

Many Americans who thought that the health care debate was important must have wondered where their congressmen were in early August during the first two weeks of the House of Representatives recess. It turns out they were not hosting town hall meetings or listening to constituents because many of them were in Israel together with their spouses on a trip paid for by the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC).

Fully 13% of the entire US House of Representatives, 56 members, traveled to Israel in the largest AIPAC-sponsored fact-finding visit by American politicians ever conducted. And the leaders of the two congressional groups, 25 Republicans for a week starting on August 2nd followed by 31 Democrats beginning on August 13th, were drawn from the top ranks of their respective parties. House Minority whip Eric Cantor headed the Republican group and House Majority leader Steny Hoyer led the Democrats.

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