

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 27, 2009

The Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Clinton:

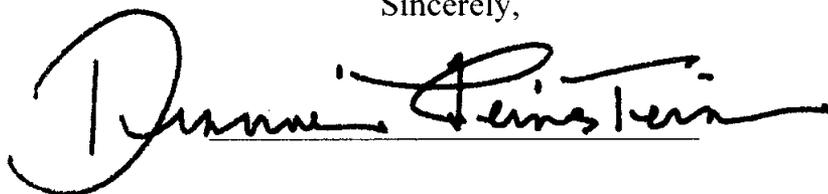
We are writing to applaud your decision to travel to Israel and the West Bank next week. Your trip sends another important signal of the Obama Administration's seriousness about dealing with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Last month, while announcing Senator Mitchell's appointment as Special Middle East Peace Envoy, President Obama stated that it "will be the policy of my administration to actively and aggressively seek a lasting peace between Israel and the Palestinians, as well as Israel and its Arab neighbors."

At that same ceremony, you expressed your own commitment to Israel-Palestinian peace, noting that Senator Mitchell's mission will be to "lead our efforts to reinvigorate the process for achieving peace between Israel and its neighbors... [to] help us to develop an integrated strategy that defends the security of Israel, works to bring an end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that will result in two states, living side by side in peace and security, and to achieve further agreements to promote peace and security between Israel and its Arab neighbors" and "to support the objectives that the President and I believe are critical and pressing in Gaza, to develop a program for humanitarian aid and eventual reconstruction, working with the Palestinian Authority and Israel on behalf of those objectives."

We commend both you and President Obama for these statements and we urge you to use your upcoming visit to Israel and the West Bank to underscore your personal commitment, and that of President Obama, to Israel's security and to achieving Israeli-Palestinian peace. Both are vital U.S. national security interests that must not be neglected. The continuing launching of rockets from Gaza into Israel, the humanitarian crisis in Gaza, and the ongoing challenge of formalizing an Israel-Hamas truce, underscore the importance of tenacious American leadership and engagement, now and in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dennis Feinstein". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "D" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Art Bond

~~Art Bond~~

Bob Carey, Jr.

Jeffrey A. Mundy

Dick Durbin

David Vitter

Ben Cardin

Tom Harkin

Mary Gandy

Ron Wyden

Chris Dodd

Carl Levin

Sheldon Brown

Olympic Smoot

George V. Voinovich

Thomas R. Carper

Kam Feingold

to Benjamin Nelson

Amy Klobuchar

Byron

Patty Murray

Maria Cantwell

Jan Tuck

Phil Boych

Arlen Dean

Jay Rostyler

Susan M Collins

Daniel K. Skaca

William

Frank R. Lautenberg

Paul Cohen