



**MEMORANDUM**

To: Reporters and Editors  
From: Carol Guthrie for Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.)  
Re: Markup of S.J. Res. 16, renewal of restrictions on imports from Burma

By a vote of 21-0, the Senate Finance Committee late today reported to the full Senate S.J. Res 16, a measure approving the renewal of import restrictions contained in the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act of 2003. Below please see Chairman Baucus's official statement regarding this action.

*Statement of Senator Max Baucus (D-Mont.)  
Regarding Burma Import Restrictions Markup*

"Please use your liberty to promote ours."

So wrote Nobel peace prize winner Aung San Suu Kyi, leader of Burma's National League for Democracy, in 1997.

In 1990, Suu Kyi won Burma's last democratic election for Prime Minister. But Burma's military did not let her take office.

And in 2003, the Burmese military junta cracked down further on Suu Kyi and her followers. America responded by imposing sanctions against Burma, including a ban on imports.

Sanctions were appropriate. But because unilateral sanctions often fail, Senator Grassley and I worked together to ensure that the import ban on Burmese products would not be open-ended. We agreed to revisit the ban on an annual basis. That way, we can ensure that sanctions remain the appropriate policy tool to address America's human rights concerns with Burma.

Today, four years later, the situation in Burma remains grave. Suu Kyi continues to be a virtual prisoner in her own home. Burma's military junta continues to kill, rape, and dragoon people into forced labor. The junta arrests political activists or causes them simply to disappear. Members of the security forces continue to torture, beat, and abuse detainees. And the junta has strangled what had been a growing economy.

Like the United States, many of Burma's trading partners in Europe and Southeast Asia have deep concerns with Burma's worsening conditions. They, too, have taken steps to isolate the Burmese junta. ASEAN countries had previously declined to publicly express concern over the human rights situation in Burma. But now some of them have stepped forward.

For our sanctions to be truly effective, however, we must have a more coordinated effort with other countries. We must especially work with Burma's immediate neighbors. I hope that we can see more progress on that front in the year ahead.

Given today's situation in Burma, our import ban remains the right tool. For the Burmese people, Congress should renew it. Let us do so today. And let us use our liberty to promote theirs.

###