



**The Secretary of Energy**  
Washington, DC 20585

August 12, 2016

The Honorable Maria Cantwell  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Cantwell:

Thank you for your May 6 letter inquiring about the establishment of a U.S.-Israel Energy Center and congratulating the Department on the signing of the amendment to the existing Agreement between the U.S. Department of Energy and Israel's Ministry of National Infrastructure, Energy and Water Resources Concerning Energy Cooperation of February 22, 2000.

I fully share your views that the U.S. and Israel both face significant energy challenges, that each of our countries possesses unique capabilities in the areas of energy research and innovation, and that our countries can both benefit from robust cooperation. Indeed, our two countries already benefit from the extensive work we are conducting jointly in renewable energy, the energy-water nexus, energy cybersecurity, and other areas.

The activities and cooperation between DOE and Israel form an important partnership that provides benefits to both countries. The ongoing relationship with Israel remains a priority for the Department, and I support expanded collaboration with our Israeli counterparts. You and your colleagues have expressed a keen interest the establishment of a joint U.S.-Israel Energy Center, and I share that goal. I have directed the Department to work with Israel with the aim to establish a structured joint research center in FY17. While the ultimate structure of such a center will depend on the outcome of those bilateral discussions, such a center could resemble similar bilateral technology collaborations that involve contributions from both partner countries, as well as a private sector matching requirement from within each country to maximize the center's impact.

The center will build on the extensive engagement that already exists between our two countries through the U.S.-Israel Energy Dialogue, as well as through programs such as the Israel-U.S. Binational Industrial Research and Development Foundation (BIRD) Energy program, the upcoming energy-water desalination challenge, and others. We are confident that a potential new center would help institutionalize and further U.S.-Israel energy cooperation.

Thank you again for your interest in the Department's partnership with Israel, and I hope to have your support in securing funding from Congress for this center in the future. If you have further questions, please feel free to contact me or Jed D'Ercole, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs, at (202) 586- 5450.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ernest J. Moniz".

Ernest J. Moniz

