



**FACT SHEET:
AMBASSADOR DAVID FRIEDMAN'S BROKEN PROMISES TO SENATORS**

US Ambassador to Israel David Friedman was met with an unprecedented level of scrutiny and opposition during his confirmation process, with 46 Senators ultimately voting against him. To secure the slim majority of votes needed to become ambassador, he was forced to renounce almost his entire record. Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Bob Corker observed that Friedman had “recant[ed] every single strongly held belief that you’ve expressed, almost.”

Yet time and again since then, Amb. Friedman’s actions and remarks in office have reflected his personal opinions, contradicted longstanding bipartisan US policy and broken the promises he made to Senators — much to the delight of those who oppose a two-state solution.

Here are some of the most significant instances of Amb. Friedman’s inappropriate actions and broken promises:

- May 2018 - In an [interview given in his office in the US Embassy](#), Friedman made inappropriate — and highly inaccurate — partisan comments, including that: “There’s no question Republicans support Israel more than Democrats.” These comments are a serious breach of protocol and ethical norms for a sitting US Ambassador. They are also a violation of assurances he gave in his SFRC testimony that “I want to assure you that I understand the critical difference between the partisan rhetoric of a political contest and a diplomatic mission. Partisan rhetoric is not appropriate in achieving diplomatic progress, especially in a sensitive and strife-torn region like the Middle East.”
- May 2018 - In the above-mentioned [interview](#), Friedman also undermined and confused longstanding US policy on Israeli settlements in the West Bank, asserting the legitimacy of settlements and stating that: “I don’t believe the settlements are illegal. I think I’ve been clear on that for years.” This flies in the face of his pledge to Senators that: “If confirmed by the Senate, I also intend to faithfully observe the directions given me by the president and the secretary of state without regard to my personal opinions.”
- May 2018 - Friedman [invited](#) anti-Semitic, anti-Muslim pastor Jeffress — who has said “you can’t be saved by being a Jew” — to be an official speaker at the opening of the US Embassy in Jerusalem. In a notable contrast, Democratic lawmakers [indicated](#) that Amb. Friedman did not invite them to the Embassy opening, expressing concern of a “dangerous effort to politicize the U.S.-Israel relationship.”

- May 2018 - It was [revealed](#) that American Friends of Beit El Yeshiva Center — the pro-settlement charity that Friedman headed — funnelled thousands of dollars under his watch to a right-wing extremist group with the exact same name and similar ideology as a group that had been designated a terrorist organization by the United States and Canada. Yet, in his nomination hearings prior to this revelation, Friedman had testified regarding his role as president of the charity that: “everything that we've given money to has been in the nature of gymnasiums, dormitories, dining rooms, classrooms, things like that. So my philanthropic activity there has not been connected to their political activity which I really had no part in.”
- March 2018 - In a speech, Friedman [maligned](#) Americans who describe themselves as pro-Israel and pro-peace, including J Street and liberal American Jews who he had [defamed](#) in the past, saying, “It's no less than blasphemous to suggest that any Jew or Christian is against peace.” Such comments are a clear abrogation of repeated pledges he made during his testimony before the SFRC such as: “If I am confirmed, you should expect my comments to be respectful and measured”; “I have and will continue to reject the inflammatory comments” and “I will pledge to you that I will do everything I can to do that and I will be inclusive and respectful of different views.”
- February 2018 - Friedman [told](#) a group of Jewish leaders that evacuation of 400,000 settlers from the West Bank as part of an Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement could lead to a “civil war” and stated definitively that the settlers “are not going anywhere.” In his remarks, Friedman reportedly also played down the significance of Israeli-Palestinian peace, claiming that an agreement was not needed to secure Israel's future as a Jewish and democratic state. All of these comments constitute a violation of his above-mentioned pledge to Senators that: “If confirmed by the Senate, I also intend to faithfully observe the directions given me by the president and the secretary of state without regard to my personal opinions.”
- December 2017 - Friedman [reportedly requested](#) that the State Department cease using the terms “occupation” and “Israeli-occupied territories” to refer to Israeli rule in the West Bank. Subsequent to this reported effort, the State Department's April 2018 annual report on human rights worldwide [dropped](#) its longstanding reference to the Palestinian territories as occupied. This represents, at best, an eliding of Friedman's personal views and US policy, if not another abrogation of his above-mentioned pledge to subordinate his personal views to the official positions of the US Government.
- September 2017 - Friedman falsely [told the press](#) that “settlements are part of Israel” and that Israel is “only occupying 2 percent of the West Bank.” His comments were so incorrect and dangerous that the State Department was forced to [publicly clarify](#) that they did not represent a shift in US policy — proof that his comments were a violation of his pledge to adhere to official US policy rather than promote his personal views.