



Testimony in Support of the Ohio-Israel Trade and Innovation Partnership Act (HB 188)

Committee: House Development Committee

Submitted by: Jewish Federations of North America

5/2/2025

Chairman Hoops, Vice Chair Lorenz, Ranking Member Abdullahi, and Esteemed Members of the Committee:

My name is Jason Wuliger, and I am the Chair of the Public Affairs Committee of the Jewish Federations of North America as well as a proud resident of Northeast Ohio. On behalf of **Jewish Federations**, I am honored to offer our strong support for HB 188, which seeks to establish the *Ohio-Israel Trade and Innovation Partnership*.

As the national umbrella organization representing over 146 Jewish Federations and communities across North America—including 8 strong, vibrant Jewish Federations throughout the state of Ohio—we applaud the Ohio General Assembly for its foresight in proposing a long-term, strategic initiative to deepen ties between the State of Ohio and the State of Israel. This partnership embodies shared values, mutual benefit, and the promise of innovation-driven economic growth.

As one of the most innovative economies in the world, Israel offers unmatched expertise in key sectors such as water technology, cybersecurity, agricultural science, and life sciences. Ohio's strengths in advanced manufacturing, logistics, research institutions, and workforce development make it a natural partner for Israel's global economic outreach.

This legislation creates a formal, durable mechanism to promote:

- **Bilateral trade and investment** that fuels Ohio's economy and supports job creation;
- **Collaborations in emerging technology**, helping Ohio businesses access Israeli innovations and vice versa;
- **Academic and business exchanges**, offering opportunities for students, researchers, and entrepreneurs to share knowledge and build lasting relationships;
- **Multilateral partnerships**, allowing Ohio to serve as a gateway for Israeli partnerships with the broader U.S. market and other global regions.

We are particularly encouraged by the inclusive and balanced composition of the proposed Partnership. It includes leaders from both parties, the private sector, higher education, and the nonprofit community—including a designated seat for the Ohio Jewish Communities, a valued partner of Jewish Federations of North America. This ensures that the Ohio-Israel Trade and



Innovation Partnership benefits from a broad range of expertise and reflects the diverse, bipartisan voices that make Ohio strong.

The proposed \$5 million annual appropriation is a prudent and forward-thinking investment. Other states with similar initiatives have seen measurable returns in terms of trade volume, startup activity, and foreign direct investment.

Jewish Federations are proud to support this legislation. It honors Ohio's longstanding commitment to its Jewish communities, while positioning the state as a leader in innovation and international cooperation. We believe this partnership will serve as a national model for constructive, bipartisan global engagement.

We respectfully urge the committee to pass this bill and fund the proposed partnership fully. It is a strong investment in Ohio's future and a testament to the enduring bonds between the people of Ohio and the people of Israel.

I would also like to express Jewish Federations' deep appreciation to Representatives Hall and Synenberg and the rest of the bipartisan cosponsors for leading this crucial initiative. Thank you for your leadership and for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

Sincerely,

Jason Wuliger
Chair, Public Affairs Committee
Jewish Federations of North America