

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND
TRANSPORTATION

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to meet on Tuesday, December 13, 2005, at 10:30 a.m., on the nominations of Deborah Taylor Tate and Michael Joseph Copps to be Federal Communications Commissioners.

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

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I have a unanimous consent request, which I would like to make for Senator BAUCUS, that the following fellows and interns be granted floor privileges during the duration of the debate on this measure, Jonathan Coleman, Andreas Datsopoulos, and Holly Luck.

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

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT
AGREEMENT—S. 1932

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that on Wednesday, following morning business, the Chair lay before the Senate a message from the House to accompany S. 1932, the deficit reduction bill. I further ask consent that the Senate disagree to the amendment of the House, request a conference with the House, and that the Chair be authorized to appoint conferees on the part of the Senate with the ratio of 11 to 9; provided further that before the Chair appoints conferees, the following motions to instruct be the only motions in order and that they be considered under the following limitations: Kennedy, higher education, 60 minutes equally divided; Baucus, Medicaid, 5 minutes equally divided; DeWine, trade, 60 minutes equally divided; Kohl, child support enforcement, 60 minutes equally divided; Carper, TANF, 5 minutes equally divided; Harkin, food stamps, 5 minutes equally divided; and Reed, LIHEAP, 60 minutes equally divided.

I further ask consent that no amendments be in order to the motions and the only debate in order under the statute other than debate on the motions be 30 minutes equally divided for general debate, divided between the chairman and ranking member; further, that all motions be debated on Tuesday and Wednesday and that the vote occur in relation to the motions in the stacked sequence at a time determined by the majority leader after consultation with the Democratic leader; finally, that any votes which do not occur prior to 1 p.m. on Wednesday be stacked to occur beginning at 3:30 on Thursday, December 15.

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

UNITED STATES-BAHRAIN FREE
TRADE AGREEMENT IMPLEMEN-
TATION ACT

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate

proceed to the immediate consideration of H.R. 4340, the Bahrain Free Trade Agreement. I ask unanimous consent that all time be yielded back.

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

The clerk will report the bill by title. The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 4340) to implement the United States-Bahrain Free Trade Agreement.

There being no objection, the Senate proceed to consider the bill.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, the Bahrain free-trade agreement is a very important agreement that reflects in this post-9/11 environment the recommendation that had been made in terms of facilitating trade to nations such as Bahrain. I am delighted we were able to both debate it earlier today and ultimately pass this important free-trade agreement.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I reluctantly oppose the legislation implementing the U.S.-Bahrain Free Trade Agreement. I have nothing against expanded trade with Bahrain, and I know that there is plenty in this FTA that is appealing to the U.S. business community. However, this agreement is another example of the misplaced priorities in the Bush administration's flawed trade policy, which can best be described as a policy of "fiddling while Rome is burning."

If you were to ask Americans to list their top trade priorities, I think they would suggest the following: dealing with the enormous trade deficit, on pace to exceed \$700 billion this year; addressing the rise of China; meeting the challenges of outsourcing and globalization; enforcing our existing agreements and rules for fair trade; and perhaps global negotiations in the World Trade Organization. A trade agreement with Bahrain would be nowhere near the top of the list; it probably would not even be on the list at all.

Yet, here we are, with the Bahrain FTA as the big trade item to close out the year. The U.S. has a trade deficit with China that is on pace to exceed \$200 billion this year—more than a quarter of the entire U.S. trade deficit. Last year, China passed the U.S. as the largest exporter of high-tech information technology and communications products. There is no doubt that the rise of China presents an extraordinary challenge to the United States. Yet, the Bush administration has essentially no policy dealing with China's currency manipulation and the accompanying U.S. indebtedness to the government of China, rampant piracy of U.S. intellectual property, WTO violations, forced technology transfer requirements, and industrial policy in areas critical to the U.S. like semiconductors and automobiles.

Instead, we have the Bahrain FTA, which involves .03 percent of total U.S. trade.

The Bush administration has proposed no policies in the face of outsourcing and the revolution of globalization to ensure that America keeps good-paying jobs and remains

the most competitive economy in the world. They basically say, "Don't Worry, Be Happy."

Instead, the U.S. uses the scarce resources of the U.S. Trade Representative to negotiate an FTA with Bahrain, which has an economy one-tenth-of-one percent the size of the U.S. economy.

When it comes to enforcing our current agreements, the Bush administration has been asleep at the wheel. While the Clinton administration brought on average 11 WTO cases per year to knock down foreign barriers to U.S. exports, the Bush administration has filed fewer than three cases per year.

Instead, they have focused their energies on negotiating an FTA which is so small that the independent ITC has stated, "the effect of the FTA on total U.S. exports is likely to be minimal."

Meanwhile, the WTO negotiations have delayed and floundered. Ironic may not be the right word, but it is a fitting testament to this administration's skewed priorities that Senators are stuck in Washington debating the Bahrain FTA this week, and so were not able to travel to Hong Kong to provide oversight on the WTO negotiations—which could have an impact thousands of times larger than a trade agreement with Bahrain.

Looking at the merits of the Bahrain FTA in isolation, let me note that I applaud the Government of Bahrain. It has been a good U.S. ally and is an important moderate Arab and Islamic country. I wish the people of Bahrain well and hope that the U.S. and Bahrain will continue to enjoy good relations, including trading relations. I also note that there are many good provisions in this agreement to ensure protection for U.S. intellectual property rights, to prevent expropriations of U.S. investments, to reduce barriers to U.S. exports, and to expand the access of U.S. service providers to Bahrain's market.

It is regrettable, though, that the Bush administration followed its flawed model in this FTA. In short, the interests of the business community are taken care of, but the interests of the average American are not. I certainly understand that many of the businesses that care about these FTAs make important contributions to the U.S. economy and are a critical source of employment, exports, and innovation. I value those contributions and think for the most part the chapters and provisions of the FTA important to the U.S. business community make sense. What I do have a problem with, however, is the fact that our trade agreements provide short shrift to areas of interest to human beings, including workers' rights and environmental protection.

When it comes to transparency in government regulation, telecommunications regulation, financial services regulation, other services regulation,