



OFFICE OF CONGRESSMAN RON KLEIN
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Klein Hails Posthumous Pardon of Florida Citizen Who Aided Birth of Israel

Rep. Klein led bipartisan Florida Delegation in request for Presidential Pardon

Boca Raton, FL – Congressman Ron Klein (FL-22) today hailed the posthumous pardon granted to Charles Winters, a Florida citizen who worked to provide several aircraft to the Jewish armed forces in pre-war Israel for its defense during the 1948 Israeli Independence War. For his work, Winters was convicted under the Neutrality Act and served time in prison.

In August of this year, Congressman Klein led the bipartisan Florida Congressional delegation in a letter supporting the pardon of Winters. President George W. Bush granted the pardon today, marking only the second posthumous Presidential pardon in modern times.

“President Bush made the right decision today to issue a posthumous pardon to Charles Winters, a Florida resident who played an essential role in the creation of the state of Israel,” Klein said.

“Mr. Winters and two other Americans, who were previously pardoned by President Kennedy and President Clinton, acted at great personal risk to fight for a cause they believed in. The raw guts and extraordinary bravery of their actions proved essential to the state of Israel at a critical moment, when it was besieged by enemies on all sides.

“The story of Mr. Winters is one we should all remember when we are called to stand up for just causes, regardless of the consequences. I am certain that the President’s decision will be a welcome holiday gift to Mr. Winters’ surviving family.”

Charles Winters was released from prison on November 17, 1949 and lived a quiet life thereafter in Miami. He passed away in 1984, but his son Jim Winters and the Jewish Federation of Palm Beach County later submitted a pardon application on his behalf. Two other Americans who supported the creation of the state of Israel, Al Schwimmer and Hank Greenspun, were pardoned by Presidents Clinton and Kennedy, respectively.

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