

Governor Rhoden Leads Trade Mission to Israel

PIERRE, SD – This week, Governor Larry Rhoden is leading a business-driven trade mission to Israel alongside South Dakota Trade. By the end of his first full day in the Holy Land, he will have met with President Isaac Herzog, Speaker of the Knesset Amir Ohana, and Foreign Minister Gideon Sa’ar of Israel. You can find photos of his meetings with President Herzog and Foreign Minister Sa’ar [here](#) and [here](#), respectively.

“South Dakota continues to be an economic leader – both nationally and internationally. Israel has been a key partner in our state’s economic success, and I was honored to meet with the Israeli leaders to strengthen our relationship,” said **Governor Larry Rhoden**. “By working together with countries across the globe, we will keep South Dakota Open for Opportunity for generations to come.”

The Governor is leading a business delegation made up of defense and agriculture businesses that are actively seeking sales in the Israeli market.

“This mission is 100% business-driven,” said **Jesse Fonkert, President & CEO of South Dakota Trade**. “We had a successful mission in November of last year and are back because our businesses are generating real opportunities that have already produced millions in sales and a robust pipeline for even more expansion.”

Governor Rhoden also conducted a wreath-laying ceremony at Yad Vashem, the World Holocaust Remembrance Center. You can find a photo of that ceremony [here](#). Governor Rhoden also saw sections of the memorial specific to the Mauthausen concentration camp, which his father helped liberate near the end of World War II.

President Trump’s newly confirmed Ambassador, Mike Huckabee, will host a reception to honor the Governor’s visit.

Governor Rhoden also visited the Gandel Rehabilitation Center at Hadassah’s Mt. Scopus Hospital to meet with recovering soldiers who have been injured since the start of the war. This stop was coordinated by South Dakota Jewish community leader Carol Rosenthal, who serves as the Chair of Hadassah International. You can find a photo of the visit [here](#).

“The Gandel Rehabilitation Center is a beacon of hope that serves as a home where the wounded come to gradually regain their lives through physical and emotional rehabilitation,” said **Carol Rosenthal**. “I’d like to thank Governor Rhoden for visiting Hadassah during his time in Israel. I’m confident that he will see first-hand the resilience of the Israeli people and that our Jewish friends and neighbors here in South Dakota will never forget this statement of support.”

Governor Rhoden is joined by the Governor's Office of Economic Development Deputy Commissioner Joe Fiala, who attended the first trade mission to Israel in November 2024. Governor Rhoden and the trade delegation are hosting, a "Doing Business in South Dakota" seminar that focused on recruiting foreign direct investment into the state.

"South Dakota was the first state to bring a trade mission to Israel after the horrific attacks on October 7, 2023," said **Deputy Commissioner Joe Fiala**. "Being there in person demonstrated our commitment to building relationships with the Israeli people. Our trade missions have created new friendships, stronger business ties, and exciting opportunities for our state's economy."

Rabbi Mendel Alperowitz of Sioux Falls, SD, is also joining Governor Rhoden and the business delegates in Israel.

"Governor Rhoden has been a true friend to the Jewish community here in South Dakota, and I am incredibly grateful he included me on this visit to the Holy Land," said **Rabbi Alperowitz**.

Trade missions to the UK/Ireland and Canada are currently being planned for later in 2025. Interested businesses should reach out to Rachael Weiland from South Dakota Trade at rachael.weiland@southdakotatrade.com.

South Dakota Trade is a 501(c)(6) association that navigates international trade for South Dakota. The Association has offices in Sioux Falls and Rapid City. For additional information, please visit www.southdakotatrade.com.