



Committee On Finance

Max Baucus, Ranking Member

NEWS RELEASE

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NEWS ADVISORY

SENATE-HOUSE PRESS CONFERENCE TO HIGHLIGHT VOTE SUSPENDING CUBA TRAVEL BAN, LOOKING TOWARD NEXT STEPS

Congress Working to End Sanctions and Promote Democracy in Cuba

Event: Press Conference highlighting the successful passage in both the House and Senate to eliminate funding for enforcement of the Cuba travel ban.

Date: Wednesday, October 29, 2003 12 noon

Location: Senate Radio-TV gallery, U.S. Capitol

Attendees: Senate and House cosponsors of the Cuba travel amendment, including U.S. Senators Max Baucus (D-Mont.) Sens. Mike Enzi (R-Wyo.), Larry Craig (R-Ind.), Byron Dorgan (D-N.D.) and Rep. Jeff Flake (R-Ariz.), among others.

Background:

On October 23, 2003, the U.S. Senate voted 59-36 in favor of eliminating funding that goes toward the enforcement of the Cuba travel ban. This vote mirrored similar House action taken in September, with a vote of 227-188, to eliminate travel ban funding. The amendment was included in the fiscal year 2004 Treasury-Transportation Appropriations Bill.

In recent months, momentum has grown in Congress and across the country for strengthened relations between the U.S. and Cuba. Earlier this year, bipartisan "Cuba Working Groups" were formed in both the House and Senate, with the goal of examining U.S. policies toward Cuba and determining the steps Congress can take to increase trade and strengthen the relationship between the two countries.

Sens. Baucus, Enzi, and Dorgan, among others have introduced legislation in the Senate to remove travel restrictions between the U.S. and Cuba. Companion legislation has been introduced in the House by Reps. Flake, Delahunt and others.

In addition, a number of Members of Congress, including Baucus, have recently traveled to Cuba and met with leading dissidents, members of the Cuban government and the Cuban business community.

At the press conference, the Members will be urging the Appropriations conference committee and the Administration to uphold the will of Congress and retain the Cuba travel provision in the final FY04 Treasury-Transportation legislation.

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