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Funds Will Bolster Israeli Military, Provide Economic Assistance

Washington, DC - Congressman Steve Rothman (D-Fair Lawn), working closely with his colleagues on the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, moved the Fiscal Year 2005 foreign aid bill through the U.S. House of Representatives last week. The bill includes \$2.22 billion in military assistance and \$360 million in economic aid 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 Jewish refugees in the State of Israel. The measure also maintains past restrictions on aid to the Palestinian Authority.

Rothman said, "Israel is the United States' number one ally in the Middle East, friend of 56 years, invaluable military partner, and the only democracy in the region. She is very worthy of this foreign aid package. I am pleased that I was able to work with my colleagues on the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, which recommends all the foreign aid for the U.S., to get the House to approve this large aid package for Israel."

"Israel must do whatever is necessary to protect itself and its people while continuing to have the unequivocal support of the United States," Rothman said. "By providing Israel with the largest amount of U.S. foreign aid allocated to any country in the world, the United States is demonstrating, in a very clear way, the importance of America's friendship and strategic partnership with the State of Israel."

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

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