



For Immediate Release
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FINANCE PANEL APPROVES BURMA SANCTIONS PLAN

Baucus leads action on important trade restrictions

Washington, DC – The Senate Finance Committee today approved by a unanimous voice vote S.J. Res. 41, a measure granting the renewal of import restrictions contained in the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act of 2003. The resolution imposes a variety of sanctions on Burma and that country’s military leaders, including by prohibiting the importation into the United States of any articles that are products of Burma. This extension of existing law must be renewed annually and is non-amendable. Since 1988, Burma has been ruled by an autocratic military regime known as the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC).

“The Burmese junta continues to rule its people with a hostile hand, and we have a responsibility to the people of Burma and to other nations around the world to say loud and clear that we’re not okay with that,” said Senate Finance Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.). **“We do this through effective trade sanctions that severely limit the junta’s clout and mobility, and further marginalize them from the international community.”**

The 2007 State Department Country Report on Human Rights Practices notes that the SPDC maintains its power by suppressing opposition groups, and severely limiting the personal freedom of the Burmese people. The State Department also reports that the SPDC has restricted freedom of speech and press, engaged in gross human rights violations including the conscription of child soldiers, and does not maintain an independent judiciary.

The Senate Finance Committee has jurisdiction over U.S. international trade.

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