

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY

Mr. LUGAR. Mr. President, I would like to announce that the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry will hold a full committee hearing on Wednesday, February 26, 1997, at 9 a.m. in SR-328A. The purpose of the hearing will be to discuss the impact of capital gains taxes on farmers.

COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND HUMAN RESOURCES

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I would like to announce for information of the Senate and the public that an Executive Session of the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources will be held on Wednesday, February 26, 1997, 9:30 a.m., in SD-430 of the Senate Dirksen Building. The following are on the agenda to be considered.

1. S. 295, Teamwork for Employees and Managers [TEAM] Act.
 2. S. 4, The Family Friendly Workplace Act.
 3. Presidential nominations.
- For further information, please call the committee, 202/224-5375.

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. CAMPBELL. Mr. President, I would like to announce that the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs will meet to conduct an oversight hearing during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 26, 1997, at 9:30 a.m. on the President's budget request for fiscal year 1998 for the Bureau of Indian Affairs [BIA] and Indian Health Service [IHS]. The hearing will be held in room 485 of the Russell Senate Office Building.

Those wishing additional information should contact the Committee on Indian Affairs at 224-2251.

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. CAMPBELL. Mr. President, I would like to announce that the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs will meet on Thursday, February 27, 1997, at 9:30 a.m. to approve the letter to the Committee on the Budget concerning the Committee's budget views and estimates for fiscal year 1998 for Indian programs. The meeting will be held in room 485 of the Russell Senate Office Building.

Those wishing additional information should contact the Committee on Indian Affairs at 224-2251.

COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND HUMAN RESOURCES

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I would like to announce for information of the Senate and the public that a hearing of the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources will be held on Thursday, February 27, 1997, 10 a.m., in SD-430 of the Senate Dirksen Building. The subject of the hearing is Reauthorization of Higher Education Act. For further information, please call the committee, 202/224-5375.

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY

Mr. LUGAR. Mr. President, I would like to announce that the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry will hold a full committee hearing on Tuesday, March 4, 1997, at 10

a.m. in SD-G50. The purpose of the hearing will be to receive testimony regarding the school lunch and school breakfast programs.

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY

Mr. LUGAR. Mr. President, I would like to announce that the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry will hold a full committee hearing on Wednesday, March 5, 1997, at 9 a.m. in SR-328A. The purpose of the hearing will be to review the U.S. Department of Agriculture's business plan and reorganization management.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIP TO SINGAPORE

• Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I rise today to report to the Senate on an official trip I took with a House Ways and Means Committee delegation in December 1996 to Hong Kong, Beijing, and Singapore. I was privileged to be the only United States Senator to serve as an official delegate to the first ministerial meeting of the World Trade Organization.

The WTO was formed by the Uruguay Round Agreement, ratified by Congress in 1994, and is the successor to the General Agreements on Tariffs and Trade. It serves as a forum for multilateral trade negotiations and a dispute settlement body. The first ministerial was called to measure progress on the implementation of Uruguay round commitments and seek further liberalization in selected areas of trade. Although I discuss the various meetings of the delegation in Hong Kong and Beijing, this report will focus on our meetings in Singapore.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6, 1996

Upon arriving in Hong Kong, the delegation met with U.S. Consul General Richard Boucher and several Hong Kong business and government officials. The primary topic of discussion was Hong Kong's transition to Chinese control on July 1, 1997.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7, 1996

On Saturday, the delegation met with representatives of the American Chamber of Commerce of Hong Kong. The upcoming transition was again discussed as was the annual debate in the Congress on China's most-favored-nation status.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 9, 1996

On the first day of the ministerial, the delegation was briefed by Acting U.S. Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky and Federal Communications Commission Chairman Reed Hunt. Ms. Barshefsky stressed the importance of completing negotiations on the Information Technology Agreement while in Singapore. She believed that an agreement was imminent but sought our support when discussing the ITA with other countries, delegations.

The delegation asked Ms. Barshefsky about the negotiations to bring China

into the WTO. I stressed the need for China to open its markets for U.S. agricultural products and to reduce the authority of its state trading enterprises. Ms. Barshefsky stressed three points relating to China's entry into the WTO. First, China must remedy its bilateral problems with the United States, especially on agriculture and intellectual property rights. China must increase market access to U.S. agricultural exports. Finally, China must abide by the decisions and policies of a rules-based system, the WTO.

Mr. Hunt briefed the delegation on the telecommunications negotiations. Mr. Hunt said that the focus in these talks will be on deregulation in order to open the global communications industry to foreign competition. Since the United States has one of the most open markets, our companies have the most to gain by liberalizing trade in this area.

TUESDAY DECEMBER 10, 1996

On Tuesday morning, I broke from the delegation for breakfast with Deputy Secretary Richard Rominger and the Administrator of the Foreign Agriculture Service, Gus Schumacher, both with the United States Department of Agriculture. We discussed our current bilateral trade disputes with the European Union, primarily with Bt corn and the veterinary equivalency standards.

At the time, the EU was deciding whether to accept Bt corn, a genetically modified organism, exported from the U.S. Failure to accept this product would have jeopardized all of our corn exports to Europe. Subsequent to the Singapore meeting, the EU decided to allow Bt corn into its markets.

The second issue, unfortunately, has yet to be resolved. The EU has failed to certify most U.S. meat packing plants for export to Europe. This failure will jeopardize current exports, such as pet food, as well as potential sales of beef and pork. The issue was to be resolved in December but a decision has now been delayed until April.

Because of the EU's actions, I have introduced a bill with the minority leader, Senator DASCHLE, to address the situation. S. 220 requires the U.S. Trade Representative to determine whether the European Union's action violates any trade agreements, including the 1992 meat agreement and the sanitary/phytosanitary provisions of the Uruguay Round Agreement. If agreements have been breached, USTR is required to take some action, which could include unilateral sanctions. I urge the European Union to remedy this situation before sanctions are necessary.

I rejoined the delegation to meet with Singapore Minister of Trade and Industry Yeo Cheow Tong. The delegation thanked the minister for his nation's hospitality and leadership at the ministerial. We impressed upon him the need to consummate the Information Technology Agreement in order to make the ministerial a success. I urged Minister Yeo, in his leadership role at

the conference, to assist the United States in resolving the veterinary equivalency issue with the Europeans. This was appropriate because Singapore recognizes the equivalency of the United States meat inspection system as it transships United States meat to other Asian nations.

We also met with the Canadian delegation. Talks focused on several bilateral issues with our two nations, including the recent NAFTA panel on dairy and poultry and the U.S. sugar program. I also asked the Canadians opinion on two issues: China's accession to the WTO and the dispute on veterinary equivalency between the United States and the EU. The Canadian delegation agreed fully with my position on China. Specifically, they said that WTO members should not lower entry standards for China and that market access and subsidy issue must be addressed before China is admitted.

Regarding the veterinary equivalency issue, the Canadian delegation agreed that sanitary and phytosanitary provisions of trade agreements must be upheld in order to maintain the grassroots support of farmers for free trade agreements.

On Tuesday, the delegation also met with delegations from Taiwan and the European Parliament, and had the opportunity to express our gratitude to the Prime Minister of Singapore for his nation's hospitality.

The Taiwanese expressed their strong desire to join the WTO. Chairman PHIL CRANE, speaking for the delegation, agreed that Taiwan was close to meeting the requirements for joining the WTO. But he urged Taiwan to be patient while the United States worked through some of its problems with China. I cautioned the Taiwanese that further progress must be made on reducing barriers for agricultural products, such as beef, pork, and poultry. The leader of the Taiwan Parliament, Mr. Vincent Slew, responded that he did not "see any problem" with making the necessary agricultural reforms.

The discussions with the European Parliamentary delegation focused on three issues: Bt corn, veterinary equivalency, and allowing China into the WTO. I raised questions about the EU's potentially keeping Bt corn and other genetically modified organisms from their markets. The European delegation argued that their citizens have an intense distrust of the scientific evidence and government policy because of the recent BSE—mad cow disease—crisis in Europe.

They pointed out that 80 percent of their consumers are against bringing Bt corn into their country and they would consider keeping all U.S. corn out in order to protect their consumers. At least, the Europeans argued, they would require separation and labeling of Bt corn. As I stated earlier, this issue has since been resolved and Bt corn grown in the United States has been accepted in the European markets.

The European delegation promised to look into the veterinary equivalency problem and thought we could make progress in certifying United States meat packing plants. On China, I argued that if the Europeans are truly concerned with their farmers, they should insist that China enter the WTO only on commercially meaningful terms. The European delegation agreed, saying that China must meet all requirements, including those on market access, before joining the WTO.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11, 1996

On Wednesday, the delegation received a full briefing from acting USTR Charlene Barshefsky. She discussed the Statement on Agriculture, outstanding bilateral issues with the European Union, and China's desire to enter the WTO. I pointed out that the terms of China's accession will determine whether China becomes our largest export market for agriculture products or our toughest competitor. To emphasize the importance of agriculture to trade agreements, I also noted that one-half of the nongovernmental observers at the ministerial were from the agriculture sector.

The delegation also met with United States Ambassador to Singapore, Mr. Chorba, and Singapore Foreign Minister Jayakumar. I asked Minister Jayakumar to help bring the other Asian nations on board with the Information Technology Agreement. The minister replied that they shared the United States interest in completing the ITA in Singapore and they would do what they can to accomplish that.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 12, 1996

On Thursday, the delegation met with United States Assistant Secretary of State Alan Larson to discuss the recent trip of Secretary of State Christopher to China. This meeting was to prepare the delegation, for its meetings in Beijing.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 13, 1996

In Beijing, the delegation received a briefing from the United States Embassy on the Chinese economy and trade situation. Later that day we met with Vice Minister Sun Zhenyu, the American Chamber of Commerce, State Planning Commission Vice Chairman Gan Ziyu, and Vice Premier Zhu Ronghi, member of the standing committee. Several issues were discussed including trade relations between the two countries.●

TRIBUTE TO THE NEVADA TAXPAYERS ASSOCIATION

● Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to the Nevada Taxpayers Association. On February 25, 1997, the association will celebrate 75 years of service to the citizens of Nevada. It is my honor to salute the organization for its diligent efforts to inform and serve the public on tax policy issues.

The Nevada Taxpayers Association is the only tax policy and analysis organization of its kind in Nevada. The

mission of this preeminent organization is to protect and preserve sensible fiscal policy that is beneficial to Nevada's citizens, and to enhance fiscal policies that impact our State, county, and city governments.

Since 1922, the Nevada Taxpayers Association has represented the interests of the citizens of Nevada, as well as business and industry, to create a fair and equitable revenue system. For the past 75 years, Nevada's past and current Governors have worked cooperatively with the Nevada Taxpayers Association to ensure the best tax structure possible for the State.

This year, the State of Nevada will celebrate Nevada Taxpayers Association Day on February 25. I applaud the Nevada Taxpayers Association for the integral role it has played, and continues to play, in fiscal policy analysis and research in Nevada. On behalf of all taxpayers in Nevada who have benefited from the association's many publications, reports, and analyses, I wholeheartedly thank them for their invaluable service. It is my pleasure to speak on behalf of the Nevada Taxpayers Association, and I commend the organization for its unwavering support of the rights of taxpayers.●

TRIBUTE TO DAN LACROIX ON BEING NAMED 1997 ROCHESTER CITIZEN OF THE YEAR

● Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire. Mr. President, I rise today to congratulate Dan LaCroix, honorary member of Gonic PTA, on being named the 1997 Rochester "Citizen of the Year" by the Rochester Chamber of Commerce. I commend his outstanding community commitment and congratulate him on this well-deserved honor.

Dan's community involvements are numerous. He participated in the juvenile diversion program, the substance abuse prevention task force, and he is a current member of the red ribbon program. Dan is a coach of the Rochester Youth Soccer Association, vice-president of the Rochester girls softball, and chairperson of the community relations girls softball.

Dan is known to many as always willing to take responsibility, whether to chair a committee, organize fairs, trips, and dances, or to help people in need. Whatever activity he commits to, he always gets the job done.

Dan has dedicated his time, talent and energy to serving the residents of Rochester in an exemplary way. I am proud to honor Dan LaCroix's outstanding community commitment, which is so important to the future and prosperity of Rochester. We are indeed indebted to him for his efforts. Congratulations to Dan for this distinguished recognition. I am honored to represent him in the U.S. Senate.●

CAFE STANDARDS

● Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I rise today to speak once again on the matter of corporate average fuel economy