

**DISCLOSURE BY ELECTED PUBLIC EMPLOYEE
OF TRAVEL EXPENSES SERVING A LEGITIMATE PUBLIC PURPOSE
AS REQUIRED BY 930 CMR 5.08(2)(d)2.**

ELECTED PUBLIC EMPLOYEE INFORMATION	
Name of elected public employee:	Eric P. Lesser
Title/ Position	Senator
Agency/ Department	Massachusetts Senate
Agency address:	The State House Boston, MA 02133
Office phone:	617-722-1291
Office e-mail:	Eric.lesser@masenate.gov
Write an X to confirm each statement.	I am filing this disclosure because: ☒ I am going to engage in an activity that serves a legitimate public purpose, i.e., it is intended to promote the interests of the Commonwealth, a county or a municipality; and ☒ A non-public entity (but not a lobbyist) has offered to reimburse, waive or pay travel expenses and costs worth more than \$50.
ACTIVITY THAT SERVES A LEGITIMATE PUBLIC PURPOSE	
Describe the activity which is the reason for traveling.	Senators and staff will be travelling to Israel to meet with government officials, community leaders and other political and cultural experts to discuss issues of importance to both Israel and Massachusetts, including conflict resolution, community building, immigration and commerce.
Describe your participation in the activity.	I will be meeting with and learning from various officials, community leaders and other political and cultural experts.
Date, time and location of activity.	December 5-15, 2019 Jerusalem, Haifa and Tel Aviv
Please explain how the activity will promote the interests of the Commonwealth, a county or a municipality.	While the trip will cover many issues that will have resonance in Massachusetts—including entrepreneurship and technology—its focus is on differing communities learning to live and thrive together. The themes of conflict resolution and community building among different religious and ethnic groups are relevant to Massachusetts and will help inform future policy.

TRAVEL EXPENSES	
Identify the person or organization that offered to reimburse, waive or pay your travel expenses.	Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Boston (JCRC)
Address of person or organization.	Kraft Family Building 126 High Street Boston, MA 02110
Provide information in as much detail as possible:	Itemization and explanation of amounts offered:
Transportation:	<i>Air, train, bus, and taxi fare and rental car hire, etc.</i> Air Travel = \$1,097.96 See other
Lodging:	<i>Overnight accommodations.</i> See other
Meals:	<i>Breakfast, lunch, dinner, special events.</i> See other
Admission:	<i>Registration, admission, tickets, etc.</i> See other
Other (please list):	<i>Refreshment, instruction, materials, entertainment, etc.</i> JCRC is subsidizing the cost of ground transportation, food, driver, guide, hotels and site visits, for a total cost of \$4,652.60. While my spouse will be travelling with me, we will be covering her additional costs ourselves.
Total:	\$4,652.60
Write an X beside any relevant statement.	☒ X I have attached the relevant itinerary. ☒ X I have attached the relevant agenda.
For the exemption to apply, check off <u>both</u> statements.	Having disclosed the facts above, I determine that: ☒ X Acceptance of the reimbursement, waiver or payment of travel expenses will serve a legitimate public purpose i.e., it will promote the interests of the Commonwealth, a county or a municipality; AND ☒ X Such public purpose outweighs any special non-work related benefit to me or to the person providing the reimbursement, waiver or payment.
Employee signature:	
Date:	12/3/19

Attach additional pages if necessary.

Elected state or county employees – file with the State Ethics Commission.

Members of the General Court – file with the House or Senate clerk or the State Ethics Commission.

Elected municipal employee – file with the City Clerk or Town Clerk.

Elected regional school committee member – file with the clerk or secretary of the committee.

welcome

Program dated: October 28, 2019 *

**JCRC OF GREATER BOSTON
ELECTED LEADERS STUDY
TOUR OF ISRAEL
December 5-15, 2019**

**Program is subject to change.*

Day One: Thursday, December 5, 2019

ON THE WAY TO ISRAEL

- Depart the US.

Overnight: Flight

Day Two: Friday, December 6, 2019

THE START OF A SPECIAL JOURNEY

- Arrival at Ben Gurion International Airport. Our representative will be on hand to assist with all formalities and ensure your journey has the smoothest of starts.
- Meet **Mike Hollander**, your tour educator, who will accompany you on this journey of education and inspiration.
- **Welcome to Jerusalem:** Enter the vibrant and colorful ancient city of Jerusalem and experience the convergence of the old and the new.
- Check into the hotel.
- 7:00 p.m. Home hospitality **Shabbat dinner** with **Ruti and Yossi Yudkovitz**.
- Return to the hotel.

Meals: Dinner

Overnight: Leonardo Boutique hotel, Jerusalem

*ברוכים הבאים

Day Three: Saturday, December 7, 2019

THE LAYERS OF JERUSALEM

- Breakfast at an Israeli hotel is an experience in itself. Start the day with a bounteous buffet.
- Depart for the Old City.
- Take a walking tour through Jerusalem's Old City and the Jewish Quarter and experience the center of Jewish life, history, and holiness. Among the highlights will be:
- A walk along the rooftops that will provide an extraordinary scene of multi-faith Jerusalem. From this one spot, we will see the domes of three great religious landmarks: The Church of the Holy Sepulchre (marking where Jesus is believed to have been crucified); the Jewish Quarter's Hurva synagogue; and the Dome of the Rock, one of Islam's most sacred and beautiful sites.
- The Cardo, the main street of Roman-controlled Jerusalem and its spectacular Byzantine-era columns.
- King Hezekiah's Broad Wall, a massive wall built to protect Jerusalem from invasion 2,700 years ago.
- Hurva Square, the center of modern-day life in the Jewish Quarter.
- Lunch in the Old City.
- Enter the Christian Quarter.
- The conclusion of the Via Dolorosa is the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the place where Jesus is believed to have been crucified. This church is one of Christianity's great pilgrimage sites and a testament to the remarkable diversity of the Christian world. It includes an empty tomb where it is said that Jesus was buried and resurrected.
- There will also be time to see the bargains and the bargaining in the Old City Shuk (market) in the Christian Quarter.
- Return to the hotel.
- 5:30 p.m. *Israel and the Geopolitics of the Middle East*: Meet with Nathan Jeffay, a specialist of geopolitics and the Middle East. TBC
- *High Times in the Holy City*: Explore Jerusalem's night life as a young "in the scene" Jerusalemite shows us around the clubs, cafés and bars hidden from most visitors to the capital.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Overnight: Leonardo Boutique hotel, Jerusalem

Day Four: Sunday, December 8, 2019

GEOPOLITICS: FROM THEORY TO FACT

- Depart the hotel.
- 9:00 a.m. ***Speaking Common Languages of Peace:*** Examine the role of shared Jewish-Arab education in creating integrated communities and in turning fear into friendship. We'll tour the Yad b' Yad (Hand in Hand) school in Jerusalem, part of a network of bilingual, multicultural educational institutions which aim to show that the two communities can learn and live together.
- Depart for Gush Etzion
- 11:00 a.m. ***Is Religion the Way Forward or an Obstacle to Peace?*** We'll go beyond the Green Line to meet with Ali Abu Awwad and Rabbi Shaul Judelman from Shorashim (Roots), a program bringing West Bank Palestinians and their Jewish neighbors together despite their fears and suspicions,
- 1:00 p.m. ***My Home in Gush Etzion:*** Meet with Eve Harrow, a local resident of Gush Etzion at lunch at the Gush Etsion winery.
- 2:30 p.m. ***The Geopolitics of Jerusalem:*** Travel through the city of Jerusalem exploring some of the political and diplomatic complexities of recent years; drive around the seam zone with an in-depth study seminar on the ramifications of current developments with Col. (Res.) Danny Tirza, one of the seam zone's designers.
- Return to hotel & free time.
- 6:30 p.m. ***Israeli Politics Through a Gender Lens:*** Dialogue with Hamutal Guri, a specialist in program and leadership development for social change, over dinner at Anna, a Mediterranean restaurant with an Italian influence, situated in the serene and historic Ticho House in Jerusalem's city center.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Overnight: Leonardo Boutique hotel, Jerusalem

Day Five: Monday, December 9, 2019

MEMORY & RENEWAL

- 8:00 a.m. **Navigate Your Way Through the Labyrinth of Israel Politics:** Join Professor Reuven Hazan of the Political Science Department at Hebrew University for an introduction into Israel's turbulent political scene where coalition governments and powerful ideological divisions are a fact of life.
- 9:30 a.m. **Transportation Challenges in Jerusalem** Meet with a representative of the light train company (Name TBA)
- 11:00 a.m. **Innovation for Inclusion:** The innovation lab at the ALYN Pediatric Hospital is researching and producing new technologies to improve the lives of children with special needs. We'll talk with medical entrepreneurs about their work and its impact, and visit their state-of-the-art laboratory.
- Lunch en route.
- 2:00 p.m. **The Holocaust and Contemporary Israeli Society:** Dr. Rachel Korazim will examine how Yad Vashem reflects the Israeli understanding of the Shoah. In particular, we'll explore the radically different ways in which secular Zionist and ultra-Orthodox leaders understood the causes and meaning of the Holocaust. Dr. Korazim is a renowned educator and expert on Israel and the Holocaust. *This will take place at Mount Herzl.*
- 3:15 p.m. Visit **Yad Vashem**, the national memorial to the six million Jewish victims of the Holocaust, an essential emotional and educational experience. Your guided tour will include:
- **The Avenue of the Righteous**, where trees symbolic of the renewal of life have been planted along with plaques honoring brave non-Jews who saved Jews during the Shoah.
- **The Historical Museum**, a state-of-the-art interactive display reflecting decades of research and educational expertise. The story of the Holocaust, with an emphasis on individual victims, is told through survivor testimonies, original artifacts, and personal possessions saved from the ghettos and camps.
- **The Children's Memorial**, commemorating the 1.5 million children lost during the Holocaust.
- Drive through the Israeli "Capitol Hill": along the **Knesset** – Israel's Parliament and its famous Menorah, the **Supreme Court** building, the Prime Minister's Office, the Israeli National Bank, and the future site of the **Israel National Library**.
- 6:00 p.m. **Where Next for Israel's Democracy?** Tour the Knesset and discuss the tensions and strengths of Israel's democracy. We'll meet with a **Knesset member** and hear about the key political issues in the country today (possibly MK Orly Levy Abecassis or MK Karin Elharar pending confirmation).
- **Our Thoughts, Our Journey:** Come together to share experiences and feelings from your journey so far.
- Free evening to explore Jerusalem on your own.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Overnight: Leonardo Boutique hotel, Jerusalem

Day Six: Tuesday, December 10, 2019

THE MOSAIC OF JERUSALEM AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

- Check out of the hotel.
- 8:30 a.m. Meet with **OneVoice** representative. OneVoice is a global initiative that supports grassroots activists in Israel, Palestine, and abroad who are working to build the human infrastructure needed to create the conditions for a resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. TBC
- Depart the hotel and drive to Ramallah.
- 10:30 a.m. **Ramallah** is a Palestinian city on the West Bank, the controversial and complex area split between Israeli control and limited Palestinian self-government. The political center of the Palestinian Authority, Ramallah is sometimes called the “de facto capital of the state of Palestine.”
- **Life in Palestine, 2019:** Tour the streets of Ramallah with **Rami Nazzal**, an internationally published Palestinian journalist. He will provide an authentic, even-handed but raw, account of Palestinian life, politics, and aspirations.
- **Lunch** will be at a Ramallah restaurant or café.
- As we drive north on the Trans-Israel Highway, there will be an opportunity to see the **Security Barrier** which runs along the seam zone between Israel and the Palestinian territories, and to learn about the barrier’s effects on Israeli security and Palestinian communities.
- Drive to **Haifa**, Israel’s largest port is also the city where the country’s Jewish and Arab populations live most closely together. We’ll explore multicultural, multi-faith Haifa.
- Check into the hotel.
- Dinner at restaurant.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch , Dinner

Overnight: Bay Club hotel, Haifa

Day Seven: Wednesday, December 11, 2019

SERENITY AND SECURITY IN THE NORTH

- Check out of the hotel.
- 8:30 a.m. Meet with Haifa Deputy Mayor **David Etzioni**.
- 10:30 a.m. **Northern Borders, Northern Battles:** meet with **Lt. Colonel (Res.) Guy Mala**, a specialist of the Alma Research and Educational Center, will brief us on Israel's geopolitical and security situation, from Mt Adir.
- 1:00 p.m. Visit the **Yemin Orde Youth Village**, one of Israel's most innovative educational institutions, specializing in integrating new immigrant youth into Israeli society. Dialogue with faculty and students, followed by lunch.
- Drive to **Tel Aviv**, also known as "the city that never sleeps." A place of sun and fun, its centers of culture and history are complemented by great beaches, stores, and entertainment.
- Check into the hotel and enjoy an evening at leisure.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Overnight: Tal hotel, Tel Aviv

Day Eight: Thursday, December 12, 2019

COMMUNITIES IN ISRAEL

- Drive south.
- 9:00 a.m. **Living on the Edge:** Proceed to **Moshav Netiv Ha'asarah**, located on Israel's border with the Gaza Strip, meet a resident and discuss the security implications of Israel's withdrawal from Gaza.
- Drive to Bet Shemesh.
- 11:30 a.m. Meet with **Aliza Bloch**, Mayor of Bet Shemesh, to hear from her about her experience and challenges as a women Mayor in Beth Shemesh. (TBC)
- Return to Tel Aviv.
- 3:00 p.m. **Out of East Africa:** Meet African women seeking refuge in Tel Aviv and see how they are working toward a brighter future by creating beautiful crocheted products. **Kuchinate** (meaning crochet in Tigrinya) is a collective that celebrates African art and culture while empowering women asylum-seekers, many of whom suffered great hardships while fleeing to Israel.
- Free time
- 7:00 p.m. **Dinner at Goshen**, an upscale grill restaurant located on the historic Nahalat Binyamin Street with speaker.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Overnight: Tal hotel, Tel Aviv

Day Nine: Friday, December 13, 2019

INNOVATION & CREATIVITY

- 9:00 p.m. Meet with **Lubna Abu Rmaileh** of the Weizmann Institute of Science. TBC
- **Beginnings:** Modern Tel Aviv grew out of ancient Jaffa. Gaze out over the Mediterranean Sea; learn why Jaffa, mentioned in the biblical story of Jonah and the Whale, is so historically important; and see how its Old City reflects the present as well as the past.
- 10:30 a.m. **The Innovation Nation:** The newly opened **Israeli Innovation Center** celebrates the people and companies that are making Israel the “innovation nation.” Located at the **Peres Center for Peace and Innovation**, it includes continually updated, high-tech exhibits on everything from artificial intelligence to the latest developments in water use. We will be welcomed by **Nadav Tamir**, Senior Advisor for Governmental and International Affairs at the Peres Center.
- **A Fallen Leader, A Fallen Soldier:** The assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in 1995 was one of the great traumas of Israeli political history. Discuss his life and death at **Rabin Square**, the place where he was murdered, and take a quiet moment to reflect at the Rabin Memorial. We’ll also see how Rabin Square has become one of the crucial public spaces in Israel and the location for political protests, state ceremonies and spontaneous celebrations.
- **Calling Boutique-Loving Hipsters:** Browse your way through **Nahalat Binyamin**, Tel Aviv’s arts and crafts market, before we check out the hustle and bustle at the **Carmel Market**.
- Return to the hotel.
- 7:00 p.m. **Shabbat dinner** at the Chadar Hahochel restaurant.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Overnight: Tal hotel, Tel Aviv

Day Ten: Saturday, December 14, 2019

INTO THE DESERT: MASADA & THE DEAD SEA

- Enjoy an early breakfast at the hotel before setting out to explore the Dead Sea region.
- 8:00 a.m. *As Low as It Goes:* We'll drive to the Dead Sea Basin, 1412 feet below sea level and the lowest place on earth. The desert, the landscape, and the views are breathtaking.
- *The Last Stand:* Take the cable car to the top of Masada with its extraordinary views and fascinating archaeological remains. This UNESCO World Heritage Site is where Jewish rebels are believed to have made their final attempt to resist Roman invaders (c 74 CE). We'll learn about Masada's importance as a symbol of Jewish defense and discuss its influence on modern Israel.
- *The Sea of Salt:* Float into happiness at the Dead Sea. Not much can live or swim in what is the saltiest piece of water in the world, nine times saltier than the ocean, but the weightless feeling of floating is great fun.
- Return to Tel Aviv.
- *What We've Seen and Felt During Our Journey:* Share the experiences and discoveries that have inspired you during this trip as we get ready to say Shalom U'lehitraot (Bye and see you soon) to Israel.
- 7:00 p.m. Farewell dinner at the Kitchen market restaurant.
- Transfer to Ben Gurion International Airport and check in for your return flight to the US.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Overnight: Flight

Day Eleven: Sunday, December 15, 2019

UNTIL WE MEET AGAIN

- Arrive in the US.

PARTICIPANTS

William Brownsberger

Jeremey Burton

Eli Cohn-Postel

Cynthia Creem

Harvey Creem

Julian Cyr

Cindy Friedman

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