Mort, thank you.

And thank you all, very much.

You know, I wish I could stand before you today and give the celebratory speech that might seem appropriate for the newly installed president of AIPAC.

And to be clear, there is much to celebrate: the strength of the U.S.-Israel relationship, the diversity of our movement, all of you here.

But to make a speech about what we have already done, or what we already know, is not responsible given the urgency of this moment.

This morning, Howard sounded the alarm.

Once among the best, most authentic expressions of bipartisan support in America, the U.S.-Israel relationship as we know it, is under attack.

Until recently, these attacks have been isolated on the far fringes of the political extremes.

But now they are being led by those growing in power and influence.

We need to see this moment for what it is.

We're in a fight.
Israel’s detractors are mounting an attack on the very foundations of the U.S.-Israel relationship.

They’re attacking the bipartisan support that has defined this relationship for over seven decades.

And one way they’re attacking that support is by attacking us.

They want us to be intimidated.

They want us to feel isolated.

They want to portray us as the outliers, by distorting this fundamental truth: We represent the majority of America.

And I’m proud to say that we don’t stand alone.

Over the last week, leaders and activists from every corner of this country have stood with us and spoken out in solidarity.

So on behalf of AIPAC’s leadership, I want to say thank you for standing with us.

To the countless members of Congress – Democrats and Republicans in the House and Senate: Thank you for standing with us.

To the senior members of the administration: Thank you for standing with us.
To the presidential candidates who spoke out, and who will speak to our conference: Thank you for standing with us.

To the tens of thousands of pro-Israel Americans who declare that you are #AIPACProud: thank you for standing with us!

And most of all…

Thanks to all of you – the 18,000 people here in Washington. Undaunted and undeterred. Thank you for coming to Washington, and for standing tall.

We are all #AIPACProud!

My friends, we are ready for this fight.

Together, we will defend the values we hold dear.

We will preserve the bipartisan majority we’ve worked so hard to build.

We will maintain the diversity of this movement.

And we will make the already strong ties between America and Israel even stronger.

So, here’s how we will do it.

First, I pledge that everything I will ask of you while I am AIPAC president, I will ask of myself.

I pledge to increase my support for pro-Israel politics.
One of the most effective ways to impact American support for Israel is to ensure our friends in Congress, and our friends running for office, have the financial support of the pro-Israel community.

That means proudly and confidently contributing to those who stand with us.

Our friends in Congress – Democrats and Republicans – must know that members of the pro-Israel community will help them.

And those who stand against the U.S.-Israel relationship must know: The pro-Israel community will work to defeat them.

But that requires resources. Real resources. More resources.

Today, I’m asking you to join me.

Soon everyone at this conference will receive an email from me asking you to do even more for pro-Israel politics, or to get involved for the first time.

By making a commitment today and giving what you can, we will impact this election cycle and this movement in real ways that will fundamentally shape the U.S.-Israel relationship.

So I'm asking everyone to join me.

Next, I pledge to increase my support of AIPAC.
Because while the cost of building and preserving our movement is substantial, even more is needed to strengthen it.

And I pledge to help you.

I’ve been doing this work for a long time. I know how challenging it can be.

And in my first six months as AIPAC president, I will travel to Boston and Miami, to Chicago and Houston, to Dallas, and San Francisco, and Los Angeles, and throughout the Northeast.

I’ll be there to support you, to organize with you, to fundraise with you, and to cultivate more activists with you.

But we can’t stop there.

For more than 30 years, I’ve seen the AIPAC family grow into the diverse coalition that it is today.

We are multi-generational and multi-racial.

We are all part of communities that bring a unique and essential voice to the table.

Today I’m calling on each of us to use it.

Between now and November third, every candidate running for federal office will appeal to our various communities for support.
But the promise of our support must be predicated on their promise to stand with Israel.

To our students in this room, and I know there are many of you, 4,000 students strong at this conference!

Our critics say that young people aren't interested in Israel. They say that you don't care.

But your presence here today, and your work every day, is the response to those critics.

The future is here in this hall today.

4,000 students. 300 Geller Student Government Presidents. Leaders of College Democrats and College Republicans.

You are the future. But not just the future, your voice is critical today.

Candidates are coming to your campus and looking for your help.

And before you volunteer on their campaign, make sure they know you stand with Israel, and that they must too.

And know this: We see the vicious anti-Israel activity that you are forced to confront on campus.

So I'm here to tell you that this entire movement stands with you, and you are not alone.
To our rabbis and pastors – our leaders in synagogues, churches and religious organizations: You have standing in your communities and the unique ability to mobilize.

I urge you to speak out about why support for Israel is critical in this election.

Make sure your decision-makers know that you represent a community that stands with Israel.

Amplify your voice on social media.

Host a political leader in your house of worship to talk about this issue.

And lead the charge.

To AIPAC's Progressive leaders, African American leaders, Hispanic leaders, and leaders in the LGBTQ community: You are on the front lines every day fighting for change.

You are building coalitions of passionate activists, and your voice is essential.

Our issue is an American issue.

Candidates need to hear our case.

Tell them why you care, and why their support for Israel is a critical factor in your vote.
Finally, to our Veterans: Thank you for your service to this country.

You know firsthand why Israel is our critical ally in America’s fight for freedom.

Elected officials need to hear from you, as well.

Speak with them. And stand with them as they stand with us.

I was ten years old when I first went to Israel.

Since then, I’ve been back more times than I can count.

I know Israel. And I love Israel.

So when our detractors spew lies and smear the place I love, I get angry.

Because the Israel they talk about doesn’t exist.

The real Israel – the Israel we all love and work so hard to protect – is a thriving democracy.

A pluralistic society that embraces debate, and the rule of law, and a free press.

A trailblazer in defense and security.

A mosaic of the world’s religions.

A global innovator.
A critical ally of America.

And a nation whose people yearn for peace every single day.

That is the Israel we know, and the Israel we are fighting for.

This fight will define our movement.

It won’t be easy.

But our best weapon is our common purpose.

It's what makes us who we are.

It's what makes us AIPAC.

And it's how we will win together.

Thank you.