself to be a resilient beacon of democratic values, despite facing existential threats daily since its founding in 1948. Working closely together, our two countries have worked to fight terrorism, to stop the spread of radical Islamist ideologies, and to prevent nuclear and chemical weapons proliferation by rogue regimes, such as Syria and the Islamic Republic of Iran.


As then-President Barack Obama stated in his speech in Jerusalem on March 21, 2013: "Israel has established a thriving democracy – with a spirited civil society, proud political parties, a tireless free press, and a lively public debate – lively may even be an understatement. And Israel has achieved this even as it has overcome relentless threats to its security – through the courage of the Israel Defense Forces, and a citizenry that is resilient in the face of terror."


Simply put, the BDS movement seeks to de-legitimize the State of Israel and its people. Senator Schumer, as you so eloquently stated on March 6, 2018: "We must continue to stand firm against the profoundly biased campaign to delegitimize the State of Israel through [BDS]... While Iran publicly executes its citizens, Turkey jails its journalists, scores of Arab nations punish homosexuality with imprisonment and torture, why does BDS single Israel out alone for condemnation?"

It is disheartening to see future members of Congress take a position on BDS that is not only highly biased, but contrary to fundamental facts and detrimental to U.S. national security interests. We therefore respectfully urge you to immediately condemn these comments and to show bipartisan support for our ally Israel.

Sincerely,


Cory Gardner
United States Senator


Lindsey Graham
United States Senator


Marco Rubio
United States Senator


Chuck Grassley
United States Senator



Ted Cruz
United States Senator

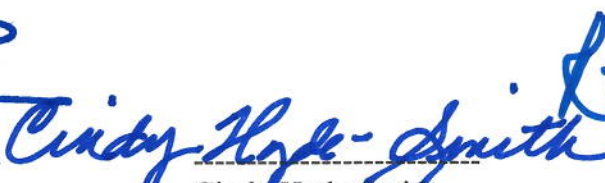

Susan Collins
United States

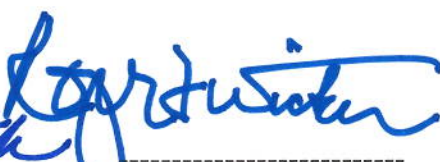

Jon Kyl
United States Senator

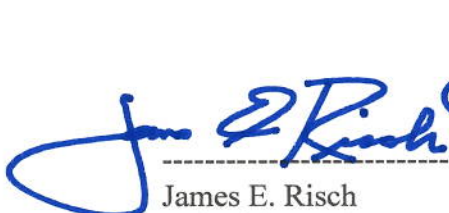

John Hoeven
United States Senator



Steve Daines
United States Senator



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Cindy Hyde-Smith
United States Senator


Roger Wicker
United States Senator


James E. Risch
United States Senator


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