

that such part of the staff as is designated minority staff, shall be under the general supervision of the ranking member and under the immediate direction of the minority staff director.

(2) Any member of the committee should feel free to call upon the staff at any time for assistance in connection with committee business. Members of the Senate not members of the committee who call upon the staff for assistance from time to time should be given assistance subject to the overriding responsibility of the staff to the committee.

(3) The staff's primary responsibility is with respect to bills, resolutions, treaties, and nominations.

In addition to carrying out assignments from the committee and its individual members, the staff has a responsibility to originate suggestions for committee or subcommittee consideration. The staff also has a responsibility to make suggestions to individual members regarding matters of special interest to such members.

(4) It is part of the staff's duty to keep itself as well informed as possible in regard to developments affecting foreign relations and in regard to the administration of foreign programs of the United States. Significant trends or developments which might otherwise escape notice should be called to the attention of the committee, or of individual Senators with particular interests.

(5) The staff shall pay due regard to the constitutional separation of powers between the Senate and the executive branch. It therefore has a responsibility to help the committee bring to bear an independent, objective judgment of proposals by the executive branch and when appropriate to originate sound proposals of its own. At the same time, the staff shall avoid impinging upon the day-to-day conduct of foreign affairs.

(6) In those instances when committee action requires the expression of minority views, the staff shall assist the minority as fully as the majority to the end that all points of view may be fully considered by members of the committee and of the Senate. The staff shall bear in mind that under our constitutional system it is the responsibility of the elected members of the Senate to determine legislative issues in the light of as full and fair a presentation of the facts as the staff may be able to obtain.

(b) Restrictions.—

(1) The staff shall regard its relationship to the committee as a privileged one, in the nature of the relationship of a lawyer to a client. In order to protect this relationship and the mutual confidence which must prevail if the committee-staff relationship is to be a satisfactory and fruitful one, the following criteria shall apply:

(A) members of the staff shall not be identified with any special interest group in the field of foreign relations or allow their names to be used by any such group;

(B) members of the staff shall not accept public speaking engagements or write for publication in the field of foreign relations without specific advance permission from the staff director, or, in the case of minority staff, from the minority staff director. In the case of the staff director and the minority staff director, such advance permission shall be obtained from the chairman or the ranking member, as appropriate. In any event, such public statements should avoid the expression of personal views and should not contain predictions of future, or interpretations of past, committee action; and

(C) staff shall not discuss their private conversations with members of the committee without specific advance permission from the Senator or Senators concerned.

(2) The staff shall not discuss with anyone the proceedings of the committee in closed

session or reveal information conveyed or discussed in such a session unless that person would have been permitted to attend the session itself, or unless such communication is specifically authorized by the staff director or minority staff director. Unauthorized disclosure of information from a closed session or of classified information shall be cause for immediate dismissal and may, in the case of some kinds of information, be grounds for criminal prosecution.

RULE 15—STATUS AND AMENDMENT OF RULES

(a) Status.—In addition to the foregoing, the Committee on Foreign Relations is governed by the Standing Rules of the Senate, which shall take precedence in the event of a clear inconsistency. In addition, the jurisdiction and responsibilities of the committee with respect to certain matters, as well as the timing and procedure for their consideration in committee, may be governed by statute.

(b) Amendment.—These rules may be modified, amended, or repealed by a majority of the committee, provided that a notice in writing of the proposed change has been given to each member at least 48 hours prior to the meeting at which action thereon is to be taken. However, rules of the committee which are based upon Senate rules may not be superseded by committee vote alone.

GUARDIAN INDUSTRIES

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I want to recognize Guardian Industries, which is celebrating its 75th anniversary this year. Guardian has been a leader in the glass, building, and automotive parts manufacturing industries and an important contributor to Michigan's economy for many years.

Guardian Industries was established in 1932 as Guardian Glass Company. What began as a small windshield fabrication business in Detroit, MI, grew to become a large-scale operation with the opening of its first float glass assembly plant in 1970. Since then, Guardian has built or acquired numerous fabrication plants throughout the world and diversified its business through the purchase and development of new technologies and methods of production.

Over the years, Guardian Industries has steadily grown to become one of the world's chief manufacturers of float glass and fabricated glass products and the world's largest producer of mirrors. Guardian has also become a major player in the building materials and distribution business and a leading supplier of exterior products to the automotive industry.

During its 75 years of existence, Guardian Industries has made a significant contribution to Michigan's economy. With a global workforce of over 19,000 employees, including about 1,000 in southeast Michigan, Guardian has demonstrated its commitment to making Michigan's economy a leader in manufacturing and technological development. Guardian Industries also plays an important role in community improvement throughout southeastern Michigan. Through its awarding of scholarships to local students pursuing advanced degrees and its financial support of the Detroit Symphony Orches-

tra, Guardian has shown a commitment to strengthening the fiber of community in Michigan.

I know my colleagues join me in commending the tremendous effort and hard work of the many employees of Guardian Industries over the years and wish them many more years of success and growth.

LATIN AMERICA

Mr. OBAMA. Mr. President, later today, President Bush will start on a 6-day visit to five countries in the Western Hemisphere: Brazil, Uruguay, Colombia, Guatemala, and Mexico.

The trip comes at an important time for the region and for U.S. relations with our hemispheric neighbors. In an historic convergence, during a 13-month period beginning in November 2005 and ending this past December, a dozen countries throughout Latin America and the Caribbean held Presidential elections. Those elections are a testament to the tremendous democratic strides made throughout the Americas during the past two decades and saw governments elected to power that span the ideological spectrum.

In many ways, the election results symbolize the important political, economic, and social change occurring throughout the Americas. As many have noted, the elections gave voice to a yearning across the hemisphere for social and economic development—a yearning among tens of millions of people for a better life. This is a welcome development and a challenge to all of us who wish to see the Americas continue down a path of democracy with justice, because, while we should welcome this democratic call for change, we must recognize that hard and steady work lies ahead to make these hopes a reality.

That a desire for fundamental change has been expressed through the ballot box is an enormous stride forward. Too often, change in the Americas has occurred in an anti-democratic fashion. Those days must permanently be put to rest. All citizens of the Americas have a fundamental right to live in freedom and to express themselves through robust democratic institutions.

That a desire for expanded prosperity has been given such clear voice raises the stakes. Governments must now do more to address the basic needs and aspirations of their people in an effective, democratic, and sustainable way. A failure to fulfill the most basic functions of government, and a failure to create the conditions in which tens of millions across the Americas can realize their hopes and break free of poverty could undo these gains. The denial of opportunity is now the most significant threat to the consolidation of democracy in the region.

Unfortunately, the elections and this desire for change have occurred at a time when U.S. prestige and influence have fallen to depths not seen in at

least a generation. As has been the case throughout the world, our standing in the Americas has suffered as a result of the misguided policies and actions of the Bush administration. It will take significant work to repair the damage wrought by 6 years of neglect and mismanagement of relations.

The United States can ill afford this deterioration of our standing. With each passing day, we draw closer together to our neighbors to the south. This convergence creates new challenges, but it also opens the door to a more hopeful future. If we pay careful attention to developments throughout the region and respond to them in a thoughtful and respectful way, then we can advance our many and varied national interests at stake in the Americas.

I welcome the President's decision to travel to five important countries in Latin America, and to reaffirm the importance of our relationship with the more than 500 million people who live to our south. I am, however, disappointed that the President has fallen so short in his promise to transform U.S. relations with the Americas. Our regional relationships cannot be properly attended to with one 6-day trip, a series of photo opportunities, and some lofty rhetoric on collaboration.

Nor does the Bush administration's declaration of 2007 as the year of engagement with the Americas suffice. One year of engagement out of seven is simply not good enough. In light of the Bush administration's woeful record, creating false expectations does more harm than good. We must be realistic about the challenges we face, and what we are doing to address them. We must devote our full time and our respectful attention to our relations within the hemisphere.

Earlier this week, President Bush spoke of a "social justice" agenda for the Americas. He was right to underscore the importance of addressing the basic needs of millions of our neighbors languishing in poverty. The primary responsibility for doing so, of course, lies with the governments and societies throughout the hemisphere. Yet helping to lift people out of widespread poverty is in our interests, just as it is in accord with our values. When instability spreads to our south, our security and economic interests are at risk. When our neighbors suffer, all of the Americas suffer.

The United States has an important role to play. Yet the President sends a mixed message when he makes his call for a social justice agenda after presenting the Congress with a budget for fiscal year 2008 that, with the exception of HIV/AIDS funding, slashes both assistance for economic development and health programs in the Americas. At a time when our standing in the hemisphere is so low, we cannot afford to send this kind of message. Our commitment to justice in the Americas must be expressed in more than one thoughtful expression in one pre-trip

speech. Our commitment must be matched by our deeds, not just our words.

It is my hope that the President will break from his practice of touting the importance of the Americas during his travels only to turn his back upon his return.

Each stop on the President's trip presents an opportunity to move beyond rhetoric, to renew relations in the hemisphere, and to set a new course for sustained followthrough in a way that advances important U.S. interests.

In Brazil, it has been reported that President Bush is expected to join with President Inacio Lula de Silva to announce greater ethanol cooperation between the United States and Brazil. Together, the United States and Brazil are the world's largest ethanol producers and consumers. Brazil's more than 30 years of renewable fuel technology investments allowed it to achieve energy independence last year. Ethanol now accounts for 40 percent of Brazil's fuel usage. More than 80 percent of cars sold in Brazil today are flex-fuel vehicles capable of running on gasoline, ethanol, or a mixture thereof.

Greater Brazilian production of renewable fuels could boost sustainable economic development throughout Latin America and reshape the geopolitics of energy in the hemisphere, reducing the oil-driven influence of Venezuela's Hugo Chavez. The more interhemispheric production and use of ethanol and other biofuels occurs, and the more such indigenously produced renewable fuels are used to replace fossil fuels, the better it is for our friends in the hemisphere.

As it relates to our country's drive toward energy independence, it does not serve our national and economic security to replace imported oil with Brazilian ethanol. In other words, those who advocate replacement of U.S.-based biofuels production with Brazilian ethanol exports, however well intentioned they may be, are both misunderstanding our long-term energy security challenge and ignoring a valuable foreign policy opportunity. The U.S. needs to dramatically expand domestic biofuels production, not embrace a short term fix that discourages investment in the expansion of the domestic renewable fuels in industry. Also, accelerating technology advances and transferring the technology to our neighbors in the Caribbean and South America will help them employ their own resources to produce environmentally clean ethanol to reduce their imported oil bill, thereby promoting economic stability in the Caribbean and South and Central America and strengthen the U.S.-Brazil relationship.

It is vital that President Bush keeps the Congress involved each step forward in a U.S.-Brazil relationship based on renewable fuels. This relationship must be structured so as not to hamper the domestic production of renewable fuels, or the development of

new technologies here at home that can enhance our energy security.

In Uruguay, President Bush has the opportunity to forge closer ties with President Tabaré Vázquez and to show that the United States is ready, willing, and able to work productively with democratic-left governments. That this ability is in question and that it requires explaining underscores how badly the President and his administration have misunderstood and mismanaged the political, economic, and social change occurring throughout the Americas. The United States is seen as supporting democracy when it produces a desired result. It is vital to reverse that trend. I hope the President can begin that process, even if we have a long way to go.

The United States has invested a great deal—nearly \$5 billion during the past 7 years—to help stabilize Colombia. A more peaceful, just, and stable Colombia is undoubtedly in our national interest. It is imperative, however, that greater peace and stability contribute to a reduction in the flow of drugs from Colombia to the United States. Thus far, we have not seen the kind of dropoff that the effective pursuit of our interests demands.

President Bush's closest ally in the region—Colombian President Alvaro Uribe—is embroiled in a controversy that has led to the arrest of eight of his supporters in the Colombian Congress and his former confidant and former chief of Colombia's secret police for ties to the country's narco-terrorist paramilitaries. President Bush must be careful to keep the pursuit of U.S. interests in Colombia distinct from specific personalities, or personal relationships. The further consolidation of legitimate governing institutions in Colombia—and the extension of their reach throughout Colombia—are clearly in the national interest of the United States, and the interest of Colombia.

Guatemala shares deep connections with the United States. Nearly 1 in 10 Guatemalans now lives in the United States. Nearly \$3 billion were remitted from the United States to Guatemala in 2005, representing approximately 10 percent of that country's gross domestic product. Having emerged from decades of internal conflict that left as many as 200,000 of its citizens dead, Guatemala finds itself struggling with a new scourge of violence that is causing instability. Gang and drug-related criminal violence and the country's staggering levels of poverty pose enormous challenges—challenges that affect our country as well. I am encouraged to see the Bush administration's new commitment to supporting a Central American regional approach to combat transnational gangs. This initiative should incorporate the most effective techniques and practices from the United States and from throughout the region. The United States must take the lead in rolling back the detrimental influence of these gangs in our own society and in Central America.

The relationship between the United States and Mexico is among our most important in the world. Getting it right is vital to advancing our core economic and security interests. To do that, a great deal of work needs to be done. Mexico is making strong efforts to address the drug trade and is working cooperatively with the United States on a number of security issues. But our complex relationship with Mexico has become captive to a single issue: the immigration debate in our country.

There is consensus that our immigration system is broken. It is past time to fix it, and I am proud of my own support for a workable solution. We need a comprehensive approach to illegal immigration that stops the flow of illegal immigrants across our borders, better manages immigration flows going forward, and deals fairly with the illegal immigrants already living and working in our country. A workable solution will require bipartisan support, and I will work to build it. The President has consistently voiced his support, for comprehensive immigration reform. It is my hope that upon his return from Mexico he will get to work, converting his words into deeds to help push comprehensive immigration reform forward.

A great deal of work needs to be done. We need to restore U.S. relations in the hemisphere. We need to consolidate the gains that have been made in the sweeping change of the last few years. We need to sustain our commitment to democracy, to social justice, and to opportunity for our neighbors to the south. The Western Hemisphere is too important to our core economic and security interests to be treated with the neglect and mismanagement that have defined the past 6 years. It is my hope that President Bush's trip marks the opening of a new chapter of cooperation and partnership a chapter of partnership with our neighbors to promote democracy with social and economic development for the benefit of all of us who live in the Americas. It is time for the United States to reclaim and renew its historic role as a leader in the hemisphere and an example of hope for all who seek opportunity in the Americas.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

HOT SPRINGS NATIONAL PARK

• Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, it is with the greatest pleasure that today I honor Hot Springs National Park, which will soon be celebrating its 175th anniversary. Hot Springs is a magical place which has brought great distinction to my State because of its history and because of the allure it has held for generations of visitors.

On April 20, 1832, President Andrew Jackson and the U.S. Congress established Hot Springs Reservation in order to protect the 47 hot springs flowing

from the southwestern slope of Hot Springs Mountain. In 1921, it was renamed Hot Springs National Park and became America's 18th national park. Hot Springs remains the first protected area in the Nation.

People have used the hot springs for more than 200 years to treat illnesses and to relax. The reservation eventually developed into a well-known resort nicknamed, "The American Spa," because it attracted not only the wealthy but also indigent health seekers from around the world. In fact, their motto was, "We Bathe the World."

Eight historic bathhouses make up "Bathhouse Row" with the Fordyce Bathhouse housing the park's visitor center. The entire "Bathhouse Row" area is a National Historic Landmark District that contains the grandest collection of bathhouses of its kind in North America. It was placed on the National Register of Historic Places on November 13, 1974.

On April 20, 2007, Hot Springs National Park and the Nation will celebrate 175 years of preserving our natural resources. I urge my colleagues to join me in continuing to protect our great American treasures, one of the greatest of which is Hot Springs National Park.●

NATIONAL ENGINEERS FUTURE CITY COMPETITION

• Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Jake Bowers, Emily Ponti, and Krisha Sherburne of St. Thomas More School in Baton Rouge, LA. They are the winners of the 2007 National Engineers Future City Competition, and I would like to take a moment to recognize these talented students in their tireless effort.

Starting in September, 30,000 entrants from 1,000 schools began across the country working on their future cities for the National Engineers Future City Competition under the guidance of professional engineers in their local communities. In January the entrants were narrowed down to 105 students from 35 schools to go to the nationals in Washington, DC. St. Thomas More School was one of these talented groups to be chosen.

This hard-working group presented their future city of Mwinda in the Congo Republic with the guidance of their teacher Mrs. Shirley Newman, their engineer mentor Mr. Guy Macarios, and the help of Mr. Eric Ponti. The future city design featured renewable energy resources to power the city and hydrogen-powered hover cars and buses to transport citizens around the city. St. Thomas More has made it to the nationals in this competition for the fourth time and is their second national win.

I applaud the students from St. Thomas More School for this great honor and wish them continued success in their academic career.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Evans, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting nominations which were referred to the Committee on Armed Services.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

The following message from the President of the United States was transmitted to the Senate:

REPORT ON THE CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO IRAN THAT WAS DECLARED ON MARCH 15, 1995—PM 9

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice to the *Federal Register* for publication, stating that the Iran emergency declared on March 15, 1995, is to continue in effect beyond March 15, 2007.

The crisis between the United States and Iran constituted by the actions and policies of the Government of Iran that led to the declaration of a national emergency on March 15, 1995, has not been resolved. The actions and policies of the Government of Iran are contrary to the interests of the United States in the region and pose a continuing unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared with respect to Iran and maintain in force comprehensive sanctions against Iran to respond to this threat.

GEORGE W. BUSH.
THE WHITE HOUSE, March 8, 2007.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 11:54 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by