

States-to-State Relations

The United States-Israel relationship extends beyond only the national level and incorporates collaboration and coordination on the state level as well.

In 2012, at least thirty-three (33) states and the District of Columbia had either established bilateral organizations with various branches of government in Israel or had signed formal agreements with the Jewish state. The various bilateral organizations include chambers of commerce - organizations that seek to incorporate Israeli businesses and develop innovative technologies to bolster the economy of individual states - as well as technology collaboratives and university-based research institutes. Formal agreements and memoranda of understanding include everything from promoting tourism to improving trade relations to exchanging scientists at research institutes.

Listed below are general summaries of each state's formal agreements with Israel. Click on any state for a more detailed listing of their cooperation with Israel.

[Alabama](#)

Formal Agreements:

- 1997: Gov. Fob James led a trade mission to Israel and signed a formal [Memorandum of Intent](#) to promote and improve trade relations, encourage investments and technology transfers and promote the exchange of ideas and company representatives, engineers, scientists and other specialists.

[California](#)

Formal Agreements:

- November 2009: Assemblyman Bob Blumenfield (D-San Fernando Valley) officially signed AB 1032 calling for an immediate Memorandum of Understanding between California and Israel to foster technology development, business development and educational opportunities in solar energy and the environmental technology industries.

- June 2008: Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the International Institute for Counter-Terrorism (ICT) in Herzliyah, Israel to tighten cooperation and existing relations between ICT and the City of LA's homeland security apparatuses. The LAPD and the LA-World Airports would receive new training and education programs on counter terrorism.

- October 1999: Gov. Gray Davis visited Israel and signed a [Memorandum of Understanding](#) for cooperation in the area of biotechnology, bio-informatics and bio-agriculture so as to create an increased commercial and research linkages.

- May 1998: Gov. Wilson and Israeli Minister of Trade and Industry Natan Sharansky signed a [Memorandum of Intent](#) to encourage the growth of trade and investment relations with the prospect of expanding the growing economic cooperation between California and Israel.

Bilateral Organizations:

- *California Israel Technology Collaborative*: Founded by alumni and faculty of UCLA, CAL-I-TC is based on finding and encouraging opportunities for high technology transfers and innovation. It encourages partnerships between the major Israeli universities and the California business and investment communities.

- *California Israel Chamber of Commerce*: The CICC is dedicated to strengthening business and trade relations between California and Israel.

- *Southern California Israel Chamber of Commerce*: The SCICC is dedicated to fostering bilateral business, trade and investment opportunities between Southern California- primarily cities such as Los Angeles and San Diego- and Israel.

Colorado

Formal Agreements:

- July 2010: Gov. Bill Ritter signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Jacob Blaustein Institutes for Desert Research (BIDR) in Israel's Negev desert with the stated goal being to "encourage voluntary interaction and cooperation and to promote friendship between the two parties for their mutual benefit."

- July 2010: Department of Natural Resources and Agriculture signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Desert Agro Research Center in Israel that is focused on water and agriculture research and development in arid and semi-arid climates.

- July 2010: Colorado School of Mines established workforce-development ties with the Israel Institute of Technology (Technion) to help develop the discovery of a vast natural gas reserve off Israel's coast.

Bilateral Organizations:

- *Colorado Israel Chamber of Commerce*: The CICC helps foster economic and business development opportunities between Colorado and Israel.

Connecticut

Bilateral Organizations:

- *Connecticut Israel Exchange Commission*: CONNIX was established in 1998 by Gov. William O'Neill to help expand economic, scientific, educational, technological, commercial, industrial and cultural cooperation and exchange. It no longer receives state funding though David Baram is hoping to resurrect the commission.

District of Columbia (Washington, DC)

Bilateral Organizations:

- *US Israel Business Initiative*: The first DC-based effort to advanced and strengthen US-Israel commercial relations at all levels. Formed by the US Chamber of Commerce.

Florida**Formal Agreements:**

- March 2011: Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer facilitated the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding for international collaboration and strategic relations between the Florida Hospital and Sheba Medical Center at Tel HaShomer. Among the many areas of collaboration are robotic surgical training, medical simulation, and stem cell transplant.

Bilateral Organizations:

- *Florida-Israel Institute*: The Florida legislature created FII to enhance educational, research, economic and cultural exchanges between Florida and Israel. It is administered by Florida Atlantic University and Broward Community College.

- *Florida Israel Business Forum*: The FIBF's mission is to actively promote bilateral trade, commerce, and economic relations between Florida and Israel.

- *America Israel Chamber, Florida Chapter*: The Florida Chapter of the AIC sponsors events and offers networking opportunities that promote and enhance business-to-business connections between Florida and Israel. The Chamber assists in promoting trade and joint business ventures between Israel and Florida.

Georgia**Bilateral Organizations:**

- *Georgia-Israel Exchange*: Gov. Zell Miller created GIE in 1992 to explore emerging technology in both industry and agriculture, enhance trade, encourage tourism and jointly participate in economic development programs.

- *Georgia Department of Economic Development, Israel Office*: The GDED promotes trade, investment, and tourism in Israel through its office located in Jerusalem.

- *American Israel Chamber of Commerce, Southeast Division*: Based in Atlanta, the SE Division of AICC helps Israeli businesses explore new markets and develop business relationships with companies in Georgia as well as Alabama, Mississippi, North and South Carolina and Tennessee.

Hawaii**Formal Agreements:**

- December 2008: Governor Linda Lingle and Shai Agassi, CEO of Better Place, signed a Memorandum of Understanding centered on a plan to bring an electric-car network to Hawai'i, thus creating a model for the adoption of electric cars in the U.S.
- May 2004: Gov. Lingle signed a Memorandum of Understanding between the state of Hawaii and Israel to encourage cooperation concerning agriculture and aquaculture research and development.

Illinois

Formal Agreements:

- June 2006: Illinois and Israel signed an MOU committing both sides to enhancing joint technology research and development in the homeland security sector.
- 1988: Gov. James Thompson signed a Memorandum of Intent that created the Illinois-Israel Initiative, which calls for projects of mutual economic benefit through improved trade, technology development, science, agriculture and tourism.

Bilateral Organizations:

- *Chicago Israel Business Initiative*: CIBI seeks to leverage cooperation between the city of Chicago with the Israel Trade and Investment Center to encourage Israel-based businesses to locate their North American headquarters in the immediate Chicago area.
- *American Israel Chamber of Commerce, Chicago*: The AICC-C is tasked with developing business relationships between Illinois and Israeli companies.

Indiana

Bilateral Organizations:

- *Indiana Economic Development Corporation, Eastern Mediterranean Office*: Headed by American oleh to Israel, Sherwin Pomerantz, the IEDC-EM looks to match companies in Indiana and Israel to develop joint business ventures and bilateral trade to enhance the economies of both states.

Louisiana

Bilateral Organizations:

- *World Trade Center of New Orleans*: Though not exclusively setup to deal with trade between Louisiana and Israel, the WTC New Orleans has facilitated the expansion of at least nine Louisiana-based companies into Israel.

Maryland

Formal Agreements:

- November 2006: The Office of the Governor signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Israeli Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labor that focuses on bilateral cooperation in private sector industrial research and development.
- 2004: Israel and Maryland entered into a Memorandum of Understanding to create the Maryland-Israel Development Fund (MIDF) that supports collaborative technology development and commercialization conducted in partnership between Maryland and Israeli businesses.
- November 2003: Governor Bob Ehrlich signed a cooperative agreement to establish the Maryland-Israel Homeland Security Partnership. The partnership will allow homeland security professionals from Maryland and Israel to share "best practices" used to respond to terror threats.
- November 2003: Gov Ehrlich signed a partnership with the Israeli Ministry of Agriculture to establish the Collaborative Marine Biotechnology R&D Program.
- May 1988: Governor William Donald Schaefer signed the Maryland-Israel Exchange which was designed to develop and expand ventures in the fields of trade, tourism, science and technology, communications, agriculture, aquaculture and transportation.

Bilateral Organizations:

- *Maryland Israel Development Center*: MIDC promotes trade and investment and fosters bilateral economic development between Israel and Maryland.
- *Maryland Israel Collaborative Marine Biotechnology Research and Development Program*: Established by Gov. Ehrlich, the R&D partnership puts together the University of Maryland's Biotechnology Institute (UMBI) with a number of Israeli research institutions through the guidance of administration of BARD. The program promotes collaborative aquaculture research that are of mutual benefit to both Maryland and Israel for various shared aquaculture and marine biology challenges.

Massachusetts

Formal Agreements:

- March 2011: Governor Deval Patrick and Israeli Chief Scientist Avi Hasson signed a memorandum of understanding that will allow for further collaboration in research and development (R&D) programs between Massachusetts and Israeli companies.
- March 2011: Housing and Economic Development Secretary Greg Bialecki announced a collaboration between UMass Lowell's NanoManufacturing Center of Excellence and Shenkar College of Engineering and Design in Israel. Researchers at both institutions will investigate fabrication processes for materials with potential to reduce costs for maintaining and servicing aircraft.
- June 2008: Massachusetts lawmakers approved a \$1 million life sciences initiative that would authorize joint academic and industrial research and business exchanges with Israel and calls for the creation of trade



facilities for pilot projects with the Government of Israel and the Boston Haifa International Life Sciences Institute.

- May 1987: The Massachusetts Office of International Trade and Investment signed a general accord with the State of Israel to stimulate trade, investment, education and medicine collaboration between the two regions.

Bilateral Organizations:

- *New England Israel Business Council*: The NEIBC provides a variety of formal and informal venues for networking, for making connections between Israel and New England people and companies and for seeking advice on doing business in these two regions. NEIBC hosts annual business summits and also setups various other conferences.

- *Boston Israel Cleantech Alliance*: BICA connects cleantech investors, entrepreneurs, academic researchers and government officials in Israel and Boston. Among their main objectives, BICA aims to foster increased economic, scientific, and educational relations between Boston and the State of Israel.

Michigan

Formal Agreements:

- February 2011: Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine in Rochester signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Emek Medical Center in Haifa that encourages collaborative research and the sharing of scientific knowledge between the two institutions and leveraging the medical expertise of both institutions to advance the science and practice of medicine.

- November 2008: Governor Jennifer Granholm signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Israeli Deputy Prime Minister Eli Yishai to establish a working group between the two governments that will focus on energy efficiency and technology that will improve water quality and increase water re-use.

- 1988: The Michigan-Israel Technology Venture was established to foster exchanges of information and technology, and an Economic Development Cooperative Agreement was signed the same year to promote trade and investment.

Bilateral Organizations:

- *Michigan Israel Business Bridge*: The MIBB was established to facilitate business and investment opportunities between Michigan and Israel for their mutual economic benefit. MIBB brings new business to Michigan and creates jobs by encouraging Israeli businesses with new technologies to establish their North American business centers in Michigan.

Minnesota

Formal Agreements:

- 1987: Gov. Rudy Perpich established the Minnesota-Israel Exchange (MNIX) to foster cooperation and promote trade, investment, science and industry.

Bilateral Organizations:

- *American Israel Chamber of Commerce & Industry of Minnesota*: AICCM serves its members by being the best resource and catalyst for developing strategic alliances between the business communities of Minnesota and Israel. The Chamber's goal is to provide services to companies in Minnesota and Israel who want to do business together.

Missouri

Formal Agreements:

- 1988: Gov. James Thompson signed a Memorandum of Intent that created the Missouri-Israel Initiative calling for projects of mutual economic benefit through improved trade, technology development, science, agriculture and tourism.

Nebraska

Formal Agreements:

- 1993: Governor Ben Nelson signed a [*Memorandum of Understanding*](#) to promote trade and exchanges related to agriculture.

New Jersey

Formal Agreements:

- October 2003: Governor James McGreevey and Vice Prime Minister Ehud Olmert signed an MOU officially declaring collaboration in the Life Sciences.

- November 1996: Memorandum of Intent concerning a joint Israel-New Jersey Program to Promote the Establishment of Environmental Management Systems.

- November 1996: MOU between the Commission on Science and Technology of the State of New Jersey and The Ministry of Science of the State of Israel.

- November 1996: The New Jersey-Israel Cultural Cooperation Committee Memorandum of Intent.

Bilateral Organizations:

- *New Jersey Israel Commission*: Established in 1988, the NJIC fosters and enhances the relationship between New Jersey and the State of Israel with regard to economic development and bi-lateral trade, education and culture and tourism.



- *New Jersey Department of Commerce and Economic Development, Israel Office*: The DCED branch located in Ra'anana has successfully negotiated tens of economic schemes between New Jersey and Israel, principally in the high-tech arena. Several American-based companies working with Israel have relocated to New Jersey, in order to enjoy the benefits available through these offices.

New Mexico

Formal Agreements:

- June 2008: Gov Bill Richardson signed an agreement of cooperation with Israeli Minister of Industry Eli Yishai that spells out a process to create strategic partnerships to cooperate on the advancement of joint water and energy technologies.

Bilateral Organizations:

- *New Mexico-Israel Business Exchange* - This new bilateral institution is building a dynamic network of people and organizations from New Mexico and Israel with innovative products, demonstrated know-how, and adaptive problem solving strategies. The mission of the NMIBE is to raise awareness of Israel's entrepreneurial activities within New Mexico, to offer support to individuals and organizations interested in pursuing opportunities with Israeli businesses and organizations to encourage collaborative relationships between New Mexico and Israeli companies, and to improve the environment for successful business ventures.

New York

Formal Agreements:

- September 2009: Gov. David Patterson signed an MOU with Israel's Industry, Trade and Labor Minister Binyamin Ben-Eliezer on industrial R&D cooperation in the areas of nanotechnology, biotechnology, and public and internal security.

- 1989: Gov. Mario Cuomo created the International Partnership Program to promote exchanges with Israel in culture, tourism and economic development.

Bilateral Organizations:

- *American Israel Chamber of Commerce of Industry, New York Office*: The AICCI is devoted to bringing US and Israeli businesses together while advocating for policies that encourage investment, increase the flow of trade, investment and transfer of technology between Israel and the US.

North Carolina

Formal Agreements:

- 1994: Gov. Jim Hunt established an International Commission that includes task forces to stimulate trade and exchanges with Israel in business, academia, arts and culture, education and social services. The North Carolina-Israel Partnership (NCIP) was created in 1996 to manage the cooperative projects.
- 1993: The governments of North Carolina and Israel signed a far reaching and broad agreement that led to the establishment in 1996 of North Carolina-Israel Development Centers in both places as well as an Israeli center for people with autism based on a North Carolina model.

North Dakota

Formal Agreements:

- May 2008: The Energy & Environmental Research Center (EERC) at the University of North Dakota announced the development of a long-term partnership with Israel to address critical energy security issues facing both Israel and the United States.

Ohio

Formal Agreements:

- June 2010: Ohio Clean Technologies Group signed an MOU with LN Green Technologies Incubator in Haifa which outlines a plan for Ohio Clean Technologies and LN Green Technological to cooperate and share resources with the objective of bringing new alternative energy technological applications to market in the United States.
- September 2009: The Dayton region and the Israeli city of Haifa signed a memorandum of understanding aimed at boosting economic development in both locations.
- February 2006: The city of Akron earmarked a \$1.5 million investment from local public and private sources in a Netanya-based technological incubator. In exchange for the investment, any companies that are created from the incubator will then base their US headquarters in Akron, a move which will provide local jobs and income tax to the city, plus dividends from part ownership in the companies.

Bilateral Organizations:

- *Ohio Israel Agricultural Initiative*: Launched by the Negev Foundation with help from Senator George Voinovich, the OIAI was established to improve agricultural trade and development between Israel and the state of Ohio through the farmers, research institutions and trade associations of both places.
- *Ohio Israel Chamber of Commerce*: The OICC is an enterprise solutions provider that works to create collaborative relationships between companies seeking to commercialize technologies in both places.
- *Dayton Region Israel Trade Alliance*: The DRIT Alliance seeks to identify and assist in realizing opportunities for sustainable business collaboration between Israel and communities in the Dayton region of Ohio.



Oklahoma

Bilateral Organizations:

- *Oklahoma-Israel Exchange*: OKIE was created by Gov. David Walters to stimulate mutually beneficial projects. In 1994, the legislature established a permanent OKIE Commission to develop joint projects in energy, agriculture, trade, water use and conservation, and cultural and educational exchanges.

Oregon

Formal Agreements:

- October 2010: Governor Ted Kulongoski signed an MOU with Israel "to develop and strengthen economic, industrial, technological and commercial cooperation".

Bilateral Organizations:

- *Oregon Israel Business Alliance*: OIBA was formed through the leadership of Governor Ted Kulongoski and various Israeli government officials and seeks to leverage cooperation between the states in forestry and water technology.

Pennsylvania

Formal Agreements:

- June 1997: Governor Tom Ridge signed Pennsylvania's first cooperative agreement with Israel to "seek to enhance technological research and economic development as well as to increase cultural awareness in order to promote a deeper understanding of shared values through the economy, arts, technology and education."

Bilateral Organizations:

- *America Israel Chamber of Commerce, Central Atlantic Region*: AICC-CAR seeks to further business relationships between companies in the Greater Philadelphia Region and Israel. Serves locations throughout Pennsylvania and even in bordering states.

South Carolina

Formal Agreements:

- 1992: Gov. Carroll Campbell, Jr. signed a [*Memorandum of Intent*](#) to establish a South Carolina-Israel Exchange to promote trade, investment, agriculture, education and tourism.

Bilateral Organizations:

- *American-Israel Chamber of Commerce Southeast Division* - Though based in Atlanta, the Southeast Division of the AICC was established in 1992 to help Israeli businesses explore new markets and develop

business relationships with companies in Georgia as well as South Carolina, Alabama, Mississippi, North Carolina and Tennessee. AICC-SD boasts over 450 members today and has earned the reputation as one of the most successful and effective bi-national business organizations in the United States. Since its founding, AICC-SD has been involved in completed transactions valued at over \$700 million, thereby contributing to the economies of both Israel and the Southeastern United States.

- *South Carolina-Israel Collaboration* - Launched in January 2012, this major joint program will coordinate cooperation between South Carolina and Israel around six relevant areas: biomedical, advanced materials, sustainable systems, transportation, defense/security, and insurance/health IT. The Collaboration will strengthen existing SC-Israel business and research relationships, work to create new partnerships, and raise awareness of this collaboration on both sides.

South Dakota

Formal Agreements:

- September 2009: Rapid City Economic Development Partnership signed an MOU with the Israeli weapons manufacturing company, TDI Arms, to open a plant in the city and create a number of new full time positions for South Dakota residents.

Tennessee

Formal Agreements:

- 1996: Gov. Don Sundquist signed the Tennessee-Israel Cooperation Agreement to promote cooperation between the two countries in trade, arts, culture, education, tourism and university/industry alliances.

Texas

Formal Agreements:

- December 2010: University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center entered into a cooperative agreement with the Rabin Medical Center in Israel to collaborate on faculty and student exchange programs, as well as the development of joint studies, research and training activities, and other educational programs of mutual interest.

- 2002: MOU was signed to foster collaborative practical and applied research between agricultural scientists areas of high priority to both Texas and Israel.

- 1992: A Memorandum of Intent was signed between the two governments with a focus to broaden the Texas-Israel SemiArid Fund (see 1985), encourage greater participation and to prove, through applied research, that the similarities in agriculture between Texas and Israel can be a lesson for both partners.

- 1985: Texas-Israel Semi-Arid partnership was created after the signing of an MOU between the Texas Department of Agriculture and the Ministry of Agriculture of the State of Israel to work together on projects of mutual agricultural benefit to the peoples of Israel and Texas.



Bilateral Organizations:

- *Texas Israel Chamber of Commerce*: TICC's aim is to boost the economies of Texas and Israel by helping member companies develop important business relationships with each other and explore new market opportunities. The Chamber is strongly supported by Gov Rick Perry of Texas as well as by Israel's Ministry of Industry, Trade, and Labor.
- *Texas Israel Exchange*: TIE was created in 1984 to promote mutually beneficial agriculture R&D and to foster the expansion of trade between the states.
- *Texas BARD Program*: Texas-BARD is an offshoot of the BARD Fund that looks to exclusively develop solutions to mutual agricultural problems that will in turn foster the development of trade, mutual assistance, and business relations between Texas and Israel.

Vermont**Bilateral Organizations:**

- *Vermont Israel Agricultural Exchange*: VIAE promotes agricultural research and cooperation in such areas as the treatment of Mastitis (a cattle disease), genetic engineering, aquaculture, integrated pest management and sustainable agriculture. The State allocates approximately \$10,000 for VIAE, which is run out of the Department of Agriculture.

Virginia**Formal Agreements:**

- September 2008: Gov Timothy M. Kaine and Ambassador of Israel Sallai Meridor signed an agreement to strengthen bilateral cooperation between the Commonwealth of Virginia and the State of Israel on private sector industrial research and development.

Bilateral Organizations:

- *Virginia Israel Advisory Board*: VIAB serves as the bridge for Israeli companies who want to establish and/or expand their business in the USA and locate in Virginia.
- *Virginia Israel Commission*: VIC is dedicated to investigating the cultural, educational and economic development opportunities between the two states.
- *Norfolk Program/Tochnit Norfolk*: Seeks to lure Israeli companies to Norfolk, home to the worlds largest naval base, by using incentives for collaboration between Israeli companies and Norfolk-based companies.
- *Virginia Israel Technology Alliance*: VITAL's mission is designed to help post-incubator, commercial-ready Israeli companies build strong foundations for growth in the U.S., and bring their products to market in Virginia.

- *US Israel Business Exchange*: Based in Vienna, US-IBEX is an independent, non-profit organization. It was created as an initiative of the Embassy of Israel in collaboration with the Greater DC business community in March 2000 to help Israeli and American companies to create opportunities for collaboration.

Washington

Bilateral Organizations:

- *Washington Israel Business Council*: WIBC's mission is to support economic growth in Israel and Washington State through stimulation and promotion of mutual commercial and educational collaboration.

Wisconsin

Formal Agreements:

- November 2009: Governor Jim Doyle and Israeli Minister of Industry, Trade and Labor Benjamin Ben-Eliezer signed a memorandum of understanding and a bilateral cooperative trade agreement with the hopes of promoting collaboration and a strong working relationship between Wisconsin and Israel in research and development.

Bilateral Organizations:

- *Wisconsin Department of Commerce, Global Ventures, Israel*: Formed in December 2010, the DOC Global Ventures office builds and strengthens bilateral ties with Israel.

- *Committee for Economic Growth of Israel*: CEGI was established to help expand and grow trade between Israel and the state of Wisconsin, in particular, and the entire US in general. It deals with business promotion in both Wisconsin and Israel, much the same as the various Chambers of Commerce.