

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
OFFICE OF THE DEMOCRATIC LEADER,
Washington, DC, June 22, 2004.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to section 104(c)(1) of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2004 (P.L. 108-199), I hereby appoint to the Commission on the Abraham Lincoln Study Abroad Fellowship Program, Representative Louise Slaughter of New York, Dr. Mary M. Dwyer of Lake Forest, Illinois, and Ms. Mora McLean of New York.

Best regards,

NANCY PELOSI.

REPORT REGARDING ICELAND'S
WHALING ACTIVITIES—MESSAGE
FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE
UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 108-
195)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, without objection, referred to the Committee on International Relations and the Committee on Resources and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

On June 16, 2004, Secretary of Commerce Donald Evans certified under section 8 of the Fisherman's Protective Act of 1967, as amended (the "Pelly Amendment") (22 U.S.C. 1978), that Iceland has conducted whaling activities that diminish the effectiveness of the International Whaling Commission (IWC) conservation program. This message constitutes my report to the Congress consistent with subsection (b) of the Pelly Amendment.

The certification of the Secretary of Commerce is the first against Iceland for its lethal research whaling program. In 2003, Iceland announced that it would begin a lethal research whaling program and planned to take 250 minke, fin, and sei whales for research purposes. The United States expressed strong opposition to Iceland's decision, in keeping with our longstanding policy against lethal research whaling. Iceland's proposal was criticized at the June 2003 IWC Annual Meeting by a majority of members of the IWC Scientific Committee, and the IWC passed a resolution that urged Iceland not to commence this program. In addition, the United States, along with 22 other nations, issued a joint protest asking Iceland to halt the program immediately. The United States believe the Icelandic research whaling program is of questionable scientific validity. Scientific data relevant to the management of whale stocks can be collected by non-lethal techniques. Since Iceland's 2003 announcement, Iceland reduced its proposed take to 38 minke whales and in implementing its lethal research program, killed 36 whales last year. For this year, Iceland has proposed taking 25 minke whales. The United States welcomes this decision to reduce the take and to limit it to

minke whales, and we appreciate Iceland's constructive work with the United States at the IWC on a variety of whaling issues. These adjustments, however, do not change our assessment that Iceland's lethal research whaling program is of questionable scientific validity and diminishes the effectiveness of the IWC's conservation program.

In his letter of June 16, 2004, Secretary Evans expressed his concern for these actions, and I share these concerns. I also concur in his recommendation that the use of trade sanctions is not the course of action needed to resolve our current differences with Iceland over research whaling activities. Accordingly, I am not directing the Secretary of the Treasury to impose trade sanctions on Icelandic products for the whaling activities that led to certification by the Secretary of Commerce. However, to ensure that this issue continues to receive the highest level of attention, I am directing U.S. delegations attending future bilateral meetings with Iceland regarding whaling issues to raise our concerns and seek ways to halt these whaling actions. I am also directing the Secretaries of State and Commerce to keep this situation under close review and to continue to work with Iceland to encourage it to cease its lethal scientific research whaling activities. I believe these diplomatic efforts hold the most promise of effecting change in Iceland's research whaling program, and do not believe that imposing import prohibitions would further our objectives.

GEORGE W. BUSH.

THE WHITE HOUSE, June 22, 2004.

PRAISE FOR THE PRESIDENT'S
JOBS AND GROWTH TAX RELIEF
PACKAGE

(Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to praise the President and my colleagues in Congress for passing tax relief that has more Americans working today and taking home even more of their hard-earned money.

The American economy was delivered three very substantial blows with the downturn in the global economy, the corporate scandals, and the attack of 9-11. We are now on the high-speed highway to recovery.

America has a broad, deep economy that is rapidly growing. In fact, the tax relief we passed has added jobs for the past 9 months, creating 1.4 million jobs. My State of Florida has seen almost 300,000 new jobs since December of 2001. And let me tell the Members, Mr. Speaker, I can see the results when I am in my district. There are help wanted signs out once again. What a wonderful sight to see.

The President's Jobs and Growth tax relief package enacted a year ago

helped drive the strong improvement in our economy. It raised the level of economic activity and productivity which will result in higher incomes and living standards for all American workers.

I praise the President and this House for engineering that growth.

THE PRESIDENT'S ECONOMIC
POLICY

(Mr. BROWN of Ohio asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, President Bush again was in Ohio this past week to try to justify his economic program to try to sell it to the residents of my State.

Since President Bush took office, one out of six manufacturing jobs has disappeared from my State. President Bush will be the first President since Herbert Hoover to have a net loss of jobs during his time in office. Ohio has lost 190 jobs every single day of the Bush administration.

His answer is always the same: more tax breaks for large corporations and the wealthiest people in the country which might, he thinks, trickle down to create jobs, and more trade agreements like NAFTA which all serve only to ship jobs overseas.

Mr. Speaker, instead of this disastrous Bush economic policy, we need to change directions, extend unemployment benefits, and give tax incentives to those corporations that do business in the United States rather than using U.S. taxpayer subsidies to reward those companies that go overseas and ship jobs overseas and outsource our middle-class jobs.

COMMENDING THE BUSH ADMINIS-
TRATION FOR A JOB WELL DONE

(Mr. KINGSTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, while there is still a lot of work left to do in Iraq, it is very significant that on June 30, the new government takes over. This is a step that is largely accepted by the international community as a good thing.

Progress is being made, but America is still going to have to stay in there for security reasons to help rebuild the infrastructure and to get the international community to continue to support the new government. We need to stick together on this.

Meanwhile, domestically the economy is picking up. Three hundred thousand jobs were created last month. It bring us to, I believe, something like 900,000 jobs this year. Huge economic growth, lots of opportunities are out there.

For our senior citizens, Medicare cards are now available that give up to a 20 to 25 percent discount on prescription drugs, very helpful for those who are on a fixed income and those who are in retirement.

This administration has taken significant steps to continue to make

America strong and free internationally and domestically and while not turning our backs on those who need the most help.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the Bush administration for a job well done.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GERLACH). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

NATIONAL SECURITY THREAT, FRAUD AND ABUSE ASSOCIATED WITH VISA LOTTERY PROGRAM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss a government program that presents a serious national security threat and is wrought with fraud and abuse, the visa lottery program.

Under the program, each successful applicant is chosen at random and given the status of permanent resident, a green card holder, based on pure luck. A perfect example of the system gone awry is the case of Hesham Mohamed Ali Hedayet, the Egyptian national who killed two and wounded three during a shooting spree at the Los Angeles International Airport in July of 2002. He was allowed to apply for lawful permanent resident status in 1997 because of his wife's status as a visa lottery winner.

The State Department's Inspector General has even weighed in on the national security threat posed by the visa lottery program. In a report issued in September of 2003, the Office of Inspector General stated that the visa lottery program contains "significant threats to national security from entry of hostile intelligence officers, criminals, and terrorists into the United States as permanent residents."

Usually immigrant visas are issued to foreign nationals who have existing connections with family members lawfully residing in the United States. These types of relationships help ensure that immigrants entering our country have a stake in continuing America's success and have needed skills to contribute to our Nation's economy. However, under the visa lottery program, visas are awarded to immigrants at random without meeting such criteria.

In addition, the visa lottery program is unfair to immigrants who comply with the United States' immigration laws. The visa lottery program does not expressly prohibit illegal aliens from applying to receive visas through the program. Thus the program treats foreign nationals that comply with our laws the same as those that blatantly violate our laws. In addition, most family-sponsored immigrants currently

face a wait of years to obtain visas. Yet the lottery program pushes 50,000 random immigrants with no particular family ties, job skills, or education ahead of these families and employer-sponsored immigrants each year with relatively no wait. This sends the wrong message to those who wish to enter our great country and to the international community as a whole.

Furthermore, the visa lottery program is wrought with fraud. A recent report released by the Center for Immigration Studies states that it is commonplace for foreign nationals to apply for the lottery program multiple times using many different aliases. In addition, the visa lottery program has spawned a cottage industry featuring sponsors in the U.S. who falsely promise success to applicants in exchange for large sums of money. Ill-informed foreign nationals are willing to pay top dollar for the "guarantee" of lawful permanent resident status in the U.S.

The State Department's Office of Inspector General confirms these allegations of widespread fraud in its September report. Specifically, the report states that the visa lottery program is "subject to widespread abuse" and that "identity fraud is endemic and fraudulent documents are commonplace." Furthermore, the report also reveals that the State Department found that 364,000 duplicate applications were detected in 2003 alone. The only penalty for such abuse is disqualification from that year's lottery.

The visa lottery program represents what is wrong with our country's immigration system. The serious national security threats, fraud and waste that the visa lottery program present beg the question why is this program still in existence?

Last February I introduced H.R. 775, the Security and Fairness Enhancement, or SAFE, for America Act.

□ 1800

This important legislation would eliminate the controversial visa lottery program. Not only will the removal of the visa lottery improve our Nation's security but it will also make the administration of our immigration laws more consistent and fair and help reduce immigration fraud and opportunism.

I urge each of my colleagues to support this important legislation.

INDEPENDENCE AIRLINES/O'HARE DELAYS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GERLACH). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LIPINSKI) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my great concern that schedules recently implemented by the new carrier Independence Air will undermine the hard work that the FAA has done for this summer's service to O'Hare International Airport. This is

an issue where we should all be concerned, considering that delays at O'Hare not only impact my district but also shake the entire national aviation system.

Beginning this past winter and continuing through spring, the DOT and the FAA worked carefully with the two largest carriers at O'Hare, American Airlines and United Airlines, to reduce schedules during the peak hours for this summer season. Those airlines agreed to reduce their schedules in the busy afternoon and evening hours, first by 5 percent and later by another 2.5 percent. This notable effort was widely announced by the DOT and the airlines as an important step in reducing delays at O'Hare and throughout the entire national airspace system during this peak season.

However, Independence Air, a new airline operating small 50-seat regional jets, has announced they will have 12 new round trips per day from Washington Dulles to O'Hare. This service has at least five round trips in the peak hours and began last week on June 16.

Mr. Speaker, this offering of new service, especially with small regional jets, is not only unfair to those airlines who made the schedule cuts but also undermines the work of the Department of Transportation and adds delays during the busy summer months. The new service adds only 600 seats per day in each direction, but uses 12 round trips' worth of takeoff and landing capacity.

Furthermore, the Chicago-Washington market already has plenty of service, including 10 round trips with full-sized low-fair jets by Southwest between BWI and Midway, ATA Airlines between Reagan National and Midway, and even more service by American and United Airlines from Reagan National to O'Hare. Meanwhile, American and United have had to reduce service in smaller, less-served markets to free up capacity at O'Hare.

The bottom line is that operational restrictions at O'Hare will not solve the delay problem over the long run. The answer to the delay problem is increasing capacity through the O'Hare Modernization Program, OMP. Therefore, I do hope that the completion of the OMP's environmental impact statement, the ESI, will move forward as expeditiously as possible.

In the meantime, I am concerned about Independence Air, because the Department's future ability to work with existing carriers to reduce schedules will be ruined if a schedule agreement can be so quickly and easily undermined.

I hope that this is an issue that we can study more in depth at an aviation subcommittee hearing in the coming months. I ask that the DOT work quickly with Independence Air to shift these planned flights out of the peak periods at O'Hare this summer.

I would also appreciate an explanation as to how future scheduling agreements can be enforced. Without