

facility, alternatives to NIF, consideration of starting with a smaller facility, and planning for the Broader stockpile stewardship program. All these elements are important, but the bill does not specify how these reviews are to be conducted.

Previous supposedly independent DOE reviews of NIF have been strongly criticized in the recent GAO report and in a recent article in the journal *Nature*, and have even been subject to lawsuits for violating the Federal Advisory Committee Act. I believe it is critical for the credibility of these reviews that they be conducted by an independent body, such as the National Academy of Sciences, and that they be organized as independent studies under FACA rules. This is a troubled program, and we need the very best thought of independent experts to help us get it back on track or to scale it back as needed.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I agree with my colleague and want to emphasize how important it is to Congress that these be outside, independent reviews. DOE has unfortunately lost credibility on this issue and needs to bring in outside experts to regain it. I have already conveyed my expectations on this point to Madelyn Crendon and am happy to join my colleagues in clarifying this today.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, our country has very important needs that many hope NIF can solve. The credibility of outside experts will be crucial as we consider the future of this program.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, all time is yielded back.

Mr. DOMENICI. I now ask unanimous consent the vote occur on the adoption of the conference report at 5:30 p.m. on Monday.

Mr. REID. Reserving the right to object, I say to my friend from New Mexico, I am disappointed that we are not voting on this tonight. I think it would be an opportunity to get a bill to the President's desk and speed up things around here. I think it is a shame we are waiting until 5:30 Monday night. It is going to consume too much time in the process.

I hope whoever has caused this, whoever that might be who is responsible, recognizes that they are responsible for slowing up what goes on around here. We have to move these appropriations bills. Senator DOMENICI and I and especially our staffs have worked night and day all this past week, and I literally mean night and day. We were looking forward to completing this bill tonight.

Having said that, I have no objection. The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I yield the floor. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period for morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### U.S.-CUBA RELATIONS

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, I would like to bring to the attention of the Senate a relatively new organization designed to enhance U.S.-Cuba relations. The Alliance for Responsible Cuba Policy was created in early 1998 to foster better political, economic and cultural relationships between our country and Cuba. Its board is comprised of distinguished Americans, including some of our former colleagues in the Congress.

Clearly the time has come to bring "responsibleness" to the debate regarding U.S.-Cuba relations.

The Alliance has briefed me and my staff regarding their first-hand experience in Cuba. I encourage them to continue their fact finding and information gathering missions to Cuba.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD an Activities Report of the Alliance.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

ALLIANCE FOR RESPONSIBLE CUBA POLICY ACTIVITIES REPORT—FACT-FINDING MISSION; REPUBLIC OF CUBA, JULY 10-12, 2000

This report summarizes the activities of a fact-finding mission to the Republic of Cuba conducted on July 10-12, 2000. The fact-finding mission was organized by the Alliance for Responsible Cuba Policy (the "Alliance"), a non-partisan, non-profit organization incorporated in the District of Columbia. The delegation included former Congressman Beryl Anthony, partner, Winston & Strawn; Mr. Albert A. Fox, Jr., President of the Alliance, Mr. Paul D. Fox, Vice-President Atlantic Region, Tysons Food, Inc. and Managing Director, Tyson de Mexico; Ms. Nanette Kelly, President and Mr. John Spain, Managing Director, The Powell Group of Baton Rouge, Louisiana; Mr. Edward Rabel, former news correspondent with CBS and NBC, and currently Senior Vice President of Weber McGinn; and Gregory J. Spak, partner, White & Case LLP.

This fact-finding mission was the second such trip organized by the Alliance. The first mission occurred on September 26-29, 1999. An Activities Report related to that mission is available from the Alliance's web site at [www.responsiblecubapolicy.com](http://www.responsiblecubapolicy.com).

During the July 10-12, 2000 mission, the delegation met with the following persons and entities in Cuba:

Ministry of Foreign Trade  
Ministry of Science, Technology, and Environment  
Ministry of Agriculture  
Ministry of Foreign Investment and Economic Cooperation  
Mr. Ricardo Alarcon de Quesada, President of the National Assembly  
Ministry of Justice

The following summarizes the discussion at each of these meetings.

#### MINISTRY OF FOREIGN TRADE

The delegation met with Maria de la Luz B'Hamel, Director of the North American Division of the Foreign Trade Ministry, and with Mr. Igor Montero Brito, Vice President of ALIMPORT. Ms. B'Hamel's division is responsible for international trade issues relating to the United States and Canada, and the Foreign Trade Ministry in general has jurisdiction over all foreign trade issues, including issues arising in the World Trade Organization and other international and regional trade agreements. Ms. B'Hamel noted that Cuba is a founding member of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade ("GATT") and the World Trade Organization ("WTO").

The Foreign Trade Ministry has a practical role in foreign trade through its authority to grant licenses to Cuban enterprises engaging in international trade. Ms. B'Hamel described two important trends that have emerged since the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the resulting rupture of Cuba's traditional trading relationships:

(1) Diversification of Cuba's foreign trade. Currently, Cuba's two largest trading partners are Spain and Canada, and no more than 10-12 percent of Cuba's trade is with any one country. As part of this diversification process, Cuba has been negotiating trade agreements with its regional trading partners in order to promote Cuba as a strategic bridge to the Caribbean region.

(2) Decentralization of foreign trade issues. Ms. B'Hamel stated the Foreign Trade Ministry is deemphasizing its direct involvement in international trade transactions, and is assuming more of a trade regulation role. Companies engaged in foreign trade today in Cuba include state enterprises, private enterprises, and international joint ventures or branch offices of foreign companies. More than 250 private and state enterprises are actively engaged in foreign trade, and there are approximately 600 Cuban branch offices of foreign companies engaged in trade in Cuba.

Ms. B'Hamel explained that, since 1994, Cuba has experienced steady improvement in foreign trade and GDP growth. Her Ministry forecasts continued GDP growth, even assuming no relaxation of U.S.-imposed trade restrictions. She stated that the U.S. trade restrictions (which she called the "blockade") have affected Cuba, but that other trends in business and world trade were creating new opportunities for the Cuban economy.

One particularly dynamic sector of the Cuban economy is tourism, which is growing by 16-20 percent per year. These statistics do not include U.S. tourists, which Ms. B'Hamel estimates to have numbered approximately 180,000 last year. She noted that this increase in tourism will have a ripple effect on the Cuban economy and will increase the demand for food goods, and other services.

Mr. Igor Montero explained that ALIMPORT is the principal Cuban state enterprise dedicated to importing foodstuffs into Cuba and distributing imports to the public. ALIMPORT is dedicated almost exclusively to the primary foodstuffs which are considered to be staples of the Cuban diet (e.g., rice, beans, etc.). Cuba currently imports approximately \$1 billion in foodstuffs annually, \$650 million of which is imported through ALIMPORT. Principal food imports are wheat, soybeans, and rice.

Cuba currently is importing approximately 400,000 metric tons of rice per year, principally from China, Thailand, and Vietnam. Delivery time for rice imported from these countries is approximately 60 days, and the quality is considered only fair. Mr. Montero acknowledged that transportation costs to

acquire this rice represent a significant expenditure.

Mr. Spain, whose Louisiana-based company, the Powell Group, is involved in the rice milling business, pointed out that his company used to supply rice to Cuba before the U.S. trade restrictions. While clarifying he was not in Cuba to develop business. Mr. Spain noted that his company could supply high-quality rice to Cuba with a turnaround time (from order to delivery) of approximately one week and insignificant freight costs.

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MINISTRY OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND  
ENVIRONMENT

The delegation met with a number of representatives from this Ministry ("CITMA"), including the Minister, Dr. Rosa Elena Simeón Negrin. Dr. Simeón described the Ministry's creation in 1994 as a result of the reorganization and consolidation of other Cuban ministries. Dr. Simeón distributed to the delegation the following publications regarding the Ministry's activities (1) "Law of the Environment"; (2) "Cuba Foreign Investment Act of 1995"; and (3) "National Environmental Strategy." These documents are available from the Alliance upon request.

Much of the discussion focused on environmental issues. Dr. Simeón noted the importance of environmental education to the Ministry's mission. She described the results of a recent survey revealing that although 73 percent of the Cuban population recognize the threat to the environment, only 30 percent believe they can improve environmental conditions through their own actions. The Ministry is attempting to increase awareness among the Cuban population of the role the individual plays in improving the environment.

Dr. Simeón also portrayed alternative fuels as an important focus of the Ministry's efforts. Approximately 5,000 facilities in the mountain areas of the country operate with solar energy, but the solar energy panels necessary to continue the development of this energy source are prohibitively expensive. Notwithstanding the cost, the Ministry is committed to solar energy.

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MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE

The delegation met with Dr. Alfredo Gutierrez Yanis, Vice Minister of Agriculture, and several other officials from the Ministry. Dr. Gutierrez explained that Cuba's traditional relationship with the Soviet Union had allowed for a stable agriculture policy. Cuba exported sugar and citrus to the Soviet Union and Soviet bloc countries, and imported machinery, fertilizer, and pesticides from those countries. Ten years after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Cuban agriculture is in the midst of a recovery program (known as the "proceso de Recuperación en Agricultura" or the "Agriculture Recovery Process"). Recovery has been uneven, however, with some sectors advancing beyond pre-crisis performance levels (notably vegetable production) and others continuing to experience difficulties (poultry, livestock, and rice production).

Dr. Gutierrez offered poultry products as an example of a sector that has not recovered. Prior to 1991, the Cuban per-capita annual egg consumption was 230, nearly double the current per-capita rate. Similarly, Cuban agriculture once produced approximately 117,000 tons of chicken meat annually, but now can only produce approximately 30,000 tons. Cuba has been forced to import chicken meat, with Canada emerging as the principal supplier. Dr. Gutierrez attributed the decrease in chicken and egg production to lack of available feed. This lack of feed results

from both the disruption in the traditional trading relationship with the Soviet Union, and changes in the economic restrictions imposed by the United States. During the 1980s, Cuba imported approximately 2 million tons of feed, and reported much of this was purchased from foreign subsidiaries of U.S. companies. After the enactment of the Torricelli Act, the value of this trade dropped from \$400 million per year to approximately \$1 million. Also, the provisions of U.S. law restricting access to U.S. ports for those vessels which have engaged in commercial activity in Cuba to obtain feed at a reasonable price.

With respect to milk, Dr. Gutierrez reported that for all practical purposes, the dairy herds ceased to produce when grain was no longer available for feeding. Many cows died of starvation and others were slaughtered while still at a productive age. The Cuban Government has since developed a breed of dairy cow that is  $\frac{5}{8}$  Holstein and  $\frac{3}{8}$  Zebu in order to facilitate milk production without excessive grain consumption, but current productivity per head has declined with these genetic changes. The Government is importing powdered milk, but not in sufficient quantities. One of the delegation members touring a neighborhood away from the tourist areas was told that the milk formula sold in state stores is supposed to be consumed exclusively by children from 3 to 7 years old.

Dr. Gutierrez also mentioned difficulties in the rice sector, in that Cuba has been forced to import most of its rice from distant sources, thereby increasing costs and lowering quality of the rice. The Ministry would like to see an increase in local rice production, and a corresponding reduction in imports to approximately 200,000 tons per year. Dr. Gutierrez feels that this would permit a per-capita rice consumption of approximately 50 kilograms.

Dr. Gutierrez cited pork and citrus production as two examples of a successful recovery. Citrus production has recovered and could increase if new markets were opened for Cuban citrus goods. Israel is providing assistance to the Cuban Government on citrus production, and an Italian firm is helping with production of citrus derivation products.

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Dr. Gutierrez described developments he believes will help the Cuban agricultural sector continue its post-crisis recovery. First, state farms play a less significant role in the agricultural sector, with the percentage of farm land cultivated by state farms reduced from 67 percent to approximately 33 percent. Thus, according to Dr. Gutierrez, approximately two-thirds of the land is being cultivated today by small private companies and cooperatives. When asked how the small companies and cooperatives sell their crops, he replied that it would be typical for such companies and cooperatives to contract with a Cuban state enterprise for a specific supply quantity, and that the companies and cooperatives would then be free to sell any additional production privately.

Secondly, individual farmers now operate in a relatively free market, and are permitted to farm areas of 75 hectares (approximately 200 acres). Nearly 800,000 hectares (approximately 2 million acres) are now in the hands of individual farmers. The farmers do not own the land (land ownership is reserved to the state), but they are allowed to cultivate the land and are entitled to sell the production as they wish. Many of these farmers have formed privately-operated cooperatives.

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MINISTRY OF FOREIGN INVESTMENT AND  
ECONOMIC COOPERATION

The delegation met with Mr. Ernesto Senti Endarias, First Vice Minister of the Ministry of Foreign Investment and Economic Cooperation, and various members of his staff. According to Vice Minister Senti, the Cuban economy is in its fifth year of a gradual economic recovery, and foreign investment has played an important role in this recovery. Sales from enterprises resulting from direct foreign investment account for approximately 3-4 percent of the Cuban GDP, nearly twelve percent of all exports, and such enterprises employ approximately one percent of the labor force.

Direct foreign investment is affecting various sectors of the Cuban economy, including (1) tourism, (2) heavy industry (petroleum (especially deep-water drilling)), (3) mining, (4) light industry, (5) telecommunications, (6) energy (especially alternative sources), (7) sugar (especially derivatives from sugar production), and (8) agriculture. Only three sectors are not open to direct foreign investment health, education, and national security. Fifty-two percent of direct foreign investment is from countries in Europe, particularly Spain and France.

Vice Minister Senti believes that direct foreign investment in Cuba will continue to grow. He observed the companies investing in Cuba typically are large companies, and these companies exhibit a high level of professionalism in their business ventures, which is beneficial for Cuba. In return, Cuba offers foreign investors highly-trained workers, political stability, and a government interested in helping companies that are willing to help Cuba.

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PRESIDENT RICARDO ALARCÓN DE QUESADA

The delegation met with Mr. Ricardo Alarcón de Quesada, President of the National Assembly, former foreign minister and former ambassador to the United Nations. The discussion with President Alarcón was wide-ranging, and he was forthcoming on all issues raised by the delegation. He showed particular interest in the status of the various legislative proposals in the U.S. Congress that might permit the sale of U.S. food and medicine to Cuba. When asked whether Cuba would commit to purchasing U.S. food and medicine after the legislation passed, he stated Cuba would like to do so, but ultimately it would depend on the text of the legislation and on timing. He explained they were monitoring the various versions of the legislation and that certain provisions (especially the increased restriction on travel and the limited duration of the export licenses) might make purchasing U.S. food and medicine difficult.

The Alliance then briefed President Alarcón on the upcoming visit by Senators Pat Roberts and Max Baucus. The Alliance explained the importance of these senators to any passage of legislation regarding the sale of food and medicine to Cuba. President Alarcón expressed his pleasure in visiting with the Alliance again.

MINISTRY OF JUSTICE

The delegation met with Lic Robert Díaz Sotolongo and other members of the Ministry. Mr. Díaz began the meeting by stating his satisfaction with the manner in which the United States and Cuba were able to resolve the recent controversy regarding Elián Gonzalez. He noted that this is a visible and helpful example of how the two governments and their societies can interact successfully despite differences of opinion.

Mr. Díaz then directed the discussion toward drug interdiction, another area in which he believes Cuba and the United

States can increase cooperation. He noted that in the last meeting with the Alliance, the Cuban Department of Justice had asked for assistance in facilitating the placement of a U.S. Coast Guard representative to the U.S. Interest Section in Havana to help increase cooperation on drug interdiction. He thanked the Alliance for its assistance, noting with satisfaction that the U.S. Coast Guard representative had arrived in Havana. Mr. Diaz went on to describe the celebrated case of the "Limerick," a Belize-flagged vessel that began to sink in Cuban waters in 1996. The cooperation of British, American, and Cuban officials led to the discovery on the vessel of six tons of cocaine believed destined for the United States. The Cuban officials turned over the drugs and the persons involved to the U.S. authorities and actively assisted in the successful prosecution of the individuals traveling to the United States to testify in the criminal trial.

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#### OBSERVATION

All the Cuban Government officials and the Cuban people with whom we visited were friendly and answered our questions in a forthright manner. They made it clear they have no ill feeling toward the American people or the U.S. form of government. They expressed bewilderment that the U.S. maintains its economic sanctions against Cuba despite other developments, including the normalization of U.S. trade relations with China, Vietnam, and North Korea, the increasing foreign investment in Cuba by the rest of the world (especially Europe and Canada), and the overwhelming U.S. public opinion in favor of removing the sanctions.

The Alliance is grateful for the opportunity to have concluded a second successful fact-finding mission to Cuba, and intends to continue this process. The Alliance is convinced that the U.S. trade restrictions must end and that we must deal with the Cuban Government as it is, not as we wish it to be.

#### THE NEED TO PASS THE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I want to take a moment to once again ask the majority to immediately bring S. 2787, the Violence Against Women Act of 2000, VAWA II, to the floor for a vote.

Yesterday the President wrote to the Majority Leader urging passage of VAWA II this week. This is a top priority not only for the Administration but for the Nation. The President wrote: "The Senate should not delay, and I urge you to pass a freestanding version of the Biden-Hatch VAWA reauthorization bill this week. The women and families whose lives have been scarred by domestic violence deserve nothing less than immediate action by the Congress." The President is right.

This Tuesday the House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act by a vote of 415 to 3. I commend the House for finally acting on this important legislation. Many of us have been urging Senate action on legislation to reauthorize and improve the Violence Against Women Act for months. We have been stymied by the Republican leadership.

I also would like to thank my friend Senator JOE BIDEN, for his leadership

on this issue. He has been a champion for victims of domestic violence for many years. He was pivotal in the enactment of the Violence Against Women Act almost a decade ago. He has been tireless in his efforts this year. It is time for the Senate to take up S. 2787, review and accept the consensus substitute and move to final passage. It could be done this week—today. Senator BIDEN has offered to proceed on a clean bill within 10 minutes and he is right.

I regret to have to remind the Senate that the authorization for the original Violence Against Women Act, VAWA, expires at the end of this week on Saturday, September 30, 2000. This is outrageous. This should be consensus legislation, bipartisan legislation. With a straight up or down vote I have no doubt that our bill will pass overwhelmingly. Playing partisan or political games with this important legislation is the wrong thing to do and this is the wrong time to be playing such games.

"Gotcha" games have no place in this debate or with this important matter. The Violence Against Women Act II is not leverage or fodder but important legislation with 71 Senate co-sponsors.

There is and has been no objection on the Democratic side of the aisle to passing VAWA II. Unfortunately, there have been efforts by the majority party to attach this uncontroversial legislation to the "poison pill" represented by the version of bankruptcy legislation currently being advanced by Republicans and to other matters.

I received today a letter from the Pat Ruess of the NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund that emphatically makes the point the VAWA is not "cover" for other legislation that hurts women. She is right. The bankruptcy bill as the Republicans have designed it is opposed by the National Partnership for Women and Families, the National Women's Law Center, the American Association of University Women and dozens of women's organization across the country. I hope that the rumors of such an effort by the Republican leadership will prove unfounded and that no such cynical pairing will be attempted. It is destined to fail and only delays and distracts the Senate from what we should be doing—passing VAWA II.

I believe the Senate can and should pass VAWA II as a clean, stand-alone bill, without further delay. That is what Senator BIDEN urged Tuesday.

According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, almost one-third of women murdered each year are killed by a husband or boyfriend. In 1998, women experience about 900,000 violent offenses at the hands of an intimate partner. The only good news about this staggering number is that it is lower than that of previous years when the number of violent offenses was well past 1 million. I have no doubt this drop in the numbers of victims of domestic violence is due

to the success of the programs of the Violence Against Women Act. We should be working to lower that number even further by reauthorizing and expanding the programs of VAWA. The country has come too far in fighting this battle against domestic violence to risk losing it because the Senate does not pass VAWA II or someone wanting to score clever, political points for short term partisan gain.

There is no reason to make this a political battle. We must act now.

I ask unanimous consent to print in the RECORD the President's letter and the September 28 letter from the NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund and a September 17, 1999 letter from the National Partnership for Women & Families, National Women's Law Center and other women's advocacy organizations.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

THE WHITE HOUSE,

Washington, DC, September 27, 2000.

Hon. TRENT LOTT,  
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. LEADER: I am writing to urge you to bring the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) to the Senate floor this week.

An estimated 900,000 women suffer violence at the hands of an intimate partner each year, demonstrating the urgent need for this legislation. Since VAWA was enacted, the Department of Justice and Health and Human Services have awarded approximately \$1.6 billion in Federal grants to support the work of prosecutors, law enforcement officials, the courts, victim advocates, health care and social service professionals, and intervention and prevention programs in order to combat violence against women. We must reauthorize these critical programs immediately.

As you know, yesterday, the House overwhelmingly passed VAWA reauthorization by a vote of 415-3. In the Senate, VAWA has similar bipartisan support with over 70 co-sponsors. If Congress does not act this week, however, VAWA's authorization will expire on September 30, 2000. The Senate should not delay, and I urge you to pass a freestanding version of the Biden-Hatch VAWA reauthorization bill this week. The women and families whose lives have been scarred by domestic violence deserve nothing less than immediate action by the Congress.

Sincerely,

BILL CLINTON.

NOW LEGAL DEFENSE  
AND EDUCATION FUND,

Washington, DC, September 28, 2000.

DEAR SENATOR: The Violence Against Women Act runs out in two days. The Senate must act immediately! Do not let VAWA die—pass S. 2787, the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act. The bipartisan VAWA renewal bill, sponsored by Senators Biden and Hatch, has 71 co-sponsors and virtually no opposition. The House passed a similar bill on Tuesday, 415-3. You must demand that this bill comes to the Senate floor today, freestanding and without harmful riders.

It is unacceptable for the Senate to attach VAWA to or partner it with any bill that the President has threatened to veto. One such bill is the Bankruptcy Reform Act, a bill that threatens women's economic security by: