

# EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

CELEBRATING THE 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF ISRAEL'S INDEPENDENCE

**HON. CHARLES W. DENT**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 24, 2018*

Mr. DENT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in celebration of the 70th Independence Day of the State of Israel. On May 14, 1948, the State of Israel declared its independence from Britain after the expiration of the British Mandate. This declaration created the state of Israel as we recognize it today.

The land of Israel has been home to the Jewish people throughout history. Jewish heritage in the area can be traced back to the Iron Age when the Kingdom of Israel occupied the region. It is in this territory between the Mediterranean and Dead Seas Judaism was founded. Jews ruled Israel during some historical periods and were conquered during others. After many years of uncertainty, the Jewish people were recognized as the rightful occupants of Israel in 1948.

Israel began to establish itself immediately during its early history as a country; it was admitted to the United Nations on May 11, 1949, a little under a year since its inception. Persecuted Jews from around the world, including Holocaust survivors, immigrated to Israel and adopted it as home. Such mass migration gave Israel a population of nearly two million by 1958. A highlight during Israel's early period was the prosecution of Nazi war criminals, mainly the trial of Adolf Eichmann in 1961. The capture of Eichmann from Argentina and his subsequent trial in Israel led to an increased public awareness of Holocaust atrocities.

In the 1970's, Israel was forced to fight off many military threats from neighboring nations. These attacks prompted support from Israel's European and Western allies, strengthening the young nation's global relationships. Israel has been able to partner with two of its former adversaries, Egypt and Jordan, after these threats subsided. While hostility towards Israel still exists, significant progress towards peaceful relationships has been made in recent years.

The economy in Israel has become very highly developed since the late 20th century. The nation enjoys the highest standard of living in the Middle East and the 35th best GDP per capita in the world. This is the result of a diverse and robust economy. Israel is a global innovator of technology and has recently drawn comparisons to Silicon Valley as a result of its success. Israel is also one of the top producers of cut diamonds throughout the world, which accounts for nearly 12 percent of global production.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House to please join me in praising Israel's 70th anniversary as an independent nation. The United States and Israel have long maintained a friendly relationship based on shared values and mutual inter-

ests. May our bond continue to strengthen into the future, and may Israel continue to prosper in the Middle East for many years to come.

RETIREMENT OF DONNA PROSKE

**HON. DANIEL M. DONOVAN, JR.**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 24, 2018*

Mr. DONOVAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank Donna Proske for her remarkable career in the healthcare industry.

After graduating from Wagner College with her Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree, Donna Proske was hired as a nurse at Staten Island University Hospital, where she would spend her entire career. During her 30-plus years of service, she went from bedsides to the boardroom. Donna went from waiting on patients as a nurse to Chief Nurse Executive, COO, EVP, and finally Executive Director in 2013. Her commitment to service led to her recently receiving the Above and Beyond Award by New York's City & State publication.

Donna has also served when she was needed most. During Hurricane Irene, she was SIUH's Incident Commander and led the evacuation of the hospital. Moreover, during Superstorm Sandy, she and a barebones staff were able to keep the Emergency Department open even as the water threatened to flood the hospital. Thanks to her efforts, they were able to accept those injured from the hurricane, along with those who needed shelter.

Just a few of Donna's many accomplishments include her role in creating The Jerome L. Finkelstein, MD, Regional Burn Center, Staten Island University Hospital's cardiac surgery program, the Elizabeth A. Connelly Emergency and Trauma Center, and the Regina M. McGinn, MD, Education Center. For one person to have had such an instrumental part in establishing these vital projects is nothing short of astounding. However, her stellar record does not stop there. She has also received the North Shore-LIJ Health System Nursing Leadership Award, Women in Healthcare Award, and the Visiting Nursing Association's Smith Stanley Award. With such a well-decorated career, it is evident that Donna has truly given it her all at SIUH.

Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate Donna Proske on her prodigious career. She is the embodiment of a dedicated and selfless individual. I thank her for everything she has done for the Staten Island community, and I wish her the happiest of retirements.

TRIBUTE TO THE YMCA OF THE FOOTHILLS

**HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 24, 2018*

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the YMCA of the Foothills in La Cañada Flintridge, California upon its 60th anniversary.

In 1952, a small group of community leaders and parents were concerned about the lack of positive activities for youth in the foothills, and reached out to the Glendale YMCA for assistance in offering programs and events. Six years later, in a home in La Cañada, the Crescenta-Cañada Family YMCA opened; later renamed YMCA of the Foothills. In 1962, led by civic leaders Jack and Bob Samuelson and Scott McDonald, the community built what is now the Crescenta-Cañada YMCA facility in La Cañada. Having grown from an organization based around camping, the YMCA of the Foothills has expanded its operation to include a variety of programs and community activities with hundreds of participants and volunteers.

The YMCA of the Foothills' mission is to strengthen communities through social responsibility, healthy living and youth development, and to enrich the quality of life physically, mentally, spiritually and socially for all persons. For sixty years, they have done just that, by providing children and families with programs ranging from youth leadership, such as the Model United Nations program that teaches youth about global cooperation, healthy living and spiritual awareness to activities for senior citizens. Since the YMCA's inception, almost 4,000 children have been taught about health and fitness, nearly 5,000 girls and boys have learned to swim, and over 10,000 hours of emotional support have been given to help youth with issues such as childhood obesity and suicide prevention.

A lifeline to the community, the YMCA of the Foothills provides resources needed to address critical social issues such as housing, substance abuse, child welfare, education and employment. By uniting people from all walks of life, the YMCA seeks to motivate a spirit of service to be active in and work for positive social change in these and other areas of life.

Today, YMCA of the Foothills has three locations and serves more than 40,000 children, teens, families, and seniors in the Sunland, Tujunga, Sun Valley and northern Glendale areas, in addition to La Cañada Flintridge and La Crescenta. Under the leadership of President Tyler Wright, programs like the 2018 Arts Initiative that support children in their creativity and the Balance and Thrive Initiative to teach senior balance fitness have been launched. Additionally, with events such as the bike-athon, fiesta days and pancake breakfasts, the YMCA of the Foothills has become a center for community engagement.

I am proud to recognize the YMCA of the Foothills for sixty years of dedicated service to

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