

# 300 gather to learn about Israel's issues

By Shalle' McDonald  
JNS.org

Several of the country's most prominent pro-Israel groups participated in the first Israel Today Symposium designed to educate the Dallas community on understanding the complex issues Israel faces.

The event, organized by Temple Shalom, drew more than 300 people to hear speakers including Lillian Pinkus, president of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC); Charles Pulman, founder of Why Israel Matters; and Daniel Agranov, deputy consul general of Israel to the Southwestern U.S.

Pulman, one of two keynote speakers, opened the day with the topic "We are Israel, A time of Pride and Resolve." He explained that his journey of support for Israel started in his first days of religious school at age 5 and has grown into a lifelong passion. Today, the Dallas attorney travels across the country advocating for Israel and visits Jewish communities around the world.

He asked the audience to think about a very personal question: their own obligation to ensure that Israel and the Jewish people survive in perpetuity.

## Did you know?

You can purchase an Israel bond for a charitable organization or institution. The program is called the Double Mitzvah Program. Purchase an Israel bond for the organization, synagogue, foundation or other charitable cause you choose to support by contacting Garry Kahalnik at 972-338-2642 or garry.kahalnik@israelbonds.com. The recipient of your Israel bond will receive interest on the bond, plus principal upon maturity. The value of the donated Israel bond may be tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law. Contact your tax adviser for details.

Lillian Pinkus, AIPAC national president, delivered the lunchtime keynote. Always an impassioned speaker, the daughter of Holocaust survivors told the audience that it wasn't enough to be educated, that the next step is action.

Throughout the day, more than a dozen topics were discussed by experts including the Arab-Israeli conflict; business development in Israel; missile defense systems in Israel; Israeli technology; Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) legislation; and Christian outreach for Israel advocacy.

The BDS panel drew very many participants, who heard from Max Chamovitz, deputy director of Israel Action Network; Republican Texas Representative Phil King; and Lauren Feibelman, national associate director of campus affairs for StandWithUs, among others.

"The BDS panel's explanation of what they are doing, particularly on (college) campuses, was thought-provoking," Pamela Buckroyd told JNS.org. "They mentioned that one of



**TOP:** From left, AIPAC National President Lillian Pinkus and Israel Symposium coordinators and Temple Shalom members, Ken Glaser and Anita Warner  
**ABOVE:** Kevin Paillet (right) seated at lunch with Joseph Green-Bishop. Paillet was a session presenter about the history of the U.S. relationship with Israel.

Photos: Lisa Rothberg

the challenges is that different pro-Israel organizations on campuses are not united in their approach.

"Personally, I think another challenge is simplifying and clarifying the message. People (who are pro-Palestinian, pro-Black Lives Matter and pro-LGBT) do not realize they are boycotting businesses that employ Palestinians, Black (Ethiopian) Israelis, and LGBT Israelis," she said.

Texas Rep. King, who spoke on the BDS panel, focused on some of the challenges Texas faces in passing anti-BDS legislation. He plans to introduce an anti-BDS bill in January, similar to what 11 other states have already passed (see box).

Ken Glaser, chair of the synagogue's Israel Connection Committee, which organized the Aug. 7 event, told JNS.org why creating the symposium was important. He is also a founder of Temple Shalom, which celebrates its 50th anniversary this year. Other members of the symposium committee from Temple

## Supporting Israel

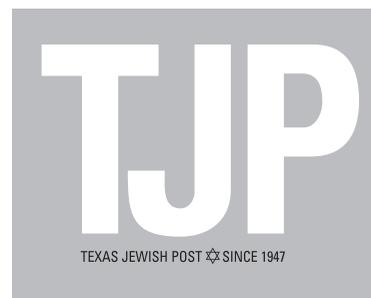
Texas State Representative for the 61st District Phil King described his proposed bill in a nutshell: "The State of Texas will not do business with any company that is boycotting Israel."

Because Texas has such a strong attitude toward free markets, King explained it will be a tough bill to pass, but it already has bipartisan support as well as the backing of Governor Greg Abbott and Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick.

### What you can do

Rep. King explained that the best thing you can do between now and January is contact your state representative and state senator and have your friends do the same and let them know it's important to you.

"When I get 10 or 15 contacts saying 'Hey, this issue is important to me,' it's on my radar and I'm monitoring it and having my staff monitor it all the way through," King said.



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Published by Texas Jewish Post, LTD. at 7920 Belt Line Rd., Dallas, Texas 75254. Subscription Rates: Texas: \$40 per year, Other States in U.S.: \$52 per year, Foreign: \$70 per year. Subscriptions are payable in advance. Unless notified otherwise, it is understood that all subscriptions are renewed automatically upon expiration. Please allow four weeks from date received by the Texas Jewish Post for address changes to take effect. The Texas Jewish Post (ISSN 0040-439X) is published weekly, with an additional issue the last week of June. Periodicals Postage Paid at Dallas, Texas. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Texas Jewish Post, 7920 Belt Line Rd., Dallas, Texas 75254.

