

*Remarks by Rep. Chris Smith (R-Manchester)
We Stand With Israel Vigil—Lakewood, NJ
October 11, 2023*

Words cannot express the profound sorrow and grief my wife Marie and I share with all Israelis and the Jewish community.

Hamas' absolutely savage terrorist attacks and its barbaric slaughtering, raping and kidnapping of innocent Israelis and Americans is a manifestation of its unbridled hate and deadly antisemitism.

Over the past few days, I have received many reports from constituents who are currently in Israel—or whose relatives and friends are in Israel—who seek to return to the United States as soon as possible but are unable to do so.

The dangers these US citizens face are so grave, and the responsibility of the US Government for their safety so paramount, that their evacuation must be immediately secured.

After requesting evacuation assistance from State Department officials on Saturday, I wrote to President Biden on Monday urging him to use all appropriate US resources and tools to arrange for the immediate evacuation of American citizens in Israel who are desperately trying to return home.

I also pressed Biden Administration officials again at a closed-door briefing in Washington, DC this morning.

There now appears to be a break in their opposition to evacuate Americans. We await their plans and will demand they are sufficient, comprehensive and for real.

Now more than ever, the United States must stand boldly with Israel. Yesterday, I cosponsored legislation to provide \$2 billion to replenish Israel's Iron Dome defense system and to freeze the \$6 billion the Administration released to Iran.

As we mourn for those who have lost their lives, we stand in absolute solidarity with Israel, support Israel's right to defend itself, and demand justice.