Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-MN)
Democratic Presidential Candidate

Hello everyone.

I want to thank all of you for your passionate dedication and commitment to the relationship between the U.S. and Israel.

I’ve spoken at your conference in the past, worked with our mighty Minnesota group – I just want to make sure they’re cheering cause they’re not really that type, but I’m just going to imagine that they are – and I also value our friendship.

For me, Israel is one of our strongest and most enduring allies in a really tough - I would say an incomparably tough neighborhood.

When I decided to run for the Senate, one of my very first trips abroad was to Israel.

I was overwhelmed by the warmth and the spirit of the people who welcomed me in every turn.

During the trip, I saw the resilience of the Israeli people, and it reinforced my commitment to strengthening the relationship between our two countries.

It allowed me to see firsthand how critical American support for Israel really is.

I will never stop fighting for a strong U.S.-Israel relationship. Period.

I am also committed to a peace process that can lead to a two-state solution that allows Israelis and Palestinians to live side by side in peace and security.

And to me, that means working with all parties to support direct negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians that can produce this two-state solution.

And we need to make sure that enduring bipartisanship for Israel is above politics and beyond politics.

And that includes not only working towards a two-state solution, but also security assistance, opposition to BDS, supporting Congressional delegations, and strong economic relations between our two countries.
At a time when President Trump has been focused more on politics than peace, we must ensure that bipartisan support for Israel in Congress doesn’t waver.

That’s how we’ve been able to achieve so many vital objectives in the past, from security assistance for Iron Dome, that I strongly supported, and David Sling, to the sanctions to bring Iran to the negotiating table.

Ensuring that support for Israel always be bipartisan is critical to all these successes.

And if I was given the honor to lead this nation, keeping that support strong and bipartisan would be a major priority.

And this is also why your leadership is important and will be so important going forward.

I want to thank you for taking such a strong stand against hate and the rise in antisemitism both around the world and here at home.

Over the past years, we’ve seen a deeply troubling increase in acts of hatred and antisemitism in our nation.

We were tragically reminded of this by the shootings at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh and then again in California, and most recently by the attack at a kosher market in Jersey City and the attack at a rabbi’s home in New York during Hanukah.

We grieve for the victims of these crimes.

We grieve for their families.

And yes, we grieve for our country.

But grieving is not enough.

Conviction without courage is not enough.

Words without action aren’t enough.

We have to stand up, speak up, and step up.

This includes providing additional resources to safeguard faith based community centers and religious entities.
This makes the prosecution of hate crimes such a priority.
And we must not only stand up to the spread of hatred, but also teach tolerance, understanding, and acceptance.

One of the things that I’ve appreciated about AIPAC and the Jewish community in our country is that you advocate for hope, not only for Israel, but also for other nations across the world.

You advocate for doing something about hate and hate crimes not only involving our Jewish community when they are the victims, but also the victims at Mosque bombings, of the victims of other religious discrimination.

I’ll end with a story that reminds me of the importance of reaching out and crossing all the bridges that we see in our country and all the divides that we must cross.

I think I mention it at your conference a few years ago.

It was during the Super Bowl when they had the Super Bowl in the Twin Cities.

Okay, it was really cold.

But one of the cool things that we did leading up into the Super Bowl was that our religious community, together, produced an interfaith ad.

And one of the most popular things in that public service ad was one of our foremost rabbis throwing a football all the way down the field – well, you know, maybe they used some special cameras – to an Imam.

And he caught it, and he ran it in for a touchdown.

I think that the message that we get from that little momentary video of humor, that message is that yes we must stand our ground, but we also can reach out and find common ground.

We have to do that to do everything we can to make this world a better place.

That’s what you’re doing.
That’s what we will do together.

Thank you so much.