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<sup>1</sup>Signed letter after delivery to conferee.

LEGISLATION TO SUPPORT THE  
UNITED STATES' VALUABLE  
ALLY—SOUTH KOREA

HON. JAY KIM

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 2, 1995

Mr. KIM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask all of my colleagues to support my efforts to further enhance and solidify our commitment to one of the United States' most valuable allies—South Korea. Today I have introduced legislation which will have a positive economic impact in the United States—especially in the tourism industry. My legislation calls upon the inclusion of South Korea in the Visa Waiver Pilot Program [VWPP]. Specifically, it waives the requirements of section 217 of the Immigration and Nationality Act, allowing South Korea to be included in the VWPP for a 1-year trial basis after which the Secretary of State and Attorney General will have the authority to determine the continued participation of South Korea in this program.

My reasons for introducing this legislation are twofold: First, the current situation at the U.S. Embassy's Consular Affairs office in Seoul is embarrassing and unacceptable. This problem stems from two counter-acting forces—the lack of sufficient space and personnel in the Consular's Office and the ever increasing number of South Korean's request of nonimmigrant, visitor visas.

Currently, the Consular's Affairs office in Seoul is under-staffed, over-worked and unable to meet the demands of reviewing over 2,000 visa applications per day. This unfortunate situation has resulted in extremely long lines of potential tourists and businessmen to the United States who are growing more and more impatient, annoyed and disheartened with the way they are being treated. While these long lines may not be something new for consular affairs offices throughout the world, the inhumane treatment of the people in those lines is.

During a recent trip to South Korea, I personally witnessed the most shameful treatment of human beings. One potential tourist, in search of a visa as part of his honeymoon plans, told me that he had been waiting in line for 3 days. Three days. He had come all the way from the southern end of South Korea, since the United States does not have any other consular affairs offices in Korea. Another woman, who appeared to be in her thirties, explained her frustration at having to stand out-

side during a thunderstorm because there is no shelter from the elements available. I was personally ashamed, as I suspect many of colleagues would have been by these tales of inhumane treatment.

These are but two examples of the growing frustration and disappointment many South Koreans are vocalizing, which has resulted in a growing sentiment of discontent with the United States. They rightly point out that this is no way for friends to treat friends. If we are to retain our place in the hearts of the Korean people we must do something to reverse this trend. In that regard, I feel it is important that we begin to treat the South Korean people with more respect by extending to them our trust and support through their inclusion in the VWPP.

My second reason for introducing this legislation is pure economics. Currently, South Korea is the sixth largest trading partner with the United States. This has resulted in total U.S. exports equaling over \$14 billion with a cumulative direct investment of over \$1 billion by United States companies in South Korea. This ever growing market has allowed for a continued growth in personal incomes for the South Korean people. The net result has been an increased demand by Korean tourists to visit the United States.

According to the Travel and Tourism Administration, South Korean arrivals are expected to reach over 600,000 in 1995, up an astonishing 900 percent from the 1987 levels. Of the over 400,000 South Korean travelers who came to the United States in 1993, 35 percent came for vacations or holidays with another 35 percent coming to visit friends or relatives. Most of such travel has been to California, New York, Hawaii, Arizona, and Florida. With an estimated \$1 billion in potential tourism dollars to spend, it is easy to see the importance of promoting easier access to the U.S. tourist market which has experienced considerable losses over the past few years. Simply put, more Korean tourists equals more business and jobs in the United States.

My home State of California is a perfect example of how important tourism is to the United States. According to the California Division of Tourism, California's travel and tourism industry generates \$55.7 billion annually, which is 6.5 percent of the gross State product. Overall, California would rank eighth in terms of international tourism as a separate nation, ahead of Switzerland, Singapore, Mexico, Canada, and Japan.

On a more national front, travel and tourism is the third largest employer in the Nation after business and health services. In fact, travel exceeds the combined payrolls of the U.S. steel and motor vehicles manufacturing industries. Between 1983 and 1993, travel-related employment and payroll has steadily increased—with payrolls nearly doubling and the number of jobs rising 38 percent. These kinds of numbers only further the argument that travel and tourism will double in size over the next decade, resulting in more job opportunities for people throughout the world. The United States must work to ensure its place in the travel and tourism industry by opening our doors to an economy which has been growing continuously over the past decade—South Korea. America has always been the first choice of destination for almost all Koreans.

However, under the current situation of long lines and endless delays, many Koreans are

fed up with waiting and are going instead to Canada—which has a waiver policy toward Korea—Europe or Australia. We stand to lose millions of dollars and thousands of American jobs because of our broken visa system.

As the Tourism Promotion Conference convenes this week in Washington, I understand that the issue of reforming the United States visa issuance process for South Korea will be raised and discussed. I welcome the input of the United States tourism industry and look forward to examining their recommendations as to how we can best achieve a larger place in the tourism market, especially with respect to South Korea.

In the interim, however, I believe that in an effort to ward off a serious decline in South Korean support for United States policy while increasing the ability of South Koreans to visit the United States, this legislation should be seriously considered as a solution to this embarrassing situation. In fact, I believe that if we reduce the bureaucratic barriers to the South Korean people, we will achieve greater compliance with our own immigration laws and promote good relations with a valuable ally. Therefore, I call upon all of my colleagues to support this 1 year, trial basis legislation which is so important to the South Korean people and to our foreign policy in Asia. After all, 25 countries are already in the visa waiver program.

ISRAEL COULD GAIN GROUND BY  
EXITING SOUTH LEBANON

HON. NICK J. RAHALL II

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 2, 1995

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I bring to the attention of my colleagues in the House an op-ed piece which appeared in the October 23 edition of the Christian Science Monitor written by Frederic C. Hof, a former U.S. Army officer and State Department official and currently a partner in Armitage Associates. Mr. Hof illustrated, in my opinion, a solution for Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon, thereby preventing further attacks on Israeli soldiers by Hizbullah which so poison the Israeli-Syrian peace negotiations.

Mr. Speaker, I traveled to Lebanon in August, including southern Lebanon, the home of my grandfathers. After discussions with people, political, religious, educational, and military leaders most importantly Gen. Emile Lahoud the very capable commander-in-chief of the Lebanon Army, there is no doubt whatsoever that given the political go-ahead the Lebanon Army can control every inch of Lebanese territory and prevent cross-border attacks upon Israel. This is confirmed by our U.S. Embassy.

Mr. Hof's op-ed follows:

[From the Christian Science Monitor, Oct. 23, 1995]

ISRAEL COULD GAIN GROUND BY EXITING  
SOUTH LEBANON

(By Frederic C. Hof)

The recent deaths of Israeli soldiers patrolling the "security zone" in southern Lebanon grimly illustrate an inescapable fact: that Israel's continued occupation of Lebanese territory is a liability both for Israel