

TRIBUTE TO HADASSAH

HON. HOWARD L. BERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 26, 2002

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America, on its 90th anniversary. I have enormous professional respect for Hadassah, I also have a deep personal affinity: my mother was a very active member, and some of my other relatives were officers in important Hadassah chapters.

Founded in 1912 by Henrietta Szold, Hadassah has become the largest women's and largest Jewish membership organization in the United States, with over 300,000 active members in all 50 states.

Hadassah's greatest achievement is its network of world-renowned medical and educational institutions in Israel. Their flagship project, the Hadassah Medical Organization, provides the highest quality health care to more than 600,000 patients a year from throughout the Middle East—regardless of race, religion or nationality—and is a resource for training health care professionals around the world. It also supports a variety of world-class research projects that have resulted in significant medical advances, particularly in the areas of breast cancer and the treatment of various genetic disorders. Over the years I have strongly supported the U.S. Agency for International Development's American Schools and Hospitals Abroad program, which provides a key source of funding for Hadassah's health care activities.

In addition to their outstanding work in Israel, Hadassah supports many important health, education and women's initiatives here in the U.S. These include a nationwide breast cancer awareness and detection campaign, Jewish family programs, and efforts to promote greater civic participation and awareness of key public policy issues. Through these activities, Hadassah's devoted volunteers strengthen our partnership with Israel, promote the unity of the Jewish people, and truly change people's lives.

I commend Hadassah for its excellent work over the past ninety years, and look forward to continuing my work with the organization to ensure an even brighter future.

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Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 90th anniversary of the founding of Hadassah. With over 300,000 members worldwide, Hadassah is both the largest women's organization and largest Jewish organization in American history.

Founded in 1912 by Jewish scholar and activist Henrietta Szold, Hadassah has evolved as a leading volunteer women's organization, committed to Israel, Jewish continuity and American ideals.

In Israel, the Hadassah Medical Organization in Jerusalem has become a world-renowned center of medical excellence. With

two hospitals, five schools, outpatient clinics, research facilities and a community health center, Hadassah is a lifeline for Israeli families and an important partner with the United States in medical research and training.

Sadly, the deterioration of the situation in the Middle East has also made the Hadassah hospital into the premiere trauma center for the victims of the vicious suicide attacks by Palestinian terrorist groups. Reconstructing bodies and healing wounds, the Hadassah doctors and nurses have saved numerous lives and restored the futures of many youth wounded in these gruesome attacks.

Hadassah's work also extends worldwide, with its nurses and doctors dispatched to work with refugees in Rwanda and to treat victims from the terrorist bomb blast at the Jewish community center in Buenos Aires.

Here in the United States, Hadassah is committed to health awareness for its members and for women and girls in underprivileged communities. Hadassah organizes education and screening for diseases like breast cancer and osteoporosis. It sponsors youth reading programs and mobilizes volunteers on national policy issues like school vouchers, genetic discrimination, and a woman's right to choose.

I am proud that Southern California boasts one of the largest concentrations of Hadassah members with over 20,000 activists in nearly 100 chapters.

I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Hadassah's 90th anniversary and in congratulating Hadassah on its tremendous impact worldwide.