



# State of New Mexico

## *Office of the Governor*

**Bill Richardson**  
Governor

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## **Governor Richardson Welcomes Israeli Ambassador to New Mexico**

SANTA FE –New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson welcomed Israeli Ambassador Daniel Ayalon to New Mexico last night with a dinner honoring the Ambassador at the Governor’s Mansion. Governor Richardson’s remarks follow:

- “I want to welcome you to New Mexico. We are proud to have you here, and pleased to have the opportunity for this time together.
- Ambassador Ayalon and Mrs. Ayalon: Shalom and welcome to the Land of Enchantment.
- I’d like to acknowledge Israeli Council General Asher Yarden, Attorney General Patricia Madrid, former Attorney General Paul Bardacke, Representative Danice Picraux, Judge Jonathan Sutin, and Mayor Larry Abraham from Los Ranchos de Albuquerque. We are also proud to have Sam Donaldson, Bob Kuckuck from Los Alamos, President Michael Peters from St. John’s, Economic Development Secretary Rick Homans and Jim Lawitz from the Las Cruces Sun News. And finally I want to recognize all the esteemed religious leaders here tonight, Rabbi Flicker, Rabbi Helman, Rabbi Levertov, Rabbi Schwab and Monsignor Jerome Martinez y Alire. Thank you all for being here.
- We are both people with rich cultures, traditions, and histories.
- The history of the Jewish faith in New Mexico is a long and proud one. In politics, the first two Mayors of Albuquerque, as well as mayors of Las Cruces,

Santa Fe and Roswell are included in these ranks. Our earliest territorial economy was also built by pioneering Jewish families like the Ifelds, Seligmans and Staabs. And these are just the ones we know about -- this doesn't include the interesting history of old Hispanic "crypto-Jewish" families that still keep the faith after all these centuries in New Mexico.

- And people of the Jewish faith are still helping to move our state forward. I am proud to be surrounded by so many of you here tonight.
- I have been to Israel as a Congressman, UN Ambassador, Energy Secretary and as a private citizen. In my eight trips I have seen a strong country that honors tradition and is working hard to create a positive future. I believe Israel and New Mexico have many shared goals.
- Since I became Governor I have worked to strengthen these ties. I am proud that I reopened our trade office in 2003 and that in December 2003, for the first time, New Mexico invested \$10 million in Israel in the form of Israel bonds.
- New Mexico is proud to be a strong economic partner with Israel through our trade office in Jerusalem (\$27.7 million in '05). Israel is a world leader in high tech including biotechnology, nanotechnology, microsystems, defense electronics, and information technology. As such, the Israeli economy is a perfect fit for the increasingly high tech-oriented New Mexico economy.
- I know that this has been a tough year for the State of Israel and I want to offer my prayers to Prime Minister Sharon, but I am proud that the partnership between our two countries has never been stronger. We are fortunate to have each other in the fight against terrorism and in advancing our common cause of a lasting peace in the Middle East.
- Our countries face many of the same challenges—from terrorism and security, to the global economy and increasing trade. We also face many of the same opportunities: to work together across our borders, to form new partnerships, to expand new markets, and to find new ways to help all of our people.
- Will you all please join me in a toast to Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Ambassador and Mrs. Ayalon? May our two states continue to work together to advance the causes of peace and commerce. I thank you for being here tonight and I welcome you to New Mexico.“