

FROM THE OFFICE OF  
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## **Governor Ron DeSantis Signs MOU with Israel Supporting Travel and Tourism**

**Tel Aviv, Israel** – Today, Governor Ron DeSantis and Israel Minister of Tourism Yariv Gideon Levin signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to support the research, development and implementation of projects to increase bilateral tourism between Florida and Israel. The MOU was signed during a reception in Tel Aviv with VISIT FLORIDA and Disney, and attended by the delegation from Florida and more than 100 travel and trade professionals based in Israel. The MOU is aimed at bringing more visitors from Israel to Florida.

During the reception, Governor DeSantis also highlighted the launch of El Al Airlines' new direct flight to Orlando from Tel Aviv beginning in June. In the last year, scheduled nonstop flight departures from Israel to Florida have increased by nearly seven percent and the United States is projected to welcome more than half a million visitors from Israel in 2021.

"Tourism fosters cultural exchange, strengthens dialogue and fuels the economic development and partnership of nations," **said Governor DeSantis**. "VISIT FLORIDA plays an important role in ensuring that Florida remains top-of-mind with international travelers so visitation to our state remains strong. The Memorandum of Understanding signed today will also strengthen Florida's share of the global travel market to help bolster our economy as we create more opportunities for hardworking Floridians. We are glad to formally highlight Florida as the foremost pro-Israel travel destination in the United States of America."

"In today's highly competitive travel marketplace, it is critical Florida continue to market ourselves as a premier vacation destination to potential travelers," **said VISIT FLORIDA President and CEO Dana Young**. "Since 2012, Florida has increased its international market share from 22.1 to 24.4 percent. This means that nearly a quarter of international visitors to the United States visit Florida. Today's MOU will reinforce the Florida-Israel relationship as we continue to maximize the economic impact of travel to

the state. We thank Governor DeSantis for leading this delegation and making Florida's tourism industry and VISIT FLORIDA a top priority."



*Photo Credit: Governor's Press Office*

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