

the conference, to assist the United States in resolving the veterinary equivalency issue with the Europeans. This was appropriate because Singapore recognizes the equivalency of the United States meat inspection system as it transships United States meat to other Asian nations.

We also met with the Canadian delegation. Talks focused on several bilateral issues with our two nations, including the recent NAFTA panel on dairy and poultry and the U.S. sugar program. I also asked the Canadians opinion on two issues: China's accession to the WTO and the dispute on veterinary equivalency between the United States and the EU. The Canadian delegation agreed fully with my position on China. Specifically, they said that WTO members should not lower entry standards for China and that market access and subsidy issue must be addressed before China is admitted.

Regarding the veterinary equivalency issue, the Canadian delegation agreed that sanitary and phytosanitary provisions of trade agreements must be upheld in order to maintain the grassroots support of farmers for free trade agreements.

On Tuesday, the delegation also met with delegations from Taiwan and the European Parliament, and had the opportunity to express our gratitude to the Prime Minister of Singapore for his nation's hospitality.

The Taiwanese expressed their strong desire to join the WTO. Chairman PHIL CRANE, speaking for the delegation, agreed that Taiwan was close to meeting the requirements for joining the WTO. But he urged Taiwan to be patient while the United States worked through some of its problems with China. I cautioned the Taiwanese that further progress must be made on reducing barriers for agricultural products, such as beef, pork, and poultry. The leader of the Taiwan Parliament, Mr. Vincent Slew, responded that he did not "see any problem" with making the necessary agricultural reforms.

The discussions with the European Parliamentary delegation focused on three issues: Bt corn, veterinary equivalency, and allowing China into the WTO. I raised questions about the EU's potentially keeping Bt corn and other genetically modified organisms from their markets. The European delegation argued that their citizens have an intense distrust of the scientific evidence and government policy because of the recent BSE—mad cow disease—crisis in Europe.

They pointed out that 80 percent of their consumers are against bringing Bt corn into their country and they would consider keeping all U.S. corn out in order to protect their consumers. At least, the Europeans argued, they would require separation and labeling of Bt corn. As I stated earlier, this issue has since been resolved and Bt corn grown in the United States has been accepted in the European markets.

The European delegation promised to look into the veterinary equivalency problem and thought we could make progress in certifying United States meat packing plants. On China, I argued that if the Europeans are truly concerned with their farmers, they should insist that China enter the WTO only on commercially meaningful terms. The European delegation agreed, saying that China must meet all requirements, including those on market access, before joining the WTO.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11, 1996

On Wednesday, the delegation received a full briefing from acting USTR Charlene Barshefsky. She discussed the Statement on Agriculture, outstanding bilateral issues with the European Union, and China's desire to enter the WTO. I pointed out that the terms of China's accession will determine whether China becomes our largest export market for agriculture products or our toughest competitor. To emphasize the importance of agriculture to trade agreements, I also noted that one-half of the nongovernmental observers at the ministerial were from the agriculture sector.

The delegation also met with United States Ambassador to Singapore, Mr. Chorba, and Singapore Foreign Minister Jayakumar. I asked Minister Jayakumar to help bring the other Asian nations on board with the Information Technology Agreement. The minister replied that they shared the United States interest in completing the ITA in Singapore and they would do what they can to accomplish that.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 12, 1996

On Thursday, the delegation met with United States Assistant Secretary of State Alan Larson to discuss the recent trip of Secretary of State Christopher to China. This meeting was to prepare the delegation, for its meetings in Beijing.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 13, 1996

In Beijing, the delegation received a briefing from the United States Embassy on the Chinese economy and trade situation. Later that day we met with Vice Minister Sun Zhenyu, the American Chamber of Commerce, State Planning Commission Vice Chairman Gan Ziyu, and Vice Premier Zhu Ronghi, member of the standing committee. Several issues were discussed including trade relations between the two countries.●

TRIBUTE TO THE NEVADA TAXPAYERS ASSOCIATION

● Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to the Nevada Taxpayers Association. On February 25, 1997, the association will celebrate 75 years of service to the citizens of Nevada. It is my honor to salute the organization for its diligent efforts to inform and serve the public on tax policy issues.

The Nevada Taxpayers Association is the only tax policy and analysis organization of its kind in Nevada. The

mission of this preeminent organization is to protect and preserve sensible fiscal policy that is beneficial to Nevada's citizens, and to enhance fiscal policies that impact our State, county, and city governments.

Since 1922, the Nevada Taxpayers Association has represented the interests of the citizens of Nevada, as well as business and industry, to create a fair and equitable revenue system. For the past 75 years, Nevada's past and current Governors have worked cooperatively with the Nevada Taxpayers Association to ensure the best tax structure possible for the State.

This year, the State of Nevada will celebrate Nevada Taxpayers Association Day on February 25. I applaud the Nevada Taxpayers Association for the integral role it has played, and continues to play, in fiscal policy analysis and research in Nevada. On behalf of all taxpayers in Nevada who have benefited from the association's many publications, reports, and analyses, I wholeheartedly thank them for their invaluable service. It is my pleasure to speak on behalf of the Nevada Taxpayers Association, and I commend the organization for its unwavering support of the rights of taxpayers.●

TRIBUTE TO DAN LACROIX ON BEING NAMED 1997 ROCHESTER CITIZEN OF THE YEAR

● Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire. Mr. President, I rise today to congratulate Dan LaCroix, honorary member of Gonic PTA, on being named the 1997 Rochester "Citizen of the Year" by the Rochester Chamber of Commerce. I commend his outstanding community commitment and congratulate him on this well-deserved honor.

Dan's community involvements are numerous. He participated in the juvenile diversion program, the substance abuse prevention task force, and he is a current member of the red ribbon program. Dan is a coach of the Rochester Youth Soccer Association, vice-president of the Rochester girls softball, and chairperson of the community relations girls softball.

Dan is known to many as always willing to take responsibility, whether to chair a committee, organize fairs, trips, and dances, or to help people in need. Whatever activity he commits to, he always gets the job done.

Dan has dedicated his time, talent and energy to serving the residents of Rochester in an exemplary way. I am proud to honor Dan LaCroix's outstanding community commitment, which is so important to the future and prosperity of Rochester. We are indeed indebted to him for his efforts. Congratulations to Dan for this distinguished recognition. I am honored to represent him in the U.S. Senate.●

CAFE STANDARDS

● Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I rise today to speak once again on the matter of corporate average fuel economy