

temporarily unavailable due to language training. The Director of National Intelligence is uniquely situated to evaluate which offices are most in need of these extra positions, and could transfer them to the places where they would do the most good.

So, to return to my previous example, if you were the supervisor of a young counterterrorism analyst who wants to take 6 months to go learn Arabic, you could go ask the Director of National Intelligence to transfer an extra position to your office for that 6 month period. That way, you could bring someone else in on a temporary basis to do that analyst's work while they are gone for training. The analyst and the agency would get the long-term benefits of additional language training, and you, the supervisor, would not have to sacrifice in the short-term.

Senator CHAMBLISS and I do not claim that this legislation will revolutionize the intelligence community's language capabilities overnight. But it is our hope that it will make it easier than it is today for managers to balance short- and long-term priorities. If we can achieve that it will be good for our national intelligence workforce, and for our national security interests.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 206—EX-PRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT THE UNITED STATES SHOULD IMMEDIATELY IMPLEMENT THE UNITED STATES-COLOMBIA TRADE PROMOTION AGREEMENT

Mr. JOHANNIS (for himself, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Mr. BUNNING, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. MARTINEZ, and Mr. BOND) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Finance:

S. RES. 206

Whereas, since his election in 2002, the President of Colombia, Alvaro Uribe, has been overwhelmingly successful in strengthening the institutions of Colombia, fighting terrorism, improving the economy of Colombia, and extending the authority of the central government, the social support network, and security to most of Colombia;

Whereas, during President Uribe's term, the economy of Colombia grew at an average rate of more than 5 percent per year between 2002 and 2007;

Whereas, according to the World Bank, the total gross domestic product of Colombia increased from \$93,000,000,000 in 2002 to \$207,800,000,000 in 2007;

Whereas, according to the Office of the United States Trade Representative, approximately 10,000,000 people in Colombia have been lifted out of poverty during the past 5 years;

Whereas, according to the Ministry of Defense of Colombia, between 2002 and 2007, kidnappings in Colombia decreased by 83 percent, murders decreased by 40 percent, and terrorist attacks decreased by 76 percent;

Whereas police are now present in all 1,099 municipalities in Colombia, including areas previously held by various criminal and terrorist groups;

Whereas, according to the Department of State, more than 30,000 paramilitaries have been demobilized and disarmed since 2002;

Whereas, in July 2008, the security forces of Colombia successfully rescued 15 prisoners held hostage by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), including French-Colombian Ingrid Betancourt and 3 citizens of the United States, Marc Gonsalves, Keith Stansell, and Thomas Howes;

Whereas, according to the Office of the United States Trade Representative, unemployment in Colombia fell from 16 percent in 2002 to 9.9 percent in 2007;

Whereas, partially in recognition of the impressive economic, political, and diplomatic advances Colombia has made during the past decade, the United States negotiated and signed the United States-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement on November 22, 2006, and a protocol of amendment to the Agreement on June 28, 2007;

Whereas, according to the Office of the United States Trade Representative, Colombia is currently the 27th largest trading partner of the United States with respect to goods;

Whereas, according to the United States International Trade Commission, goods valued at \$11,400,000,000 were exported from the United States to Colombia in 2008, an increase from \$3,600,000,000 in 2002;

Whereas, according to the United States International Trade Commission, implementing the United States-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement would boost exports from the United States by an estimated \$1,100,000,000;

Whereas, more than 90 percent of exports from Colombia to the United States already enter the United States duty-free under the Andean Trade Preference Act (19 U.S.C. 3201 et seq.) and the Generalized System of Preferences under title V of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2461 et seq.);

Whereas, according to the Office of the United States Trade Representative, more than 80 percent of consumer and industrial products exported from the United States to Colombia will enter Colombia duty-free as soon as the United States-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement enters into force and all remaining tariffs on such products will be eliminated within 10 years after the Agreement enters into force;

Whereas, according to the Office of the United States Trade Representative, the primary exports from the United States to Colombia in 2008 were \$2,600,000,000 in machinery, \$997,000,000 in mineral fuel, \$974,000,000 in organic chemicals, \$969,000,000 in corn and wheat cereals, and \$950,000,000 in electrical machinery;

Whereas, according to the Office of the United States Trade Representative, Colombia is the 15th largest market for farm products exported from the United States, with the United States exporting almost \$1,700,000,000 worth of farm products to Colombia in 2008;

Whereas, since 2006, the quantity of agricultural products exported from the United States to Colombia has increased by approximately 40 percent per year;

Whereas, according to the Department of Agriculture, 99.9 percent of agricultural products imported into the United States from Colombia enter the United States duty-free, but no agricultural products exported from the United States to Colombia currently enter Colombia duty-free;

Whereas, according to the American Farm Bureau Federation, the United States-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement would increase sales of agricultural products produced in the United States by \$910,000,000,000 each year;

Whereas, according to the Department of Agriculture, more than half of agricultural products exported from the United States to Colombia will enter Colombia duty-free as soon as the United States-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement enters into force and all remaining tariffs on such products will be phased out over time;

Whereas the United States-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement will level the playing field for workers, businesses, and farmers in the United States by making duty-free treatment a 2-way street between the United States and Colombia for the first time;

Whereas, in the United States-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement, Colombia agreed to exceed commitments made by Colombia as a member of the World Trade Organization and to dismantle significant barriers to services and investment from the United States; and

Whereas, in the United States-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement, the United States and Colombia reaffirm their obligations as members of the International Labour Organization: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That—

(1) the Senate—

(A) recognizes the historic successes achieved by the President of Colombia, Alvaro Uribe, in rebuilding the Government of Colombia, strengthening the institutions of Colombia, and solidifying the rule of law in Colombia;

(B) congratulates President Uribe, the Government of Colombia, and the security forces of Colombia for significant successes in fighting the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC);

(C) recognizes the close ties between the United States and Colombia in the fight against illicit narcotics, terrorism, and transnational crime; and

(D) recognizes that the United States-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement is enormously advantageous for workers, businesses, and farmers in the United States, who would be able to export goods to Colombia duty-free for the first time; and

(2) it is the sense of that Senate that—

(A) it is in the security, economic, and diplomatic interests of the United States to deepen the relationship between the United States and Colombia; and

(B) the United States should implement the United States-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement immediately.

Mr. JOHANNIS. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the United States-Colombia Free Trade Agreement which was signed way back in November of 2006. On July 29, President Uribe will be visiting the United States to meet with our President, President Obama. The two have previously met at the Summit of Americas in April, but this will be President Uribe's first time here under the new administration.

Today, as one Senator, I rise to express my hope for a continuing bond in our relationship with Colombia's President Uribe. I also rise to express some concerns that I will talk about. I am happy that President Obama recognizes the importance of our closest ally in South America. I am also pleased President Uribe continues to seek a close relation with the United States, for he is truly a courageous and a visionary leader.

Coming to power in some of the darkest and most vicious days of a Marxist insurgency everywhere in that country, he has pulled Colombia back from

the brink. President Uribe has driven the terrorists from much of their territory in Colombia's cities, boosted the economy, and he has improved Colombia's human rights record.

If an American President had achieved this much, some would be clamoring for him or her to seek a third term. The same is true in Colombia, where despite term limits, Uribe is actually being petitioned to run again.

His achievements are very impressive. During President Uribe's time in office, the economy grew at an average rate of over 5 percent over the past 5 years.

According to the World Bank, Colombia's GDP growth then grew 7.5 percent in 2007, far surpassing the average in Latin America. Ten million Colombians have been lifted out of poverty, unemployment has fallen from double digits—16 percent in 2002—to 9.9 percent in 2007.

Crime has been a historic problem in Colombia. Yet, under President Uribe's stewardship, kidnappings have declined 83 percent, murders are down by 40 percent, terrorist attacks are down by 76 percent. Every single one of Colombia's 1,099 municipalities now have a police presence. Finally, at long last, Colombia appears to be winning the war against the terrorists who have made life miserable for far too many years.

Last summer, the world was treated to the images of smiling U.S., French, and Colombian hostages when a daring Colombian Army raid freed them from the terrorists. These included three U.S. defense contractors and one hostage who had been held since February of 2002.

The U.S. State Department estimates that over 30,000 paramilitaries and terrorists have been disarmed and demobilized—an impressive number.

I look to the future in this relationship, but I will be very candid. I am concerned about the present. I speak of the Colombia trade agreement that is languishing in the executive branch. We should, in my judgment, be embarrassed by this inaction. I recognize the populism of opposing trade, but I cannot understand the opposition to the Colombian Free Trade Agreement. It levels the playing field for U.S. workers and farmers and small businesses. Over 90 percent of Colombia's exports to the United States already enter this country duty free. They have for years, under the Andean Trade Preferences Act and other previous agreements.

Meanwhile, U.S. exports to Colombia face high tariffs. They can be as high as 35 percent, a tax on our goods going into Colombia. In spite of these restrictions, Colombia is America's 27th largest trading partner.

An International Trade Commission study estimated that the United States-Colombia Free Trade Agreement would boost U.S. exports by \$1.1 billion. Do my colleagues and others who oppose this deal think the U.S. economy is so robust it does not need another billion-dollar-plus market? Are things that rosy? I suggest not.

I come from a farm State where we are especially eager to open new markets. Virtually 100 percent of Colombia's agricultural products enter the United States duty free. Zero percent of U.S. agricultural exports enter Colombia duty free.

This FTA wipes out those differences. It levels the playing field. Tariffs would immediately disappear for 80 percent of U.S. exports into Colombia and the rest phase out over time. The potential for dramatic increases in our exports, in my judgment, is very clear.

Consider this: Even with the tariff imbalance our agricultural exports to Colombia totaled almost \$1.7 billion in 2008. In spite of all of the current tariffs, corn and wheat cereals are one of the major U.S. exports to Colombia. Last year we sold \$969 million worth, as well as \$2.6 billion in machinery.

By anybody's definition these are very big numbers, and on a level playing field—which is what the FTA will do—they will be even bigger, with a potential to create thousands of jobs in an economy that needs every job.

These statistics clearly show the FTA we have negotiated with Colombia is not a blind leap into the unknown. Colombia already essentially has free trade with us, an open border. This FTA levels the playing field for America's farmers and ranchers and U.S. businesses.

Did you know more than 8,000 small- and medium-size businesses in our country export to Colombia? For them, the elimination of these tariffs would blow open the door of opportunity.

Congress should not be in the business of creating hurdles for the United States overseas, nor should the executive branch. Yet here we have a clear pathway to eliminate a huge hurdle with a simple nod of approval. Yet we have failed to act.

The economic justification speaks for itself, but it is just one of the several compelling reasons to ratify this agreement immediately. Perhaps as persuasive is the political situation in Latin America. Since his rise to power in Venezuela in 1998, Hugo Chavez has reinvigorated the radical Latin-American left. He has formed a block of anti-American countries in South and Central America composed of Cuba, Nicaragua, Bolivia, and, increasingly, Ecuador.

During an audacious raid on the Ecuador border, Colombian military units captured evidence detailing the Venezuelan Government's extensive support for the terrorists. Venezuela has used its petroleum money to buy friends and influence people throughout the hemisphere, and too often they have succeeded. Our friend in Colombia has stoutly resisted this siren song. When too many other nations have drifted into cheap anti-U.S. populism, Colombia has stood strong, and has traveled precisely the opposite way.

So while President Uribe is here in our Nation and is meeting with our President, I hope the President of the

United States will do the right thing and stand firmly in support of completing the FTA that has been negotiated. It is time for the administration to show great leadership on this issue, which is at every level, in my judgment, just good common sense.

However, Congress cannot shirk its responsibility for the lack of action on the Colombia FTA. While the administration needs to step to the mound, Congress must step up to the plate and swing for the fences. This agreement was signed and it was sealed and it was delivered two and a half years ago. It is an unbelievable opportunity for our farmers, our ranchers, and our small businesses. It is waiting right here at our doorstep. All it needs is our nod of approval.

That is why today I introduce a resolution recognizing the benefits of the Colombian Free Trade Agreement. I encourage my colleagues to cosponsor this resolution and to implore the leadership to allow it to come to a vote.

Rarely has an initiative with benefits this crystal clear faced such a rocky and uncertain road. The time to level the playing field for farmers and ranchers and small businesses is here. It is upon us.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I congratulate the Senator from Nebraska on his resolution to recognize the importance of the United States continuing to trade in the world, especially with our friends in Latin America, especially when they are already taking advantage of low tariffs with us and we are not taking advantage of low tariffs with them. Our principal concern on the Republican side, and I am sure for many Democrats, too, is the cost of living for middle-class families in America. There are many issues that come before us that deal with that—the level of taxes, the level of tuition, that we get Medicaid spending under control so States will be able to fund the Universities of Nebraska and Tennessee better—but another way to do that is to trade with the world.

People walk into stores in America, and they are looking, today, in bad economic times, for low costs. Are we going to erect barriers and raise costs? Are we going to say to families who do not have many extra dollars that it is in our national interest to raise our costs? Are we going to keep out of our country people with products and ideas causing them to keep our products and ideas out of their country? Are we that afraid of competing in the world?

We Tennesseans have been much better off since Federal Express started flying in China and Nissan started building cars in Tennessee. Federal Express employs 30,000 people in the Memphis, TN, area, and Nissan just announced this week it is going to build electric cars, not in Japan but in Smyrna, TN. That is because we trade with the world. So this creeping protectionism that we see is a threat to the middle-class budget of every American.

Senator JOHANN has made an important step toward change.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 31—PROVIDING FOR A CONDITIONAL ADJOURNMENT OR RECESS OF THE SENATE, AND A CONDITIONAL ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. REID submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. CON. RES. 31

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring),

That when the Senate recesses or adjourns on any day from Thursday, June 25, 2009 through Sunday, June 28, 2009, on a motion offered pursuant to this concurrent resolution by its Majority Leader or his designee, it stand recessed or adjourned until noon on Monday, July 6, 2009, or such other time on that day as may be specified by its Majority Leader or his designee in the motion to recess or adjourn, or until the time of any reassembly pursuant to section 2 of this concurrent resolution, whichever occurs first; and that when the House adjourns on any legislative day from Thursday, June 25, 2009, through Sunday, June 28, 2009, on a motion offered pursuant to this concurrent resolution by its Majority Leader or his designee, it stand adjourned until 2:00 p.m. on Tuesday, July 7, 2009, or such other time on that day as may be specified in the motion to adjourn, or until the time of any reassembly pursuant to section 2 of this concurrent resolution, whichever occurs first.

SEC. 2. The Majority Leader of the Senate and the Speaker of the House, or their respective designees, acting jointly after consultation with the Minority Leader of the Senate and the Minority Leader of the House, shall notify the Members of the Senate and the House, respectively, to reassemble at such place and time as they may designate if, in their opinion, the public interest shall warrant it.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 32—A BILL EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF CONGRESS ON HEALTH CARE REFORM LEGISLATION

Mr. MENENDEZ submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

S. CON. RES. 32

Whereas consumers may continue to confront a variety of problems with a reformed health care system;

Whereas those problems may range from difficulties in choosing an appropriate health plan, problems with calculation of premiums and cost-sharing, the possibility of a denial of benefits, and issues with enrollment and access to providers;

Whereas the Institute of Medicine estimates that as many as 30 percent of people in the United States suffer from health treatment illiteracy;

Whereas the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion of the Department of Health and Human Services reports that only 12 percent of the population can use a table to calculate the share of health insurance costs for an individual;

Whereas a study by RAND Corporation found that increasing the ease of access to

information regarding insurance products and simplifying the application process would increase purchase rates of insurance products as much as modest subsidies would;

Whereas the reports from the Institute of Medicine, the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, and RAND Corporation prove there is a need for a fundamental improvement in the manner in which consumers learn about insurance choices;

Whereas many consumers lack avenues or mechanisms to present grievances both to the managers of health plans and to external reviewers and fail to receive timely decisions with respect to those grievances;

Whereas consumers often need expert guidance to pursue claims for denied health care benefits and other coverage disputes;

Whereas some States have documented a number of cases of improperly rescinded health insurance policies, inappropriate billing for out-of-network services, and fraudulent and deceptive marketing of health plans;

Whereas the Federal Government lacks oversight mechanisms to prevent health care coverage problems from recurring in other States;

Whereas the appropriate resolution of a health coverage complaint may involve multiple Federal and State agencies;

Whereas health plans sometimes make mid-year changes to provider networks, benefit offerings, or other elements of the plan important to enrollees;

Whereas people need assistance enforcing consumer rights in the health care system; and

Whereas Federal laws have created successful models of consumer assistance with health dispute resolution, such as the Long Term Care Ombudsman program that assists nursing home residents in every State and the Senior Health Insurance Assistance Program that assists those eligible for Medicare: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that any health care reform legislation should include, with respect to health plans—

(1) support for consumer education and assistance with enrollment, particularly for vulnerable populations, at both the Federal and State levels;

(2) assistance for people asserting consumer rights;

(3) a strengthened system of consumer protections, including—

(A) an appeal mechanism within a health plan, and an appeal mechanism with an external entity independent of the health plan, which could address a variety of coverage problems;

(B) coverage for emergency care without prior authorization;

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 1365. Mr. NELSON of Nebraska (for himself and Ms. MURKOWSKI) proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 2918, making appropriations for the Legislative Branch for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes.

SA 1366. Mr. MCCAIN proposed an amendment to amendment SA 1365 proposed by Mr. NELSON of Nebraska (for himself and Ms. MURKOWSKI) to the bill H.R. 2918, supra.

SA 1367. Mr. DEMINT submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2918, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1368. Mr. DEMINT submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2918, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 1365. Mr. NELSON of Nebraska (for himself and Ms. MURKOWSKI) proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 2918, making appropriations for the Legislative Branch for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes; as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

That the following sums are appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for the legislative branch for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes, namely:

TITLE I

LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

SENATE

EXPENSE ALLOWANCES

For expense allowances of the Vice President, \$20,000; the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, \$40,000; Majority Leader of the Senate, \$40,000; Minority Leader of the Senate, \$40,000; Majority Whip of the Senate, \$10,000; Minority Whip of the Senate, \$10,000; Chairmen of the Majority and Minority Conference Committees, \$5,000 for each Chairman; and Chairmen of the Majority and Minority Policy Committees, \$5,000 for each Chairman; in all, \$180,000.

REPRESENTATION ALLOWANCES FOR THE MAJORITY AND MINORITY LEADERS

For representation allowances of the Majority and Minority Leaders of the Senate, \$15,000 for each such Leader; in all, \$30,000.

SALARIES, OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES

For compensation of officers, employees, and others as authorized by law, including agency contributions, \$178,982,000, which shall be paid from this appropriation without regard to the following limitations:

OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

For the Office of the Vice President, \$2,517,000.

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

For the Office of the President Pro Tempore, \$752,000.

OFFICES OF THE MAJORITY AND MINORITY LEADERS

For Offices of the Majority and Minority Leaders, \$5,212,000.

OFFICES OF THE MAJORITY AND MINORITY WHIPS

For Offices of the Majority and Minority Whips, \$3,288,000.

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

For salaries of the Committee on Appropriations, \$15,844,000.

CONFERENCE COMMITTEES

For the Conference of the Majority and the Conference of the Minority, at rates of compensation to be fixed by the Chairman of each such committee, \$1,726,000 for each such committee; in all, \$3,452,000.

OFFICES OF THE SECRETARIES OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE MAJORITY AND THE CONFERENCE OF THE MINORITY

For Offices of the Secretaries of the Conference of the Majority and the Conference of the Minority, \$850,000.

POLICY COMMITTEES

For salaries of the Majority Policy Committee and the Minority Policy Committee, \$1,763,000 for each such committee; in all, \$3,526,000.

OFFICE OF THE CHAPLAIN

For Office of the Chaplain, \$415,000.

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

For Office of the Secretary, \$25,790,000.

OFFICE OF THE SERGEANT AT ARMS AND DOORKEEPER

For Office of the Sergeant at Arms and Doorkeeper, \$70,000,000.