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August 6, 2014

Ambassador Ron Dermer
Embassy of Israel
3514 International Drive N.W.
Washington, DC 20008

Dear Ambassador,

Today, many of my fellow members of the Pennsylvania Legislature have written you pledging their support of Israel in its pursuit of protecting its citizens during Operation Protective Edge. I also write to pledge my support, but I want to take this opportunity to touch on a subject that is close to my specific district.

I want to write specifically to raise awareness to the fact that Israel's actions are not only in the defense of the innocent Israeli civilians who are under constant rocket fire from Hamas, but Israel's actions occur in the name of protection of society as a whole. I want to make clear my belief that any sovereign nation, when fired upon by an enemy, especially an enemy such as the terrorist organization Hamas, has a clear moral right to respond appropriately. Many Israeli soldiers have paid the ultimate sacrifice in this conflict and that recognition leads me to the crux of my letter.

Mr. Ambassador, I want to personally thank you for your nation's treatment of the thousands of "Lone Soldiers" fighting for the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) in the name of Democracy. The Lone Soldier Center website describes these soldiers this way:

"A 'lone soldier' is a soldier in the IDF with no family in Israel to support him or her: a new immigrant, a volunteer from abroad, an orphan or an individual from a broken home.

Every day tens of thousands of soldiers are defending the State of Israel and its citizens. These soldiers regularly spend weekends and holidays at home where their parents provide for all of their needs; food, laundry, and even a hug. For more than 5700 lone soldiers, there is no immediate family in Israel to support them. Though highly motivated

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and proud to serve, when on leave, many of them struggle to fulfill their most basic needs."

Your National Hero, and my former constituent, Michael Levin, was one of these Lone Soldiers who ultimately gave his life in the service of Israel. In fact, and I'm sure you're aware, Israel's Lone Soldier Center was built in honor of Michael. I've had the honor of not only travelling to Israel twice and visiting his grave at Mt. Herzl, but to sit down with his parents for a discussion about the Israeli Military's treatment of Michael and other Lone Soldiers.

These young men and women are fighting for their country, they're fighting for their people, and more importantly, whether my nation and the rest of the free world recognizes it or not, they're fighting on behalf of us all against those terrorists who wish to divide us.

Again, I want to thank you for your nation's treatment of these lone soldiers, and I stand steadfast in support of Operation Protective Edge. The fight against terrorism is a global fight, and the plight of the Jewish people is an honorable one. May god bless the shining star of democracy in the Middle East today, and in the years to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert M. Tomlinson".

Robert M. Tomlinson
Senator, 6th District