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## Advocacy District Leaders

### Representatives, by District

D1 Olver:	Jules Chametzky
D2 Neal:	Joel Spiro
D3 McGovern:	Yael Savage, Margo Barnet
D4 Frank:	David Strauss
D5 Tsongas:	Judy Goldberg, Rabbi Ira Korinow
D6 Tierney:	Philip Kuhn
D7 Markey:	Bonnie Alpert, Rafe Ezekiel
D8 Capuano:	Marya Axner
D9 Lynch:	Dan King, Phyllis Bluhm
D10 Delahunt:	Bill Gamson

### Senators

Kennedy & Kerry:  
Bonnie Alpert,  
Donna Spiegelman

## Congressional Advocacy Leads to Successes

One of our chapter's most important activities is pursuing and maintaining relationships with our senators, representatives, and their staff. In so doing, we convey our message: "We are pro-peace and pro-Israel, and we are organized." The chapter's Advocacy Committee coordinates meetings with senators and representatives both in their DC offices and here in Massachusetts, and ensures follow-up communication by phone and email. Our goal is to voice our positions clearly and urge action on Congressional initiatives that press the Executive Branch to effectively facilitate the peace process. We collaborate in these advocacy efforts with our sister chapters in Western Massachusetts and on Martha's Vineyard.

### Successes in 2007:

During National Advocacy Days on Capitol Hill in June, Massachusetts delegates met with our senators and representatives, or their staff. As a result of these meetings and follow-up contacts:

- Seven of our ten representatives co-sponsored H.Res.143, a resolution introduced by Rep. Susan Davis (D-CA) urging the President to appoint a special envoy for Middle East peace.
- Both of our senators co-sponsored S.Res.321, a resolution introduced by Sens. Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) and Richard Lugar (R-IN) calling on the President to pursue a robust diplomatic effort to engage Israel and the Palestinians in negotiations.

Among them, the 10 Chapter members who participated visited the offices of seven representatives and both our senators – more than last year. District 7 Advocacy Team member Jonathan Jacoby said of his experience, "The discussions in all three offices (Reps. Capuano, Delahunt, and Markey) were similar and supportive... We were complimented for the progress we have made and encouraged to get out and build up our numbers and keep the letters, phone calls, and visits coming." Joel Spiro, District 2 Advocacy Leader added, "The meeting with Rep. Delahunt was particularly useful in the sense that he encouraged Brit Tzedek to build up strongly at the grass-roots level. He indicated that Members of Congress look to the Jewish community for guidance on Israel issues and that a large and vocal Brit Tzedek helps many Members who would like to have options they might be more comfortable with."

In-district advocacy efforts led all ten of our representatives to sign the bipartisan letter initiated by Reps. Gary Ackerman (D-NY) and Charles Boustany (R-LA) and sent to Secretary Condoleezza Rice on November 16. The letter commended Rice's efforts to

reinvigorate the Israeli-Palestinian peace process by convening the Annapolis conference, and called for additional steps to ensure its success. "The fact that all ten Massachusetts members of the House signed the Ackerman-Boustany letter is an enormous achievement for our state's three chapters," said Bonnie Alpert, co-chair of the Advocacy Committee. "Our Congressional district Advocacy leaders and other activists worked hard for several weeks to make this Massachusetts clean sweep happen. This shows that calling, writing, and visiting our members of Congress is a hugely important activity."



*MA delegation in Congress*

*To get involved in advocacy efforts, please contact Bonnie Alpert at [boston@btvshalom.org](mailto:boston@btvshalom.org)*

## Engaging Younger Supporters

### ➤ Peace and Justice Interns

Last fall, three Tufts University undergraduates completed useful internship projects with our chapter. Yael Stern reached out to synagogues, calling them to find out about their programs and whether they wanted to have speakers. Evan Lacher was involved with media outreach, exploring requirements of media outlets for accepting letters to the editor and press releases. Molly Schwartz conducted a community outreach survey of festivals and tabling opportunities and their conditions for participation. In evaluating their work with the Boston chapter Molly said, “Interning with Brit Tzedek was a great experience, both in terms of the projects we did and in seeing how a social action organization works to make a difference in the world.” After attending the chapter’s monthly Steering Committee meeting, Yael said, “It was great being at the Steering Committee meeting, where I was impressed by the level of detail that went into its work.” Evan added that “it was interesting how a conflict halfway across the world was brought home to us, so we could help to work on resolving it.”

The interns expressed interest in follow-up activities on campus – whether arranging for Brit Tzedek guest speakers or talking themselves to other students as “peers to peers.”



*Tufts Interns: Molly, Evan and Yael*

### ➤ Harvard Students Visit Brit Tzedek Table

Our chapter was invited to participate at the Harvard Hillel IsraelFest held October 24 under a large tent in front of the university’s Science Center in Cambridge. In addition to showcasing information by the Israeli Consulate, Aliyah office, and several Jewish organizations, the festival offered Middle Eastern food that attracted many students. Having a table at this event presented us with the opportunity to reach out to a larger young audience than we usually encounter.

### ➤ Young Brit Tzedek Supporters Meet in Cambridge

Jessica Gorelick, Brit Tzedek’s NYC-based chapter organizer, and Anna Freedman, of the Brit Tzedek national office in Chicago, were the guests at the Boston Chapter’s second 20s/30s brunch on November 28 at Grendel’s Den in Harvard Square. Jessica and Anna told the group about Brit Tzedek’s Let’s Talk with the Candidates campaign. In the lively general discussion that ensued, attendees talked about how to reach out more effectively to people in the 20s/30s age group, with some in attendance volunteering to help in the effort.

## Mara Rudman Speaks at Chapter Gathering



Approximately 45 people attended a fall chapter gathering, held November 14 at Temple Sinai in Brookline. The evening’s featured speaker was Middle East political analyst Mara Rudman, who served as Deputy National Security Advisor to President Clinton and National Security Council Chief of Staff, 1997-2001. She is now a Senior

Fellow at the Center for American Progress in Washington, DC. Speaking shortly before the Annapolis meeting, Rudman titled her talk “Serious Diplomacy: Why a Mideast Summit Matters, How to Make It Happen.” She emphasized that the summit would be the first step in a process and described the elements required to ensure its success. Rudman also outlined what the resolution at the end of the process must look like. In a long question & answer session Rudman addressed challenges in domestic politics both in the U.S. and the Middle East and listed some “must haves” including a compensation fund for Palestinian refugees, a good package for returning Israeli settlers, and a political risk insurance fund for Palestinian small businesses.

## Briefly Noted

- The Boston chapter of Brit Tzedek was one of many organizations presenting their materials at the Oct. 7 Octoberfest in Harvard Square. Our table attracted many people, of whom 40 put down their names and contact information on our sign-in sheets as a show of support and interest in learning more about future events.
- A Shabbat dinner and talk at Beth El Temple Center in Belmont, co-sponsored by Brit Tzedek on October 12, attracted 60 people. The speaker was Debra DeLee, President and CEO of Americans for Peace Now, who stressed that the peace process presents opportunities that should be acted upon. She made a strong case for American Jews to tell Congress to work for peace. BT members Jonathan Jacoby and Diane Balser spoke, as well, using the occasion to talk about the work of our chapter.
- On November 5, ten Boston chapter activists attended the Elizabeth Wyner Mark Peace Award Dinner at the Fairmont Copley Place in Boston. The event was organized by Americans for Peace Now as a tribute to the late Dr. Elizabeth W. Mark who was an APN Board Member. The awards were presented to Arnold Hiatt, Chairman of the Stride Rite Foundation and Director of Business for Social Responsibility, and to Anthony Lewis, former New York Times columnist who talked briefly about the Middle East situation. Well-known investigative journalist Seymour Hersh was the featured speaker. The participation of our members was made possible through the generosity of Sid Topol, who sits on the boards of both Brit Tzedek and Americans for Peace Now.

## Focus On The Media

“The media play a key role in framing the discussion of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict,” says Stan Fleischman, co-chair of the Boston Brit Tzedek Media Committee. “It is important,” he adds, “that Brit Tzedek’s viewpoint be reflected in the media as a way of reaching a wide swath of people. We do this by writing op-eds and letters to the editor for state-wide and community papers. We are really pleased that recently we were successful in placing an op-ed by Sid Topol and one by Mara Rudman in the Jewish Advocate supporting the Annapolis Conference.”

Donna Spiegelman, the other Media Committee co-chair, emphasizes the importance of cultivating relationships with the media. “We do that,” she said, “by meeting with editors and other journalists and by arranging editorial meetings for speakers and experts who pass through Boston to provide greater exposure for their views.”

Committee members also give the chapter and its activities visibility by drafting and placing announcements and press releases to publicize the chapter’s events, actions, and accomplishments. Finally, members attempt to monitor NPR and other liberal call-in radio shows for content related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and generate suggested questions for activists to call in and use on-air.

*The Media Committee can use all the help it can get. To join in this work, contact Stan Fleischman at [stanf@rcn.com](mailto:stanf@rcn.com)*

### ***Our Voice In The Media***

*In the past 3 years we made our views heard in the local media through  
21 letters to the editor  
7 op-ed articles  
20 news stories*



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#### **Steering Committee:**

Bonnie Alpert  
Rafe Ezekiel  
Stan Fleischman  
Deborah Fogel  
Sandy Goldfless  
Deborah Katz  
Ilana Lescohier  
Donna Spiegelman (chair)  
Elizabeth Vernon  
Beth Wasserman



*Advocacy Days Delegates visit Rep. Delahunt in DC.  
From left: Jonathan Jacoby, Diane Balsler, David  
Strauss, Rep. Delahunt, Bonnie Alpert, and Joel Spiro.*

### **LOCAL RABBIS CALL FOR PEACE**

Jewish clergy from across the country are increasingly voicing the need for progress towards peace in the Middle East. In September 2006, more than 300 rabbis and cantors signed a call to the American Jewish community to “Seek Peace and Pursue it.” In November 2007, more than 500 rabbis, cantors, and rabbinic and cantorial students (46 from the Boston chapter area) signed on to Brit Tzedek’s call to “Kindle the Lights of Peace.” This latter call, which expressed support for reviving Israeli-Palestinian talks at the Annapolis peace conference, also appeared as a full-page ad in the November 23 issue of *The Forward*.

These calls are being led nationally by the Rabbinic Cabinet of Brit Tzedek, which has grown to more than 200 rabbis and cantors. A local group of rabbis took the initiative to create a Greater Boston chapter of the Rabbinic Cabinet. In a letter of invitation to colleagues they said:

“Our purpose is to be a pro-Israel and pro-peace rabbinic voice in the greater Boston Jewish community. By joining the Cabinet, you will be helping us to provide support to the local chapter of Brit Tzedek, one of the organization's largest and most active, with over 3100 supporters in the Greater Boston area. The Cabinet will provide the local chapter with moral guidance steeped in the Judaic tradition, and with the credibility that such support can give.”

To date, our chapter’s Rabbinic Cabinet has 19 members.  
*To join, or invite your rabbi to join write to Stan Fleischman at [stanf@rcn.com](mailto:stanf@rcn.com)*