

Outrageous and Wrong: World Jewish Congress Head Responds to Criticism of David Friedman

J Street liberals and Democrats who oppose President Donald Trump's nominee to be ambassador to Israel, David Friedman, are "really quite wrong" and their arguments against confirming his nomination are "beyond outrageous," according to the head of the World Jewish Congress.

Ronald S. Lauder wrote to Senate Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Bob Corker, R-Tenn., in defense of Friedman's appointment, saying the attorney would be "a tremendous U.S. ambassador to Israel."

"One might disagree with him on a political point, but that doesn't mean he is not extremely capable, upstanding and that the president should have the absolute right to nominate whomever he desires," Lauder wrote. "I have come to know Mr. Friedman over the past few months, and I can attest to his brilliance, his honesty and the strength of his character."

Last month, the liberal Union for Reform Judaism publicly expressed opposition to his nomination, a first for the organization. Many other liberal Jewish groups have also spoken out against the appointment, largely because of comments he made during the 2016 presidential campaign—he called J Street supporters "far worse than *kapos*," a slur for Jewish collaborators in Nazi Germany—which he later said he regretted during his confirmation hearing.

The Foreign Affairs Committee is expected to vote Friedman's nomination out of committee this week. {eo}