



Committee On Finance

Max Baucus, Ranking Member

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For Immediate Release

Wednesday, January 19, 2005

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Baucus Praises Donations to Disaster Effort

Senator Encourages More Contributions to Aid Those Affected by Indian Ocean Tsunami

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) Today, U.S. Senator Max Baucus (D-Mont), ranking member of the Senate Finance Committee, praised the efforts by relief organizations and American citizens that have raised hundreds of millions of dollars for the victims of the Indian Ocean Tsunami that struck the area last December. Americans have reacted to the tragedy by donating over \$406 million to charity.

In response to the tragedy, Senator Baucus, joined by Chairman Charles Grassley, introduced legislation allowing extra time for Americans to make cash donations to charities supporting relief operations in the Indian Ocean basin. Under the new law enacted earlier this month, taxpayers will be permitted to claim a tax deduction in tax year 2004 for cash donations made before January 31, 2005, for tsunami disaster relief.

"Many innocent victims continue to suffer from one of the most devastating natural disasters in recent history, and they will endure hardships for decades to come," Baucus said. "The Indian Ocean basin is one of the most beautiful and vibrant places in the world. The countries affected by this disaster will be able to heal and rebuild more quickly because of the outpouring of generosity demonstrated by Americans. I commend those who have made donations and encourage America to keep making contributions to this worthy cause," Baucus added.

Charitable organizations have been receiving generous donations to aid with the relief efforts. Those coordinating the efforts have been asking for cash donations to eliminate the burden of shipping goods overseas and to stimulate economic growth by allowing cash to flow into local economies.

Charles F. MacCormack, President and CEO of Save the Children, expressed gratitude for all of the donations his organization has received for the Indian Ocean Tsunami disaster.

"Save the Children is profoundly grateful for the generous contributions of private individuals and corporations in support of our work to help children and their families recover from the devastating tsunami tragedy," MacCormack said. He continued, "We are also aware that there are long-term needs that will require billions of dollars and years of effort on the part of millions of people and governments worldwide."

Americans have less than two weeks to receive a tax deduction for their contributions to aid the tsunami victims for the 2005 filing season. The provision expires for donations made after Monday, January 31, 2005.

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