The Shabbat bill controversy:
A focused perspective on the religious debate and the conduct of religious politicians

In Hiddush’s last newsletter, we highlighted a number of aspects involving the current controversy over the Shabbat bill. What we would now like to share with you, our colleagues, is a more focused perspective on the religious debate and the conduct of religious politicians in this controversy. This will give you deeper insight as to how this controversy factors in the ongoing debate over religion and state. This account is not advocating that all stores be open on Shabbat. On the contrary, what Hiddush has been advocating for is a serious and responsible re-assessment of the social, economic, and legal aspects of Shabbat in the Jewish and democratic State. Only in this way can Israel establish a balance between these often conflicting values.
The Israeli public discourse and news bulletins were dominated by the updates and reports on the status of the Shabbat bill. Below, we are highlighting the views of the religious participants in the debate. This debate helps us understand the positions of the religious players in Israel’s religion-state debate.

It’s important to appreciate how heated the debates over this Shabbat bill were. There was a record setting filibuster effort on the part of the opposition, with extremely contentious and sensitive crisis points that brought out some of the most contentious issues – and some of the most objectionable initiatives – due to the pressure to deliver the adoption of the bill.

In this analysis, Uri Regev explores different facets of this recent controversy, which include:

- The desperation of the ultra-Orthodox parties and the Coalition to pass this bill
- Where are traditional Israeli Jews on this controversy?
- How should Israel deal with Shabbat?
- Politicians Blaming the Supreme Court
- Passing the bill by threatening to bring down the government
- Making non-religious, moralistic arguments

Contact us

Email: ruach@hiddush.org
Phone (US): 415-261-3404
Phone (Israel): 054-779-1179

READ MORE >>>
Ruach Hiddush is a network of Rabbis and Cantors working to fully realize the promise of Israel's Declaration of Independence, which guarantees religious freedom and equality. The fulfillment of this promise is vital for strengthening Israel as a Jewish and democratic state, and for maintaining the solidarity of world Jewry.

a project of Hiddush