Legislation Text

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Respectfully requesting the Prime Minister of Israel, The Honorable Benjamin Netanyahu, to maintain and support the Foreign Ministry of Israel's diplomatic mission in the United States by retaining The Consulate General of Israel to the Mid-Atlantic Region in Philadelphia.

WHEREAS, The Israeli Foreign Ministry is considering closing its Philadelphia Consulate; and

WHEREAS, The Consulate General of Israel established in Philadelphia 30 years ago is the official representative of the State of Israel to the U.S. Mid-Atlantic Region: Delaware, Kentucky, Southern New Jersey, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia. It serves as the liaison between the residents of the two regions and actively promotes exchanges in the fields of academia, culture, economy, politics, press relations, public diplomacy and social media; and

WHEREAS, The Jewish population in The Greater Philadelphia region is the 2nd largest on the East Coast and the 5th largest in the United States, serving as a vital foundation for strengthening the relations between the State of Israel and the United States; and

WHEREAS, According to the Greater Philadelphia Economic Impact Study prepared by Temple University Enterprise Management Consulting, there is a significant business and economic exchange occurring between the two regions; as of 2011, the total impact of Israel on the Greater Philadelphia region's economy was at least $1.6 Billion, including a minimum of $714 Million in economic activities generated by Israeli firms; and

WHEREAS, According to the Philadelphia-Israel Chamber of Commerce, 25% of all Israeli exports to the United States, accounting for $5 Billion in goods and services, pass through the Philadelphia region every year and new opportunities are being explored on a regular basis in life science, medical and energy exploration industries; and

WHEREAS, The strengthening of diplomatic, academic, and business ties between the City of Philadelphia and Israel was showcased during the November 2013 trade mission to Israel by Michael Nutter, Mayor of Philadelphia. Mayor Nutter held high level meetings with Shimon Peres, President of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu, Prime Minister of Israel, Ron Huldai, Mayor of Tel Aviv, and Nir Barkat, Mayor of Jerusalem; facilitated an exciting three-way academic partnership between Hebrew University, Drexel University, and the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia; and conducted numerous businesses and investment meetings; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby respectfully requests the Prime Minister of Israel, The Honorable Benjamin Netanyahu, to maintain and support the Foreign Ministry of Israel's diplomatic mission in the United States by retaining The Consulate General of Israel to the Mid-Atlantic Region in Philadelphia.