

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

R. BRUCE JOSTEN
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TO THE MEMBERS OF THE UNITED STATES SENATE:

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the world's largest business federation representing the interests of more than three million businesses and organizations of every size, sector, and region, urges you to sign the Senate letter to Chairman Inouye and Ranking Member Cochran supporting allocation for the International Affairs Budget of no less than \$58.8 billion, the amount requested by the Obama administration and in keeping with bipartisan calls from American foreign policy and military leaders.

U.S. businesses understand that diplomacy and development assistance play vital roles in building economic prosperity, protecting national security, and promoting America's humanitarian values. Although it represents less than 1.5 percent of the total federal budget, the International Affairs Budget funds America's development and diplomacy, and these investments are critical to creating jobs, saving lives, protecting U.S. diplomats and embassies abroad, and fighting terrorism and the spread of weapons of mass destruction. As Defense Secretary Robert Gates has stated, "America's civilian institutions of diplomacy and development have been chronically undermanned and underfunded for far too long ... relative to the responsibilities and challenges our nation has around the world."

Additionally, U.S. foreign assistance programs provide technical advice and build stronger political, legal, and economic policy regimes in developing countries that help these nations to become reliable trading partners. At a time when export opportunities represent a potential lifeline to the U.S. economy and a motor of domestic job creation, these international programs are more important than ever.

America must remain engaged in the world and utilize all of the tools and resources it has to strengthen U.S. national interests — including the U.S. International Affairs Budget — to meet the global challenges and opportunities of the 21st century. The Chamber urges you to support no less than \$58.8 billion for the 302(b) allocation for the FY11 International Affairs Budget.

Sincerely,



R. Bruce Josten