

Eyeing Political Comeback, Disgraced Former New York Governor Launches 'Progressives for Israel'

Former New York Governor Andrew Cuomo announced on Monday the launch of a pro-Israel organization called "Progressives for Israel," an advocacy group which aims to focus on promoting support for Israel among Democrats.

The former governor made the announcement at an event commemorating the 80th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising, hosted by Rabbi Shmuel Boteach, head of the World Values Network.

"I'm starting an organization called Progressives for Israel. And I'm going to call the question for Democrats: Do you stand with Israel, or do you stand against Israel? Because silence is not an option," Cuomo said.

In pre-recorded remarks, Cuomo also said: "It's time for our officials to condemn anti-Semitism, not just with their words, but their actions. You can't denounce anti-Semitism but waver on Israel's right to exist and defend itself."

Cuomo's political career has been marred by several scandals, including allegations of sexual harassment, which led him to resign in 2021. His latest move is seen as a step towards a potential return to politics.

According to reports, the former governor is expected to challenge New York Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand when she runs for re-election next year.

When making his announcement, Cuomo referred to himself as a

“Shabbos goy,” a non-Jew who is asked by Jews to perform certain types of work that Jewish religious law prohibits a Jew from doing on Shabbat.

“The Shabbos goy can do the work that benefits both the Jewish community and the non-Jewish community,” Cuomo said.

Cuomo’s “Progressives for Israel” initiative comes as a pushback against progressive Democrats, such as Jewish Senator Bernie Sanders and New York Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, who say the United States should start using its military aid to Israel as leverage and condition it upon policies towards the Palestinians.

Polls show that a majority of Democrats, especially among young Americans, hold more positive views towards the Palestinians than toward Israel. In addition, some 26% of Democratic voters say their party’s politicians are more in favor of Israel than they are themselves.

Democratic Representative Jerry Nadler of New York, who is also Jewish, did not welcome the former governor’s new pro-Israel venture.

“Perhaps Mr. Cuomo doesn’t understand that there are a number of progressive, pro-Israel organizations—like New York Jewish Agenda (NYJA)—right here in New York, doing just fine without his ‘help,’” Nadler said.

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