

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

R. BRUCE JOSTEN
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT
GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

1615 H STREET, N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20062-2000
202/463-5310

November 10, 2009

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the world's largest business federation representing more than three million businesses and organizations of every size, sector, and region, urges you to support a robust FY 2011 U.S. International Affairs budget and to sign onto a letter to President Obama on this issue currently being circulated for consideration by Representatives Howard Berman and Mark Kirk.

American businesses understand that diplomacy and development assistance play vital roles in building economic prosperity, protecting national security, and promoting America's humanitarian values. 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 trade is providing a lifeline to the U.S. economy, 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 sign the Congressional letter to the President by November 25.

Sincerely,



R. Bruce Josten