



Advocacy Update

Sent July 24, 2013

Direct Peace Talks to Resume

After months of intense diplomacy, Secretary of State Kerry has achieved a diplomatic breakthrough: for the first time in three years, it appears that Israelis and Palestinians are going to engage in direct peace negotiations. [Click here](#) for some background on the peace talks, as well as links to articles that can provide more context. Despite hesitation on both sides, the restart of direct negotiations signals that Secretary Kerry believes that the parties are close enough to merit peace talks.

WRJ has been a strong supporter of Israel since its inception, both in our [policy resolutions](#) and in our [Sisterhood programs](#). We [remain committed](#) to the pursuit of peace in the Middle East, and commend Secretary Kerry for his diplomacy. We hope that Prime Minister Netanyahu and Prime Minister Abbas seize this opportunity to bring much needed peace to Israel, its neighbors and the region. [Click here](#) to tell President Obama and your members of Congress that Middle East peace is an important issue to you, and that you support the U.S. efforts to realize a two state solution as critical to Israel's continued security and prosperity. The U.S. holds a unique position as a mediator between the two parties, and active U.S. involvement will be crucial to any successful peace negotiations.

Reform Movement Youth Learn about Social Justice

This summer, dozens of our Movement's youth had the opportunity to learn in depth about how the Reform Movement supports social justice work, and how we engage on key policy issues facing our country today. Through the RAC's [Machon Kaplan program](#) for college students and the URJ's [Urban Mitzvah Corps program](#) for high school students, students spent time learning about policy issues such as [reproductive rights](#), [LGBT equality](#), [immigration reform](#), [poverty](#), and much more – all central issues to WRJ! These college and high school students not only learned about issues of concern to WRJ and the Reform Movement, but also shared their knowledge and concerns with elected officials and their staff members across Capitol Hill.

The [WRJ YES Fund](#) plays an instrumental role in supporting the next generation of social justice activists and Reform Movement leaders through its annual grant to the RAC. [Click here](#) to donate to the YES fund to continue to enable work done across our Movement for and on behalf of our youth. And [click here](#) to read about some of the experiences our college students had while in Washington DC!

August Recess Visits: Last Chance!

A few weeks ago, we wrote telling you about August recess – when members of Congress go home to their districts to hear what matters are most important to their constituents. This year, recess will take place from August 3 through September 8. During this time period, many members of Congress will hold town hall meetings in their home districts, where members of the public can ask questions about pertinent topics. Call your Senators' and Representative's office at 202-224-3121 and ask if there is going to be a town hall meeting opportunity in an area near you.

You can also request a meeting with your member of Congress for your congregation, your Sisterhood, or even just yourself! Many [Senators](#) and [Representatives](#) have scheduling request forms on their websites – if not, you can always call their office at 202-224-3121 and ask to speak to the Scheduler. Tell the Scheduler that you are a constituent and want to meet with your Member when they are home over recess.

For more information on WRJ and Social Justice, visit www.wrj.org/social-justice-home

You can talk to your Member about [any social justice topic](#)! Pertinent policy issues that are WRJ priorities right now are [immigration](#) (particularly in the House of Representatives), [gun violence prevention](#) and [women's health](#). Relaying WRJ priorities can help form legislators' opinions, and can raise the profile of these issues for our representatives. Tell your member the principles important to WRJ (which can be found in our [resolutions](#) on the topic), ask them what concerns they have about pending legislation, and – most importantly! – ask what you can do as a member of your Sisterhood to help advance this important issue.

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