

Rothman Secures \$ 2.56 Billion in U.S. Aid for Israel

Congressman

NEWS RELEASE

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--Foreign Aid Bill Passes House; Funds Will Help Secure America's Interests in the Middle East by Bolstering Israel's Military and Providing Economic Assistance--

(Washington, DC) -Continuing his fight to provide America's number one ally in the Middle East with sufficient U.S. foreign aid, Congressman Steve Rothman (D-Fair Lawn) today announced that he helped secure \$2.56 billion in Congressional appropriations for Israel in the Fiscal Year 2006 Foreign Aid bill. The bill passed the House on Friday, November 5th, by a vote of 350-35. As a Member of the Subcommittee on Foreign Operations of the House Appropriations Committee, Rothman was appointed as a House Conferee to the Conference Committee on this bill, which enabled him to work with his Senate counterparts to finalize this important aid package for Israel. Rothman fought to ensure that Israel will receive \$2.28 billion in military assistance and \$240 million in economic aid. In addition, Rothman's sub-committee also included another \$40 million for the resettlement of Russian, Eastern European, Ethiopian and other Jewish refugees in the State of Israel in the Foreign Operations Appropriations bill.

"Israel is the United States' number one ally in the Middle East, a trusted friend of 57 years, our invaluable military partner, and the only democracy in the region," Rothman said. "Israel is America's greatest defense bargain at \$2.56 billion. To replace Israel, which has the strongest and best military in the Middle East, would cost the U.S. at least \$130 billion a year and require the deployment of at least 100,000 U.S. troops. I am honored that I was appointed to be a House Conferee on the Foreign Operations Appropriations bill this year and was able to work with my House and Senate colleagues to provide this substantial aid package for Israel."

Rothman is a member of the Democratic Israel Working Group and also the first Bergen County Congressman to serve on the House Appropriations Committee in the history of the United States.

The Foreign Operations Appropriations bill is one of 11 spending bills Congress is required to pass each year. The measure next moves to the White House where President Bush is expected to sign the bill into law.

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