

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 8, 2008

The Honorable Robert C. Byrd
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman and Senator Cochran:

As you consider 302(b) allocations among Appropriations Subcommittees, we urge you to allocate for the International Affairs Budget \$39.8 billion, the amount approved in the Senate budget resolution with 73 votes.

The International Affairs Budget is an essential component of our national security. Defense Secretary Gates has said: "What is clear to me is that there is a need for a dramatic increase in spending on the civilian instruments of national security – diplomacy, strategic communications, foreign assistance, civic action, and economic reconstruction and development." The 2006 National Security Strategy, the Quadrennial Defense Review, and the 9/11 Commission all support increased investment in America's civilian capability to achieve our nation's foreign policy objectives. The Committee on Foreign Relations recently heard testimony from two retired flag officers, representing more than fifty fellow retired flag officers, making the same point.

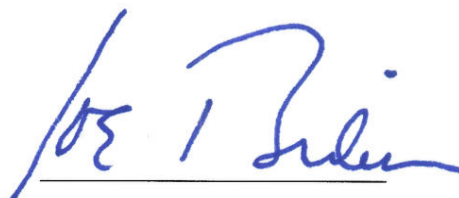
Seventy-three senators voted for an amendment that restored the International Affairs Budget to the level requested by the President. This was the most significant shift in spending priorities agreed on by the Senate during debate on the budget resolution, and its adoption was broadly bipartisan.

Currently, for every fifteen dollars we spend on the military, barely one dollar goes to the civilian component of our international efforts. The money you allocate will maintain funding for critical programs such as the reconstruction of Afghanistan, the fight against global AIDS, nonproliferation efforts, and refugee and development assistance. Efforts such as these are crucial to our national security, our foreign policy, and our moral standing in the world.

The Senate has spoken clearly on these priorities, and we urge you to adopt a 302(b) allocation that reflects Senate support for the International Affairs Budget. Thank you for considering our request.

Sincerely,


Dick Lugar


Thad Cochran

Jim Sullivan

John E. Sumner

James P. Stein

C. H. Stea

Chris D. D. D.

Noah Coleman