

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

## COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, the Finance Committee requests unanimous consent to conduct a hearing on Thursday, April 17, 1997, beginning at 10 a.m. in room 215 Dirksen.

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

## COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, April 17, 1997, at 10 a.m. to hold a hearing.

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

## COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent on behalf of the Governmental Affairs Committee to meet on Thursday, April 17, 1997, at 9:15 a.m. for a hearing on public education improvement opportunities for the District of Columbia.

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

## COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, the Committee on the Judiciary would like to request unanimous consent to hold an executive business meeting on Thursday, April 17, 1997, at 10 a.m., in Room 226 of the Senate Dirksen Office Building.

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

## COMMITTEE ON RULE AND ADMINISTRATION

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Rules and Administration be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, April 17, 1997, beginning at 9:30 a.m. to consider the course of action regarding petitions in connection with a contested U.S. Senate election held in Louisiana in November 1996.

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

## COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, the Committee on Veterans' Affairs would like to request unanimous consent to hold a hearing to hear the testimony of Gen. Colin Powell on Persian Gulf War issues. The hearing will be held on April 17, 1997, at 9:30 a.m., in room 216 of the Hart Senate Office Building.

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

## SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, April 17, 1997, at 2:30 p.m. to hold a closed hearing on intelligence matters.

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

## SUBCOMMITTEE ON EASTERN AND SOUTH ASIAN AFFAIRS

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Sub-

committee on Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs of the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, April 15, 1997, at 2 p.m. to hold a hearing.

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

## SUBCOMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Labor and Human Resources be authorized to meet for a Employment and Training Subcommittee Hearing on Innovations in Youth Training, during the session of the Senate on Thursday, April 17, 1997, at 9:30 a.m.

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

## SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL SECURITY, SECURITY, PROLIFERATION, AND FEDERAL SERVICES

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent on behalf of the Governmental Affairs Subcommittee on International Security, Proliferation, and Federal Services to meet on Thursday, April 17, at 10:30 a.m. for a classified hearing on "Proliferation: Chinese Case Studies."

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

## SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee of Readiness of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet at 10 a.m. on Thursday, April 17, 1997, in open session, to receive testimony on the status of the operational readiness of the U.S. Military Forces in review of S. 450, the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 1998 and 1999.

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

## ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

## SURFACE TRANSPORTATION AND EFFICIENCY ACT

• Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I am pleased to join 31 of my fellow Senators in introducing a reauthorization of our Nation's transportation legislation, the Intermodal Surface Transportation and Efficiency Act [ISTEA]. This bill commits our country to sound transportation planning and development and reflects the vital role transportation plays in our expanding economy.

In 1991, I was proud to be a member of the Environment and Public Works Committee and an original author of ISTEA. This innovative law has resulted in the development of efficient and effective transportation throughout our country. ISTEA shifted decision making from Washington to local communities, enhanced air quality health standards, increased mobility and allowed our economy to grow in an intelligent manner.

Today, I am equally honored to be involved in the introduction of ISTEA WORKS, the continuation of this suc-

cessful law. This bill retains the basic structure of ISTEA, preserving the role of States and local communities in deciding transportation policies, continuing the emphasis on intermodalism and maintaining support for strong environmental provisions. The bill protects the important enhancements programs, expands the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality program and improves safety.

This legislation also addresses an issue important to Vermont and the Nation. As we have heard recently, Amtrak continues to struggle with its finances. Although I know Amtrak will survive, action must be taken to improve the system now. ISTEA WORKS grants States the flexibility to use Federal transportation dollars for operating and maintaining passenger service. This flexibility is important to Vermont, where we are running two of the most successful passenger trains in the Nation. The new authority will also enable our State to expand passenger rail and upgrade rail lines to benefit freight rail traffic.

Mr. President, this is a historic occasion. With the introduction of this legislation, we begin to raise the awareness of the success of ISTEA and the urgent need to reauthorize this important legislation with few major changes. ●

## NOMINATION OF PETE PETERSON TO BE AMBASSADOR TO VIETNAM

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I was pleased to see the Senate consider the President's nomination of Douglas "Pete" Peterson to be the United States Ambassador to Socialist Republic of Vietnam late last week. I supported this nomination in the Foreign Relations Committee. But I did so after careful consideration of the symbolism of this vote and of the signal it sends to Americans.

Mr. President, the appointment of an ambassador is a normal consequence of having full diplomatic relations with a given country. And we have had diplomatic relations with Vietnam since July 1995 when the President signed an executive order establishing such ties. So, technically, the Senate's view on this nominee does not represent a statement of policy. It simply represents the normal procedure by which the Senate provides its advice and consent to a Presidential nomination.

There has never been any serious question raised regarding the President's selection of Mr. Peterson to fill this position. Mr. Peterson is an outstanding citizen and public servant. He spent nearly 30 years in the U.S. Air Force, including 6½ years as a prisoner of war in Vietnam, and has received numerous awards for his valiant service. As a three-term Member of Congress from the second district in Florida, Mr. Peterson also has devoted significant energies to working with both the Bush administration and the Clinton Administration to bolster the U.S.