



## California-Israel Leaders Sign Pledge to Collaborate on Renewable Energy

In Tel Aviv, Israel, Assemblymember Bob Blumenfield (D-San Fernando Valley, California); Minister Benjamin Ben Eliezer, Israeli Minister of Industry, Trade and Labor, Lee Wallach, President of the Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life / Faith2Green and business leaders from California and Israel met to discuss next steps of a collaboration between the state of California and Israel on renewable energy research and development. The collaboration was called for in legislation authored by Blumenfield (AB 1032), sponsored by Faith2Green and announced after Minister Ben Eliezer and California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed the letter of intent expanding collaboration on renewable energy research and business development. “As California takes on the challenge of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, there is much we can learn from the experience and expertise of Israel. In turn, Israel can benefit from improved

communication with, and access to, California's emerging green-technology sector," Blumenfeld said. "I am pleased that the state of California is moving forward quickly on the idea. Our delegation can take this effort to the next level and make it a reality." As a leading trade partner with California, Israel offers a place for potential business and trade partners as well as for innovative programs and ideas. Since 1996, California has exported nearly \$12 billion in manufacturing goods to Israel and received over \$130 million for investments in enterprises.

California and Israeli companies worked together to build the world's largest solar power plant that has generated approximately 90 percent of the world's commercial solar-derived electricity in the past 19 years. Cooperative bilateral agreements between California and Israel have been used successfully over the years to encourage the growth of mutually beneficial trade and investment relations in such areas as high technology, tourism, biomedicine, and agro-technology. The Letter of Intent between California and Israel announced this week will promote business investments and spur development of "clean technologies" that include renewable energy and innovative water conservation technologies for the global market. Among other things, the effort will provide for improved strategic coordination in clean technology development; facilitated collaboration among business and academics to increase global market opportunities and employment associated with renew-able energy and other clean technologies; and promotion of the development and production of innovative and globally competitive renewable energy products and clean technology that would contribute to sustained job growth in California and Israel.