

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0908

June 21, 2023

The Honorable Antony Blinken
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20520

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
245 Murray Lane, SW
Washington D.C. 20528

Dear Secretaries Blinken and Mayorkas:

We write to express our support for efforts to include Israel in the Visa Waiver Program (VWP) and to encourage both the Department of State and the Department of Homeland Security to prioritize finalizing Israel's accession this year.

Approximately 450,000 Israelis travel annually to the U.S., and that number has been increasing each year. With 93 weekly direct flights from Israel to U.S. airports, there is already significant demand for travel. As such, Israel's participation in VWP would significantly increase the potential for both tourism and business travel.

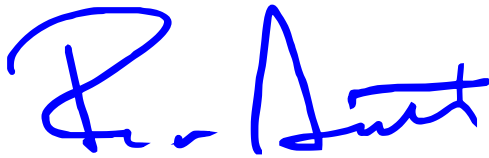
In pursuit of these benefits for both countries, the Department of State and the Department of Homeland Security – particularly Ambassador Nides and the entire staff at the U.S. Embassy in Israel – and the Government of Israel have all worked diligently to enable Israel's eligibility for VWP. In January, Israel's non-immigrant visa refusal rate fell below 3%, satisfying one key requirement of eligibility for the program, and since that time the Government of Israel has been working to implement the necessary technical requirements for inclusion. Finally, Israel's parliament has passed all of the legislation to facilitate requisite data sharing, which underscores Israel's commitment to meeting the necessary benchmarks and gaining admission into VWP.

We recognize that there are still outstanding issues that must be addressed before Israel's participation in the program can be finalized, and we urge both sides to continue working toward addressing these issues – including the reciprocal treatment of U.S. citizens - to ensure Israel's compliance with all program requirements before the deadline of September 30, 2023.

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We hope that the Department of State and the Department of Homeland Security will continue efforts to ensure that the momentum that has yielded the aforementioned progress is not lost, and that Israel's accession to VWP is finalized this year.

Sincerely,



Rick Scott
United States Senator



Jacky Rosen
United States Senator



John Thune
United States Senator



Patty Murray
United States Senator



James E. Risch
United States Senator



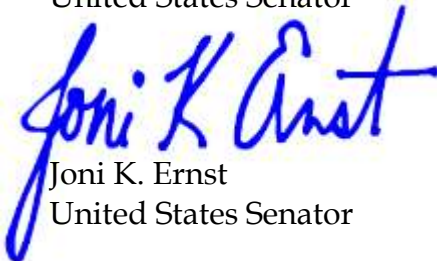
Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator



Roger F. Wicker
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator




Joni K. Ernst
United States Senator



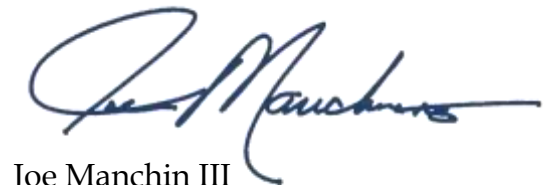
Maggie Hassan
United States Senator

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United States Senator


Alex Padilla
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Mike Braun
United States Senator


Joe Manchin III
United States Senator


Marco Rubio
United States Senator


Ron Wyden
United States Senator


Mike Crapo
United States Senator

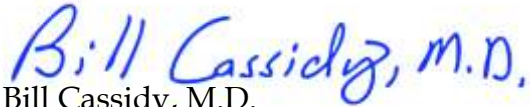

Kirsten E. Gillibrand
United States Senator


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United States Senator


John W. Hickenlooper
United States Senator


Shelley Moore Capito
United States Senator


Benjamin L. Cardin
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United States Senator



Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator



Thom Tillis
United States Senator



Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



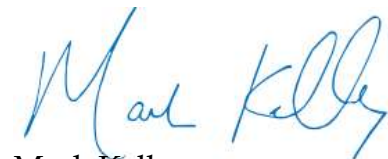
Jerry Moran
United States Senator



Catherine Cortez Masto
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John Hoeven
United States Senator



Mark Kelly
United States Senator



Kevin Cramer
United States Senator



John Fetterman
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Ted Cruz
United States Senator

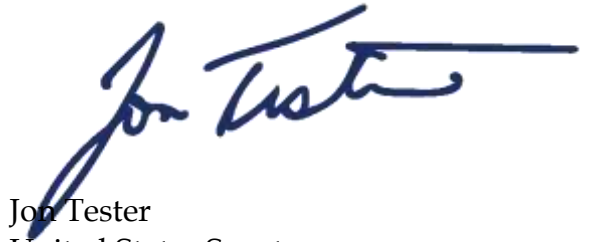


Kyrsten Sinema
United States Senator

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John Boozman
United States Senator



Jon Tester
United States Senator



Ted Budd
United States Senator



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United States Senator



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Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator



Marsha Blackburn
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



John Kennedy
United States Senator



Mark R. Warner
United States Senator



Tom Cotton
United States Senator



Christopher Murphy
United States Senator



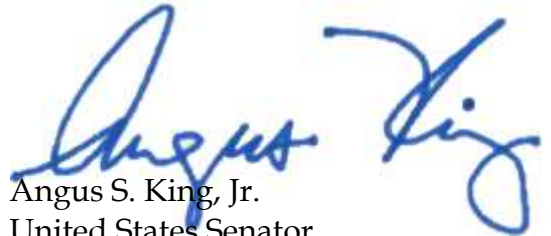
Katie Boyd Britt
United States Senator



Gary C. Peters
United States Senator



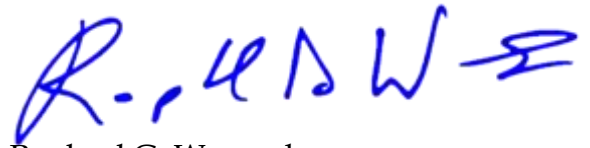
Steve Daines
United States Senator



Angus S. King, Jr.
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Bill Hagerty
United States Senator



Raphael G. Warnock
United States Senator



Pete Ricketts
United States Senator



Tim Scott
United States Senator



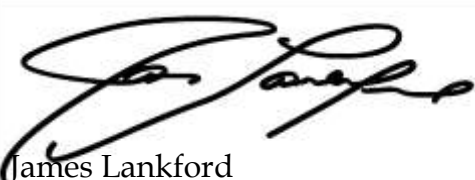
Mike Lee
United States Senator



Cindy Hyde-Smith
United States Senator



JD Vance
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James Lankford
United States Senator

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Markwayne Mullin
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Susan M. Collins
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United States Senator



Mitt Romney
United States Senator