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Uses Position On House Appropriations Subcommittee On Foreign Operations

To Obtain Military & Economic Assistance

Washington, DC - Congressman Steve Rothman (D-NJ9) helped secure a substantial United States foreign assistance package of \$2.69 billion for Israel using his seat on the powerful House Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee, which is responsible for allocating all U.S. foreign assistance. The House early this morning passed the Foreign Operations Appropriations bill for Fiscal Year 2004, which includes the Israel funds. The full House Appropriations Committee, of which Rothman is a member, approved the measure last week.

"This \$2.69 billion foreign assistance package demonstrates to the world the importance of the U.S. - Israel relationship. It provides significant support for the State of Israel, our strategic military partner, ally, trusted friend of 55 years, and the only democracy in the Middle East, as it takes courageous steps along the roadmap for peace," said Rothman. "Assistance to bolster Israel's security is this year, as always, in the national strategic interest of the United States. Israel continues to need our support in battling terrorism and stopping the killing of its people and also in strengthening its economy."

Rothman worked with his colleagues on the Foreign Operations Subcommittee and the full House Appropriations Committee to secure \$2.16 billion in military assistance and \$480 million in economic assistance for the State of Israel. In addition, the Foreign Operations Appropriations bill includes \$50 million for the resettlement of Russian, Eastern European, Ethiopian and other refugees in the State of Israel. The measure also continues restrictions on aid to the Palestinian Authority.

"I am proud to be a member of the Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee because it allows me to play a vital role in providing for the U.S. commitment to our friend and ally, the State of Israel," Rothman said. "Israel and its people have suffered for far too long at the hands of terrorists that seek the country's destruction. I remain committed to providing Israel with the resources needed to protect itself and to provide for its people. I look forward to the day when all of Israel's neighbors in the Middle East will live side-by-side with Israel in peace."

The Foreign Operations Appropriations bill is one of 13 spending bills that Congress is required to pass each year.

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[Go back](#)