

Organized Crime Convention and the Trafficking Protocol;

Whereas ratification by the United States of the Organized Crime Convention and the Trafficking Protocol would enhance the ability of the United States Government to render and receive assistance on a global basis in the common struggle to prevent, investigate, and prosecute trafficking in persons; and

Whereas, like the United States, most countries affected by the tsunami disaster have signed, but not yet ratified, the Organized Crime Convention and the Trafficking Protocol: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) combating trafficking in persons should continue to be a priority of United States foreign policy;

(2) the United States should ratify the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children;

(3) the President should commend the efforts of the governments of those countries affected by the December 26, 2004, tsunami to protect their children from the dangers of trafficking; and

(4) the President should urge all countries to ratify the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, particularly those countries that have been most affected by the tsunami and in which children face the resulting increased risk of being abducted and trafficked.

Mr. LUGAR. Mr. President, I rise to submit a resolution expressing the Sense of the Senate regarding the trafficking in children following the Asian tsunami.

The recent tsunami in the Indian Ocean region was a natural disaster unlike anything in recent human history. It is estimated that the tsunami claimed the lives of more than 160,000 people throughout the region and displaced more than 1 million.

This disaster has taken an incredible toll on children. The United Nations Children Fund, UNICEF, estimates that children comprise more than one-third of all deaths. Tens of thousands of children have lost family members and friends and are coping with unspeakable trauma. Nearly 35,000 children have been orphaned, and many more have been separated from their families. These children are in need of food, water, and shelter. They face the imminent threats of hunger, disease, and diarrhea.

In addition to these dangers, these children are also vulnerable to being trafficked for sexual exploitation, forced labor, or to be child soldiers. According to the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons at the Department of State, an estimated 600,000 to 800,000 people are trafficked every year, some 50 percent of whom are children. In South East Asia alone, nearly 250,000 people are trafficked in, out, and through the region. Without their families, the children orphaned by the tsunami lack protection from predators who would profit from their tragedy.

My resolution acknowledges this uniquely vulnerable group and urges the United States and other countries to ratify the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children and the underlying U.N. Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime. The Protocol requires countries to enact laws to criminalize trafficking in persons, punish traffickers and assist victims. In addition, the Protocol would enhance our ability to give and receive assistance on a global basis in the common struggle to prevent, investigate and prosecute trafficking.

On December 13, 2000, the United States signed these international agreements. Last June, the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations held a hearing on these very important law enforcement treaties. At the earliest opportunity, I intend to schedule a vote on the Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons at a business meeting of the Committee. By ratifying the Trafficking Protocol, and urging other countries to do the same, we would send a strong message to the world that this modern-day form of slavery must be stopped and that the United States is committed to ensuring that perpetrators are punished and that victims are helped.

#### AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

##### COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 10, 2005, at 9:30 a.m., in open session to receive testimony on the defense authorization request for fiscal year 2006 and the future years defense program.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

##### COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 10, 2005, at 10:00 a.m., to conduct a hearing on "The Role of the Government-Sponsored Enterprises in the Mortgage Market."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

##### COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, February 10, 2005, at 9:30 a.m., to hold a hearing on the Tsunami.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

##### COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Com-

mittee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet to conduct a hearing on Thursday, February 10, 2005 at 10:15 a.m. on "Bankruptcy Reform." The hearing will take place in the Dirksen Senate Office Building Room 226.

#### Witness List

Mr. Kenneth Beine, President & CEO, Shoreline Credit Union, Two Rivers, WI; Mr. Malcom Bennett, President, International Realty & Investments, Inc., Los Angeles, CA; Mr. Dave McCall, Director, District 1, United Steel Workers of America, AFL-CIO, Columbus, OH; Mr. R. Michael Stewart Menzies, Sr., President & CEO, East Bank and Trust Company, Easton, MD; Mr. Philip Strauss, Retired Attorney, Family Support Bureau in the Office, District Attorney Office in San Francisco, on behalf of the National Child Support Enforcement Association, San Francisco, CA; Ms. Maria Vullo, Partner, Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP, New York, NY; Prof. Elizabeth Warren, Leo Gottlieb Professor of Law, Harvard Law School, Cambridge, MA; and Prof. Todd J. Zywicki, Visiting Professor of Law, Georgetown University Law Center, Washington, DC.

#### SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT OF GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT, THE FEDERAL WORKFORCE, AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management, the Federal Workforce, and the District of Columbia be authorized to meet on Thursday, February 10, 2005 at 10:00 a.m. for a hearing entitled, "Unlocking the Potential within Homeland Security; the New Human Resources System."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 10, 2005 at 2:30 p.m. to hold a closed meeting.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that privilege of the floor be granted to Joe Helble and Lydia Olander, both science fellows in my office, during consideration of the Climate Stewardship Act of 2005.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### NATIONAL SCHOOL COUNSELING WEEK

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Judiciary Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 37, and that the Senate then proceed to its immediate consideration.