



Important Reactions to Israel's "Nation-State" Law

In July, the Israeli government passed the disturbing new Nation-State law, which asserts the primacy of Jews and Jewish rights in Israel, while ignoring and downgrading the rights of other citizens. The law undercuts critical commitments made in the Israeli Declaration of Independence that Israel would “foster the development of the country for the benefit of all its inhabitants ... and ensure complete equality of social and political rights.”

Over the past few weeks, we've seen outraged reactions to this new law from leaders, activists and concerned citizens in Israel, the American Jewish community and around the world.

J Street's Response

- Our statement: [J Street Saddened and Disturbed by Passage of Israel's Nation-State Law](#)
- [Our “Word On The Street” message to J Street supporters.](#)
- [Our “explainer” of the law.](#)
- In the media: [The Atlantic](#), [Los Angeles Times](#), [USA Today](#), [Haaretz](#).

From Israel

- [180 Israeli artists, authors and intellectuals](#), including Amos Oz, David Grossman and A.B. Yehoshua, called on Prime Minister Netanyahu and the Knesset to cancel the law.
- [Eight former police commissioners](#) signed a letter calling for the law to be changed and expressing support for minority groups' opposition to it.
- [Meretz party leader Tamar Zandberg](#) petitioned Israel's High Court to overturn the law, calling it “an act of sabotage against Israeli law that replaced equality with racism.”
- [Former Shin Bet director and Navy commander Ami Ayalon](#) called on Israel's President Reuben Rivlin not to sign the nation-state bill into law.
- [Zouheir Bahloul, a Palestinian-Israeli MK from the Zionist Union](#), resigned from the Knesset in protest.
- [Several Druze officers have resigned from the IDF](#), citing the law's discrimination against them and their community. [Veteran leaders of the Druze community](#) are organizing protests against the law.
- [Retired Israeli generals and former commanders of the IDF's elite paratrooper units signed letters](#) opposing the law.
- [Thousands](#) have attended protests against the bill, [including a public “Arabic lesson”](#) organized by a consortium of Israeli civil society organizations.

Critical Statements from American Jewish communal organizations

- [Anti-Defamation League.](#)
- [Ameinu.](#)

- [American Jewish Committee](#).
- [Association of Reform Zionists of America](#).
- Conservative movement: Made no official statement, but pointed to [this blog post](#) as expressing its position.
- [Jewish Labor Committee](#).
- [Jewish Federations of North America](#).
- [National Council of Jewish Women](#).
- [New Israel Fund](#).
- [Reconstructing Judaism](#).
- [T'ruah](#).
- [Union for Reform Judaism](#).

Statements from other prominent American voices

- [American Federation of Teachers President Randi Weingarten](#): “It is a giant leap backward for the people of Israel. It is anti-Arab and anti-minority, and it embodies a bigotry and authoritarianism that I fear was energized and emboldened by the current U.S. president.”
- [Representative Jan Schakowsky \(IL-9\), Chief Deputy Democratic Whip](#): “I deeply cherish Israel’s Jewish and Democratic character, and I am proud to be a longtime supporter of the US-Israel relationship and our shared democratic values....I deeply cherish Israel’s Jewish and Democratic character, and I am proud to be a longtime supporter of the US-Israel relationship and our shared democratic values.”

Notable Opinion and Analysis

- [Netanyahu weakens support for Israel in the United States](#), Gershom Gorenberg, Washington Post
- [The Ramifications of the Nation State Law: Is Israeli Democracy at Risk?](#), Pnina Sharvit Baruch, INSS
- [Israel's 'Jewish state' law is the latest assault on its Arab citizens](#), Editorial, LA Times
- [The Unavoidable Obstacle to LGBT Equality, Religious Pluralism and a Liberal Israel: It's the Occupation, Stupid](#), Chemi Shalev, Haaretz
- [Israel's hugely controversial "nation-state" law, explained](#), Miriam Berger, Vox
- [60% of Israelis Think the New Nation-State Law Should Have Included 'Equality'](#), Israel Democracy Institute