

WASHINGTON, DC (April 21, 2010) – Rep. Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) made the following statement on the House floor to commemorate the 62nd anniversary of the founding of the State of Israel.

Madam Speaker, I rise to honor the 62nd anniversary of the founding of the Jewish State of Israel. Israel has weathered decades of war and terrorism but it remains a thriving democracy and America's closest friend and ally in the Middle East.

As a very young child, I remember the immense pride and joy my family felt when the Jewish State became a reality. I had the privilege of traveling once again to Israel earlier this month, and again I was struck by the resilience, courage, and innovation of the Israeli people, as well as their pride in the beautifully lush country they have built in the desert. I thought about my childhood again and the number of times I had saved my nickels and dimes to buy a tree certificate that we used for birthdays and anniversaries to plant trees in Israel and make that desert bloom.

No longer just a longing of the Jewish people, Israel today is a leader in technology, energy, and scientific innovation – including medical innovation. It is also the only democratic state in the Middle East and our steadfast friend, ally, and partner.

Today, we mark the 62nd anniversary of the State of Israel and celebrate the unbreakable bonds between our two countries. Sixty-two years after the U.S. became the first country to recognize the new State of Israel we still share common dreams and continue to strengthen our critical relationship.

Just minutes after the declaration of the founding of the State of Israel, President Harry Truman recognized that country and it began a 62-year-long commitment, non-partisan, bipartisan – universal throughout our country – recognizing the importance of our relationship with the State of Israel. I believe that this Congress of the United States maintains that dedication and will forever more. Thank you.