

Brownstein

DATE: May 21, 2024

TO: Mayor of Newark

FROM: Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck

RE: Appointment with Ambassador of Bahrain Thursday or Friday

Potential Talking Points

- Bahrain is an important regional ally for the United States, serving as the home for U.S. naval operations in the Middle East and maintaining relations with Israel, being one of the signatories of the Abraham Accords. The partnership contributes to deterring threats, promoting maritime security, and countering extremism. Bahrain and the United States have enjoyed a diplomatic relationship for over 52 years, established in 1971.
- This long-standing partnership forms the bedrock of their close cooperation on various fronts, including in the Persian Gulf War, Desert Storm and the Afghanistan conflict as part of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). The partnership contributes to deterring threats, promoting maritime security, and countering extremism.
- Most recently, Bahrain and the United States signed the Comprehensive Security Integration and Prosperity Agreement (C-SIPA) to improve both security and economic cooperation between our two countries.
- This agreement is a landmark achievement for Bahrain and the United States, which creates a blueprint for American relations with other countries in the Gulf. It will deepen economic ties, enhance security cooperation, and expand our bilateral relationship to new areas of shared interest including technology, education, and culture.
- In this fraught time for the region, Bahrain remains one of the few regional countries to recognize Israel, and is the only Arab country to have participated in the recent naval operations to counter Houthi aggression in Yemen and protect global shipping lanes in the Red Sea.
- Bahrain and the United States share a commitment to regional stability, peace, and human rights. Bahrain is a staunch advocate of religious freedom and our national values on protecting the freedom of belief and worship are in line with the United States. Our society and culture has a tradition of tolerance and acceptance of all faiths, and our laws reflect those values.
- We are also personally threatened by a major enemy of the United States, Iran, which has attempted to claim Bahrain as part of its rightful historical territory. Bahrain could be essential in helping establish a wider Gulf and Middle East coalition united against the malign activities of Tehran and the Ayatollah.
- In addition, Bahrain is an important economic partner for America, hosting a U.S. Free Trade Zone (FTZ) and serving as one of the largest exporters of aluminum to the United States. The

U.S.-Bahrain Free Trade Agreement, signed in 2006, has significantly boosted bilateral trade. In 2022, trade volume reached \$2.8 billion, demonstrating the strong economic partnership between the two countries.

- The U.S.-Bahrain Free Trade Agreement fosters robust bilateral trade and investment. Bahrain is actively diversifying its economy beyond oil and gas, focusing on innovation, renewable energy, and technology, creating lucrative opportunities for American businesses.
- Despite this, Bahrain is still subject to the Section 232 tariffs on aluminum and steel that were enacted by the Trump administration and continued by the Biden administration. These tariffs were created to counter coercive economic activity by adversaries like China, not allies like Bahrain. Even a partial exemption for the aluminum portion of the duties would be immensely beneficial for my country.