



Committee On Finance

Max Baucus, Ranking Member

NEWS RELEASE

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Senators Press Appropriators to Retain Provisions Eliminating Cuba Travel Ban *Baucus, Enzi, Craig, and Dodd Send Letter to Treasury-Transportation Conferees*

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) A group of U.S. Senators who have been leading the fight to allow Americans to travel to Cuba and open borders between the two countries, today sent a letter to House and Senate Appropriation conferees stating that provisions to lift the travel ban must remain in the final bill that is sent to the President's desk.

Senators Max Baucus (D-Mont.), Mike Enzi (R-Wyo.), Larry Craig (R-Idaho) and Christopher Dodd (D-Conn.) today insisted that the Cuba provisions remain in the fiscal year 2004 Treasury-Transportation bill throughout conference negotiation or the group will "consider all parliamentary options available to us to respond..."

"I am disappointed that we even have to contact the Appropriators about maintaining the Cuba provisions since it should be a non-issue," Baucus said. "Suspending enforcement of the Cuba travel ban passed the Senate by a wide bipartisan margin and passed the House by a wide bipartisan margin. There is absolutely no reason the provision should be removed from the Treasury-Transportation Appropriations bill. To do so would be a direct act against the will of a majority of Congress and majority of Americans."

Last month, the Senate voted 59-36 to include an amendment to the FY04 Treasury-Transportation Appropriations bill that would eliminate funding that goes toward the enforcement of the Cuba travel ban. The House included the same amendment in September by a vote of 227-188.

In addition, the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee will be holding a mark-up to vote on S. 950, a bill to lift the Cuba travel ban, later today.

Baucus has been playing a leading role in pushing Congress and the Administration to reexamine America's policy toward Cuba, stating that 40 years of embargo have done nothing to improve Cuba's political climate or help the Cuban people. Earlier this year, Baucus introduced legislation that would seek to lift the trade embargo against Cuba, and remove travel restrictions between the U.S. and Cuba. In addition, Baucus helped establish the "Senate Working Group on Cuba" and traveled to Cuba in September to meet with leader's of the Cuban dissident movement and political and business leaders.

Full text of joint Baucus-Enzi-Craig-Dodd letter follows:
November 5, 2003

The Honorable Richard Shelby

The Honorable Patty Murray
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Transportation, Treasury and General Government

Dear Senators Shelby and Murray,

We respectfully request that you fully support inclusion of the Craig-Dorgan amendment to suspend enforcement of the Cuba travel ban in the FY'04 Transportation-Treasury Appropriations conference report. As co-sponsors of the amendment, we worked very hard to achieve Senate approval of this historic measure, and will do all in our power to ensure its enactment.

As you know, the Craig-Dorgan amendment passed the Senate by a 59-36 margin. The same amendment was approved in the House by a vote of 227-188. These margins of support reflect a clear and undeniable statement of policy by Congress. Since both Houses of Congress have passed the same amendment, there is nothing for the conferees to reconcile.

We realize that there will be attempts to remove the Cuba provisions in conference, and we therefore want to make our views on this issue very clear. If the conferees produce a conference report that excludes our amendment, we will consider all parliamentary options available to us to respond to that eventuality.

Thank you for the opportunity to present our position, and we look forward to working with you on this important matter.

Sincerely,

Senator Larry E. Craig
Senator Max Baucus
Senator Mike Enzi
Senator Chris Dodd

Cc: Chairman Ted Stevens
Majority Leader Bill Frist
Senator Arlen Specter
Senator Christopher Bond
Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell
Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison
Senator Mike DeWine
Senator Sam Brownback
Chairman Bill Young
Rep. Ernest Istook
Rep. Frank Wolf
Rep. Jerry Lewis
Rep. Harold Rogers
Rep. Todd Tiahrt
Rep. Anne Northup
Senator Robert Byrd
Minority Leader Tom Daschle
Senator Barbara Mikulski
Senator Harry Reid
Senator Herb Kohl
Senator Richard Durbin
Senator Byron Dorgan
Rep. Dave Obey
Rep. John Olver
Rep. Steny Hoyer
Rep. Ed Pastor
Rep. Carolyn Kilpatrick
Rep. James Clyburn
Rep. Steve Rothman

Rep. Robert Aderholt
Rep. John Sweeney
Rep. John Culberson

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