

COMMEMORATION OF THE 64TH  
ANNIVERSARY OF ISRAEL'S  
INDEPENDENCE

**HON. AL GREEN**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, April 27, 2012*

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the State of Israel is the premiere functioning democracy in the Middle East and has been a steadfast ally of our great nation since its inception. I would like to congratulate the state of Israel on the 64th anniversary of its independence. The citizens of Israel have persevered in the face of great adversity to establish and maintain a free and democratic nation in their homeland.

Israel was founded on the principles of a shared destiny of the Jewish people and their cultural heritage. Despite the acts of violence and wars that have ensued, Israel has persisted in its pursuit of its right to exist in the Middle East. Israel has also played the important role of a refuge for the Jewish people, as well as African peoples, who have suffered great atrocities.

I speak from my heart, having personally witnessed the beauty and majesty of Israel and its people. I have prayed before the Wailing Wall and gazed at the skyline of Jerusalem. Let us today reaffirm our unwavering commitment to our great friend and ally, Israel.

A TRIBUTE TO THE SERVICE OF  
AL PERRY

**HON. JIM COSTA**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, April 27, 2012*

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with my colleague Mr. DENHAM to pay tribute to the service of Mr. Al Perry on the occasion of his retirement from the Veterans Affairs (VA) Central California Healthcare System. His years of dedicated service to United States veterans exemplifies his reverence for our country and demonstrates the best of what America has to offer.

After earning a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from Middlebury College in 1970, Mr. Perry served in the United States Medical Service Corps from 1971 to 1973. This service marked the beginning of his unwavering commitment to promoting and protecting the welfare and safety of our nation. Following his service, Mr. Perry attended Northeastern University where he obtained a Master's Degree in Public Administration, and the Medical College of Virginia where he earned a Master's Degree in Healthcare Administration.

During his career with the VA, he has served as a friend and counselor to many of our nation's service men and women. As a coach and mentor for the VA's career and development programs, Mr. Perry served as a guide and moral paradigm for countless veterans by steering and advising them through difficult decisions. Prior to this, Mr. Perry served as adjunct faculty at California State University, Long Beach and Boston University.

A tireless advocate for all veterans, Mr. Perry has held a number of leadership posi-

tions within the VA. He served as Co-Chair, Chair, Acting Director, and eventually Director of several national taskforces and healthcare systems, including the VA National Workload Realignment Taskforce, the CARES Livermore Realignment Taskforce, and the federal medical disaster stations during Hurricanes Katrina, Ike, and Gustav.

Under his management, the VA Central California Healthcare System was widely recognized. In 2003, the VA Central California Healthcare System received the "Central California Excellence in Business Award" from the Fresno Chamber of Commerce and the Fresno Bee. In 2006, they received the VA Secretary's Annual Labor-Management Partnership Award and were recognized by the VA Under Secretary with the Annual Diversity Award. They also received the Robert W. Carey Performance Achievement Award and were ranked among "America's 100 Most Wired Hospitals" in 2009, 2006, and 2004. In 2010, they received the Robert W. Carey Performance Achievement Award.

Mr. Perry's longstanding commitment to U.S. veterans is truly a reflection of his character and has not gone unrecognized. He is the recipient of numerous awards and honors, including the OPM "HERO" Award for Community Service in the Federal Non-Military Division the Presidential Rank "Meritorious Executive" Award, the "Distinguished Executive" Award, and the 2011 Veterans Health Administration Certified Mentor of the Year Award.

Mr. Perry has been a true champion for veterans of the Central Valley. He and his team have consistently and effectively partnered with local elected officials in efforts to better serve and care for Central Valley veterans.

We applaud Mr. Perry for his many years of work on behalf of our nation's veterans and their families. His retirement marks a bitter-sweet milestone for the VA Central California Healthcare System. We wish him the best of success as he begins the next chapter of his life.

Mr. Perry is looking forward to enjoying more time with his wife, Susan-Jean Perry, and his daughters and son in-law, Amanda Perry, Meredith Kohl, and Kristoffer Kohl.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. DENHAM and I ask our colleagues to join us in congratulating Mr. Al Perry on his successful career as a leader in the Veterans Affairs Central California Healthcare System, and honoring for his lifelong service to the United States of America and its veterans.

THE HOLOCAUST

**HON. STEVE COHEN**

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, April 27, 2012*

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, today, there was a Yom HaShoah service held in the United States Capitol as they are being held in State Capitals throughout the Nation, to remember the victims of the Holocaust—the loss of six million lives. It is imperative that we remember the loss of those six million people and, also, the people who survived and those who helped them survive.

In 1984, as a young State Senator, I sponsored legislation to create the Tennessee Holocaust Commission, one of the first such state

Commissions. I'm very proud of the work of the Tennessee Holocaust Commission, much of which is educating Tennessee teachers so they can teach children about the Holocaust.

The Commission has been very successful and has benefitted from great leadership. Then Commission Chair Reverend Beverly Asbury, also Chaplain at Vanderbilt University, worked tirelessly to get the Commission off the ground and current Chairwoman Felicia Anchor, born in the Bergen-Belsen camp, uses her passion and personal experience to continue to do great things.

I wear a button to honor Raoul Wallenberg, a great diplomat who helped save 100,000 Jews. This morning HRH Princess Madeleine and Swedish Parliamentary Leaders met with the Congressional Swedish Caucus and talked about the efforts of Swedish Diplomats to engage the United States to help save lives.

U.S. Treasury Secretary Morgenthau and two people in his administration, Mr. Pehle and Mr. DuBois, implored our President to help rescue Jews, and the United States certainly helped. Unfortunately, many lives were lost because we didn't get involved soon enough. We should never meet evil with silence.

Yom HaShoah is about remembering. As we remember the lives lost, we should also remember those who survived and, also, the military that liberated the camps and the hundreds of thousands of righteous gentiles who risked their own lives to save Jews.

I urge all Americans visiting Washington to visit the U.S. Holocaust Museum and I urge all Tennesseans and those visiting Nashville to go to the Memorial on the State Capitol Grounds, situated alongside six cedar trees representing six million people, to remember and to understand why we must always remember.

IN RECOGNITION OF ISRAEL'S 64TH  
INDEPENDENCE DAY

**HON. STEVE ISRAEL**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, April 27, 2012*

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, this week Israel celebrated its 64th Independence Day. Since its founding on May 14, 1948, Israel has become America's greatest ally in the Middle East and our commitment to the U.S.-Israel relationship remains, today, stronger than ever.

Despite years of intermittent war and overwhelming odds, Israel has developed into a thriving democracy representing many of the same democratic principles that we enjoy in the United States today. Israel's vibrant democracy includes a very active free press representing a diverse set of opinions throughout society and a robust and fair legal system guaranteeing citizens' civil rights. Israel respects the freedom of religion for all of those who worship within her state and is a leader in the protection and promotion of gay rights in the Middle East region.

Israel has also become a leader in the fields of agriculture technology and high-tech, developing a drip irrigation system used all over the world and tech devices used in many households and businesses with the same reach. Israel's medical technologies and military advancements have also protected U.S. soldiers on the battlefield and saved many lives.