



## Candidate Questionnaire

### 1. **General Information**

Candidate Name:

Jimmy Panetta

Office Sought:

California's 19<sup>th</sup> Congressional District

Proposed Ballot Designation:

U.S. Representative

(Or Occupation Listing)

Campaign Mailing Address:

Jimmy Panetta for Congress

P.O. Box 103

Carmel Valley, CA 93924

Candidate/Body Person Cell Phone:

Plasha Will: (831) 521-5840

Candidate Email Address:

info@jimmypanetta.com

### 2. **Campaign Team**

Provide the names, email, and cell phone numbers for your campaign team:

Name: Plasha Will

Email: plashawill@gmail.com

Phone: (831) 521-5840

### 3. **Elected Office**

Do you currently, or have you ever held public office?

Yes

If yes, which public office(s) have you held and when did you do so?

U.S. Representative, 20<sup>th</sup> Congressional District, California (2017 – present)

### 4. **Personal and Political Background**

Current Occupation:

Member of Congress

Are you a registered Democrat?

Yes

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Have you ever been registered with another political party or selected “Decline to State” or “No Party Preference” for your voter registration party affiliation, and if so, for what period?

No

In less than 250 words, briefly summarize your personal background (work experience, education, community involvement, etc.).

As a U.S. Representative for just over five years, I have authored and had signed into law several pieces of federal legislation that support our men and women in the military and their families, enhance the lives of homeless veterans, help manage our federal forests, bolster the habitats of pollinators, and ensure security for those in hospice care. I have fought for and secured millions in federal funding for affordable housing, farmworker protections, and infrastructure investment. I also helped author the Farm Bill and the USMCA trade bill to protect and promote our agriculture. I fought to reverse harmful environmental policies to sustain coastal and ocean resources. I secured compensation for restaurants, small businesses, farmers, farmworkers, and hospice providers to offset losses resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. As a member of the Ways and Means, Agriculture, and Armed Services Committees, I am able to work on many of the solutions for the issues that affect us on the Central Coast.

Prior to Congress, I graduated from U.C. Davis and Santa Clara University School of Law. I then became a deputy district attorney in Oakland and Salinas. I was a U.S. Naval Officer that was mobilized and deployed to Afghanistan. I also worked to address veterans’ homelessness, create Monterey County’s first veterans’ treatment court, and establish the Central Coast Veterans Cemetery. I was a 2015 Monterey County Veteran of the Year.

My wife is a superior court judge and we have two daughters that attend my same high school.

What endorsements have you received from organizations and prominent individuals? (You may either use the space below or attach a separate list.)

Please find my endorsements linked to my campaign website [here](#).

5. Check boxes:

Previously held positions in the 2022 election cycle:

In the 2022 cycle have you:

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	Have you affirmed to any other organization to boycott or not take trips to Israel from any particular sponsor to learn about Israel or Palestine?
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	Have you endorsed, supported or opposed any bills as a result of your position, would reduce, withhold or condition aid to Israel?

In the past five years, have you:

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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Participated in an organized activity, including a forum, on Israel or related issues? <sup>1</sup>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<p>While holding office, introduced or co-sponsored legislation (other than purely ceremonial, supportive measures) on Israel or related issues or the Jewish community? If yes, please specify which kinds in this box below:</p> <p>I cosponsored the U.S.-Israel Cooperation Enhancement and Regional Security Act, which improves defense and security assistance to Israel, and improves our mutual cooperation on R&amp;D, directed energy capabilities, cybersecurity, and technology.</p> <p>I cosponsored the Responsible Withdrawal from Syria Act to reduce the total number of U.S. troops deployed to Syria and requires the Departments of State, Defense and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence to submit reports to Congress addressing the prospect of a conflict between Israel and Iran in Syria and Lebanon.</p> <p>I cosponsored resolutions supporting the announcement of the establishment of full diplomatic relations between the state of Israel and the Kingdom of Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates.</p> <p>I cosponsored the Expanding Medical Partnerships with Israel to Lessen Dependence on China Act, which authorizes a bilateral grant program with Israel to develop health technologies with an emphasis on the use of personalized medicine and data in relation to COVID-19, artificial intelligence, respiratory assist devices, and diagnostic tests.</p> <p>I cosponsored a bill to reaffirm the critical role of congressional consultation and to require appropriate deliberation to assess the effects of the sale or export of defense articles or services to the Middle East so that any decision made under the Arms Export Control Act does not adversely affect Israel’s qualitative military edge.</p> <p>I cosigned a letter led by Reps. Norcross and Turner requesting that the House Appropriations Committee support \$1 billion in supplemental funding to replenish the Iron Dome and language to ensure U.S. manufacturers will support the replenishment of the Iron Dome through co-production in any future FY22 appropriations package.</p>

<sup>1</sup>

Oct. 10, 2021: For Country Caucus Member-level forum on the future of warfare;  
Mar. 8, 2022: Joint Briefing with Rep. Schneider and AIPAC on Iran’s Nuclear Program

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	<p>I cosigned a letter led by Reps. Deutch and McCaul requesting that the Appropriations Committee fully funds security assistance to Israel as authorized in the 2016 U.S. - Israel Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).</p> <p>I signed a letter led by Reps. Brown and Waltz supporting a U.S. foreign policy encouraging Iran to return to its nuclear agreement (JCPOA) while addressing its regional aggression.</p> <p>I co-wrote a letter signed by 35 members of the U.S. House to the Administration demanding answers on U.S. foreign policy toward Iran and the current relationship in response to the military operation targeting General Soleimani in Baghdad.</p> <p>I signed a letter to the Secretary of Homeland Security expressing support for Israel's participation in U.S. Customs and Border Protection's Global Entry program, which allows expedited entry upon arrival to the U.S. for pre-approved, low-risk travelers.</p> <p>I co-signed a letter to the Appropriations Committee requesting \$6 million to implement the U.S.-Israel Energy Cooperative Agreement and to develop the U.S.-Israel Energy Center in the Energy and Water Appropriations Bill</p> <p>I co-wrote and led a letter from California's congressional delegation calling on the Administration to stop a proposed rule that would restrict our state's flexibility in administering the Supplement Nutrition Assistance Program, known as CalFresh in California. The President and CEO of Mazon: A Jewish Response to Hunger, Abby J. Liebman, expressed support from my letter: <i>"Announcing such a cruel policy during the Jewish community's holiest time of year dramatically reminds us of the failure of this Administration to act with common decency, let alone higher values...it will throw literally over one million Californians into hunger, including some of our most vulnerable neighbors: veterans, military families, seniors, Native Americans, and college students. As an organization headquartered in California, we are proud of the leadership of Reps. Panetta, Lee, Costa, and so many others in calling on USDA to rescind this short-sighted proposal."</i></p> <p>I also made the following public statements and trips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● May 2021: Denounced violence in Israel in response to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict of that month.</li></ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Oct. 2018: Joined Carmel Beth Israel congregation to express support for the victims of the Pittsburgh synagogue shooting.</li><li>● March 2018: Traveled with a congressional delegation led by Speaker Nancy Pelosi to Jerusalem to meet with Israeli President Reuven Rivlin and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and to Tel Aviv to meet opposition leader Isaac Herzog to reiterate American support for a two-state solution and for peace in the region.</li><li>● May 2017: Expressed support for the non-binding House Resolution disapproving UN Security Council Resolution regarding Israeli settlements.</li><li>● August 2017: Traveled to Israel on a congressional trip led by Majority Leader Steny Hoyer that was sponsored by the American Israel Education Foundation.</li></ul>
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## **6. Policy Questions**

Please describe your positions on the following issues. Please limit your responses to 250 words for each response. If you wish, one response may include up to 500 words.

1. Please describe your relationship, if any, with the Jewish community in the area you serve as an elected official:

I have an excellent working relationship with my Jewish constituency. I am proud that many of my closest friends, supporters and advisors are Jewish. Since I was elected, I have been a vocal proponent for a close relationship between the United States and Israel, which has always been a strong American ally and the most reliable democracy in the Middle East. I have stood with my constituents to support Israel at public events in the district as well as on the floor of the House.

I have consistently supported a two-state solution. I believe that we should use our diplomatic and development capabilities to encourage direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. As part of this approach, Palestinian leaders must recognize Israel as a Jewish State and end terrorist attacks on Israeli civilians.

Additionally, I have consistently supported annual U.S. foreign aid to Israel and voted to increase funding for the Iron Dome.

2. Hate Crimes: Do you see Antisemitism as a Hate Crime? How do you propose working on Hate Crimes if you are elected?

Yes, crimes that are motivated by antisemitism should be considered hate crimes. I am committed to fighting hate in all its forms, including antisemitism, wherever and whenever it appears. Anybody using anti-Semitic metaphors or prejudicial accusations about Israel and its supporters must be denounced accordingly. Whether a Democrat or a Republican, we must continue to reject antisemitism. As Americans, we must continue to support our shared democratic values with Israel.

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I have voted on several measures designed to strengthen penalties against hate crimes in response to an increase in violence against Asian Americans during the coronavirus pandemic. Last year, I voted to instruct the Department of Justice to expedite the review of hate crimes related to COVID-19 and make the reporting of hate crimes more accessible at the local and state levels, including providing online reporting resources that are available in multiple languages.

Additionally, I voted for the “Never Forget Education Act”, which provides \$10 million in federal funding for expansive education resources at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum to ensure that future generations of American students will be taught about the horrors of the Holocaust which is particularly important in response to the increase of antisemitic attacks in the U.S. and fears that memories of the Holocaust will fade with the declining population of survivors.

One of the first resolutions I introduced reiterated the indisputable fact that the Nazi regime targeted Jewish people in its perpetration of the Holocaust and called on every entity in the executive branch to affirm that fact. Sadly, this resolution was necessary in response to the Trump Administration’s statement on Holocaust Remembrance Day in 2017 that did not include a reference to Jewish people targeted during the Holocaust.

I also supported legislation denouncing violence in Israel in response to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in May 2021, expressing sympathy and solidarity with the Carmel Beth Israel congregation in Pittsburgh to express support for the victims of the synagogue shooting, and creating a special envoy in the Department of State to monitor and combat antisemitism. I am proud that Congress always comes together to make clear that antisemitism cannot and will not be tolerated.

Additionally, I believe that we should take a proactive approach to prevent antisemitism, which is why I hosted a virtual roundtable on the rise of hate crimes with members of the Central Coast Asian American and Pacific Islander community. We listened to the testimonies and experiences of those in attendance and discussed efforts at the federal level to curb hate crimes against any ethnicity or religion. Attendees included individuals who were born and forced to stay in internment camps during World War II, community activists focused on rooting out hate locally, professors and educators, and community members who have experienced antisemitism, anti-Asian sentiment and other forms of ethnic and religious-based discrimination. This informative and important roundtable was a model forum that could be applied to discuss how antisemitism affects the Jewish community on the Central Coast.

**3. Do you support or oppose efforts to boycott Israel (BDS)? Have you had any discussions with your community about BDS?**

I cosponsored the Israel Anti-Boycott Act and voted for overwhelmingly bipartisan legislation opposing efforts to delegitimize the state of Israel and the global boycott, divestment, and sanctions movement targeting Israel. The bill is a response to resolutions passed by the United Nations Human Rights Council over U.S. objections that addressed Israeli violations of international humanitarian law in the occupied territories and called for companies to avoid, identify, assess and address any adverse human rights impacts related to their activities.

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I believe this legislation also sends an important signal that the U.S. is committed to a negotiated two-state solution to ensure that Israel is Jewish and Democratic and that we are doing all that we can to promote peace in the Middle East. In the last Congress, I also voted for bipartisan legislation imposing economic sanctions on foreign persons, agencies and governments that assist Hamas, the Palestinian Islamic Jihad or their affiliates.

4. Ethnic Studies Program: Would you support state policies that ensure that Jewish-American lesson plans are included in the Ethnic Studies curriculum? Would you work to change lesson plans that denigrate Jews, Judaism and Israel?

As a federal representative of the Central Coast in the U.S. House of Representatives, I do not have jurisdiction or voting rights in state policies. However, I can assert my leadership by expressing support in general that Jewish-American plans should be included in California's ethnic studies curriculum. I would also like to take this opportunity to express my strong support for – and would encourage my colleagues in the state assembly and senate – to remove any material in lesson plans or other places that denigrate Jews, Judaism and Israel. I support this standard at the national level and with respect to all relevant federal education policies and regulations administered by the U.S. Department of Education and its agencies.

5. As a Democrat, what steps can we take to help fight antisemitism on both the left and the right?

Millions of Jewish people in the U.S. and around the world continue to be confronted with various forms of hate. I strongly support rooting out antisemitic words and actions tied to deeply ingrained anti-Jewish bias. I firmly believe that we can ultimately prevail over such discrimination by continuing to raise awareness, provide educational programs, and training and resources throughout elementary and secondary education and into college and university settings.

In order to prevail over antisemitism, we must expand our national dialogue, including in the United States Congress. We should continue to invite leading researchers, policy experts and leaders in the technology industry to help us combat all forms of hate, particularly online forms of harassment that has proliferated in recent years and compounded our isolation during the pandemic.

I will continue to support anti-discrimination and bullying prevention programs in order to help students and educators understand and challenge bias and empower them to stand up to antisemitism. This will help all Americans come to understand at a young age the effects of intolerance on our society and to make sure they have access to the resources necessary to help identify antisemitism and develop proactive strategies and responses to all forms of hate.

6. What other issues do you think are unique or important to the Jewish and pro-Israel community, and how do you propose to make a difference with these issues and keep in touch with the community?

I have always admired how Israel has withstood decades of attacks from its neighbors in

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the region and yet has managed to maintain a free and open, prosperous, and multi-cultural and tolerant society that is at the leading edge of many technological, medical and other innovative breakthroughs. It is imperative for the U.S. to maintain a strong bilateral relationship with Israel and to continue supporting its position as the oldest Middle Eastern democracy and a source of strength and stability in one of the world's most volatile and unstable regions. Therefore, we must continue to build on the mutual success of our two nation's long friendship and alliance by continuing to support its traditions and values as a democracy and as an enduring beacon of freedom, religious liberty and tolerance to the world.

Iran has been a threat to stability in the region and around the world, and it would become even more dangerous if it were to gain a nuclear weapon. I supported the Iran nuclear agreement (JCPOA) as a comprehensive diplomatic solution to end Iran's nuclear program. I regret President Trump's decision to withdraw the U.S from the agreement and am hopeful the Biden Administration will return to work with Iran to improve and renew its important security and nonproliferation provisions.

Additionally, I support the intent of the Abraham Accords, which normalized diplomatic relations between the UAE, Bahrain and Israel and that could help advance strategic relationships with other countries in the Middle East. These accords should remain a pillar of U.S foreign policy toward the region.

Thank you for your time and effort to complete this Questionnaire

Contact information:

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