

Sen. Rand Paul: End 'Welfare' to Israel

✖ Tea Party-backed Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.) is calling for an end to "welfare" for Israel—and it's caused an outcry among pro-Israel supporters in the Body of Christ.

With the continued unrest in Egypt, along with concerns that the Muslim Brotherhood is working behind the scenes toward the destruction of Israel through this unrest, the notion of ending aid to Israel in this hour is stirring Zionists to action.

The debate comes in the wake of a newly released House GOP budget. Paul insists the budget falls short of the measures needed to deal with a federal deficit. Paul continues to defend stance on ending all foreign aid—including the \$3 billion the U.S. gives Israel every year—in the name of balancing the budget.

"I'm not singling out Israel. I support Israel. I want to be known as a friend of Israel," Paul told ABC News, "but not with money you don't have. We can't just borrow from our kids' future and give it to countries even if they are our friends."

Paul told ABC that Israel is "probably" 10 years ahead of any neighboring country and that its defense is significant and "probably" well in advance of its enemies. "Should we be giving free money or welfare to a wealthy nation?" Paul asked. "I don't think so."

In response, more than 22,500 members of Christians United for Israel (CUFI), including several hundred members from Paul's state, have e-mailed the senator asking him to abandon his call to end aid to Israel.

E-mails sent to the senator state in part "...eliminating aid to

Israel would abandon a key ally in a dangerous region at a turbulent time. Such a cut would betray our highest principles, endanger our nation, and, in the long run, end up costing us far more.”

“I do not believe that the Senator’s comments are representative of the Tea Party or the wider American public,” says John Hagee, CUFI founder and chairman. “CUFI members and leaders have met on several occasions with Tea Party leaders and elected officials. Throughout our meetings, Tea Party leaders consistently expressed their commitment to supporting Israel’s qualitative military edge in the Middle East.”

David Brog, CUFI’s executive director, says CUFI membership is concerned with both the strategic and moral implications of Paul’s stance.

“Christians across the country, including a large number in the Senator’s home state of Kentucky, recognize that foreign aid to Israel is vital to American interests in the Middle East,” Brog says. “I anticipate that the number of CUFI members emailing the Senator will continue to grow as we keep the action alert open through the week.”

Global Jewish Advocacy group AJC, meanwhile, authored a letter to leading House Republicans stressing the critical importance of continued aid to Israel. The letter, addressed to Rep. Hal Rogers, Chairman of the House Committee on Appropriations, and Rep. Paul Ryan, Chairman of the House Committee on the Budget, urged them to reject Paul’s call.

“We are thankful to the Senators for their initiative and we are confident of a positive reception on the Republican side of the House, where the unique friendship between the United States and Israel is equally understood and valued,” says AJC Executive Director David Harris. “Ending aid to Israel would deliver a massive blow to the strategic interests of our country. If the current political upheaval in the Arab world

demonstrates anything, it is that Israel is the only country in the Middle East guaranteed to remain a staunch ally of America, regardless of who is in power."