

New Bedford's Mayor Mitchell Leads group of U.S. mayors to Israel

Delegation from U.S. Conference of Mayors met with Israeli and Palestinian officials on trip sponsored by Project Interchange.

“NEW BEDFORD – Mayor Jon Mitchell chaired a group of U.S. Mayors on a trip to Israel earlier this week on behalf of the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the leading organization representing American cities. Mayor Mitchell is a member of USCM’s Board of Trustees.

The delegation spent four days in Israel meeting with municipal leaders, academics, business leaders, and experts from both Israel and Palestine. They also held discussions with released hostages and their families, and others coordinating humanitarian aid in the region. Site visits included Tel-Aviv, Jerusalem, and the city of Sderot on the border with Gaza. In the Oct. 7, 2023 attack by the terror group Hamas, 70 civilians, including 20 police officers, were murdered in Sderot.

Mayor Mitchell was back at City Hall on Friday.

“Although this is the USCM’s fourth mayoral delegation to Israel, the issues in the region today are more relevant than ever to Americans,” Mayor Mitchell said. “The current conflict is widening the political fault lines in our country, and I believe that it is important for mayors, as the leaders of their cities, to take opportunities like this to deepen their understanding of a situation that, as everyone can agree, is complicated and difficult.”

The trip was sponsored by a joint program between the USCM and

the American Jewish Committee's Project Interchange, which facilitates exchanges between Israeli, Palestinian, European, and American officials. The mission of the program is to enhance Americans' understanding of the region's politics by exposing mayors to diverse perspectives and promoting new and mutually beneficial relationships with Israeli and Palestinian leaders. This is the program's fourth mayoral delegation to Israel, which was funded entirely by the program.

Participants included Mayor Daniel Rickman of Columbia, South Carolina, Mayor Travis Stovall of Gresham, Oregon, and officials from the USCM and AJC. Based on security considerations, the USCM requested that members of the delegation refrain from announcing the trip beforehand or releasing details of the itinerary prior to return."-City of New Bedford.