

Members of Congress Urged to Stand in Solidarity with Jewish Community as Jewish American Heritage Month Begins

AJC and Lantos Foundation invite Representatives and Senators to join Solidarity Sabbath initiative

WASHINGTON, DC, USA, May 1, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Today, as Jewish American Heritage Month begins, American Jewish Committee (AJC) and the Lantos Foundation for Human Rights & Justice are launching a special initiative, the Congressional Solidarity Sabbath. This initiative invites all Members of Congress, regardless of

political party, religious tradition, or cultural background, to engage with the Jewish community in a meaningful way during the month of May. This could include participating in a Shabbat dinner, attending a service, visiting a synagogue, or hosting a roundtable with local Jewish

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leaders. These simple but powerful acts will stand as a sign of solidarity with the American Jewish community and with Jews throughout the world. It will also demonstrate Members’ sincere commitment to the continued fight against the scourge of antisemitism.

“Jewish American Heritage Month is an opportunity for all Americans to get to know and understand the diversity within the Jewish community,” said Ted Deutch, CEO of AJC. “Being Jewish is not just about religion, but also a people, culture, and group that has contributed so much throughout our nation's history. At a moment when the

American Jewish community is feeling excluded from and unwelcome in too many spaces, this month and initiative are more important than ever. I’m pleased to partner with the Lantos Foundation to bring this opportunity to Members of Congress. In AJC’s 25 regional offices around the country, we are here to help connect elected officials with local Jewish communities, this



month and long into the future.”

American history is filled with the contributions and service of American Jews, some more well-known than others. Over the past 370 years, Jewish Americans have served in government and the military, won Nobel prizes, headed universities and corporations, advanced medicine, created and performed in enduring works of performing and visual art, written great American novels, and become emblems of justice as members of the Supreme Court, among other contributions. The American Jewish experience, like that of other groups, is about so much more than standing up to hatred and bigotry.



The 2024 Solidarity Sabbath comes at a critical time, with the world experiencing a global surge in antisemitism and American Jews feeling alienated from their broader communities. From targeted attacks on Jewish institutions and local businesses, to the insidious spread of anti-Jewish speech online and on college campuses, antisemitism is causing American Jews to change their behavior out of fear. According to [AJC's State of Antisemitism in America 2023 Report](#):

- 63% of American Jews say the status of Jews in the U.S. is less secure compared to one year ago. In 2022, this number was 41%. In 2021, it was 31%.
- 46% of American Jews say they altered their behavior out of fear of antisemitism. In 2022, this number was 38% — a significant eight percentage point jump in one year.

“Where antisemitism flourishes, history has shown that other forms of prejudice, discrimination, and hate are never far behind,” said Katrina Lantos Swett, President of the Lantos Foundation. “As our namesake the late Congressman Tom Lantos famously said, ‘The veneer of civilization is paper thin. We are its guardians, and we can never rest.’ We hope that Members of Congress will answer our call to be such guardians and to stand in solidarity with the Jewish people this month. By taking a stand against antisemitism through the Solidarity Sabbath, each participating Member can help beat back the rising tide of many forms of hate.”

Members of Congress who would like to participate in the initiative have the entire month of May to do so, and many Members have already committed to take part. Any congressional offices seeking to connect with the Jewish community in their district or state can reach out to partnerships@ajc.org for assistance. Members of the media who would like a comprehensive list

of representatives and senators who will participate in the initiative can reach out to press@lantosfoundation.org.

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About the Lantos Foundation for Human Rights & Justice: The Lantos Foundation was established in 2008 to carry forward the legacy of Congressman Tom Lantos, the only Holocaust survivor ever elected to the U.S. Congress and a leading human rights champion. The Foundation works with a range of partners and often in cooperation with the U.S. Government on issues that span the globe. The Foundation's key areas of focus include human rights issues related to religious freedom, rule of law, internet freedom and activist art. The Foundation also administers the Lantos Congressional Fellows Program, supports human rights advocates, activists and artists through its Front Line Fund grant program, and awards the annual Lantos Human Rights Prize to honor and bring attention to heroes of the human rights movement. Past recipients of the Prize include His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Professor Elie Wiesel, Israeli President Shimon Peres, Iraqi Parliamentarian Vian Dakhil, Hong Kong Democracy activist Joshua Wong, Bill Browder, the founder of the Global Magnitsky Justice Campaign, founder of the Equal Justice Initiative Bryan Stevenson, NBA athlete turned activist Enes Kanter Freedom, among others. Visit www.lantosfoundation.org for more information.

About American Jewish Committee:

AJC is the global advocacy organization for the Jewish people. With headquarters in New York, 25 offices across the United States, 15 overseas posts, as well as partnerships with 38 Jewish community organizations worldwide, AJC's mission is to enhance the well-being of the Jewish people and Israel and to advance human rights and democratic values in the United States and around the world. For more, please visit www.ajc.org.

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