



U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON

Finance

SENATOR CHUCK GRASSLEY, OF IOWA - CHAIRMAN

<http://finance.senate.gov>

Following are the official results and a comment from Chairman Grassley.

Results of Executive Session November 9, 2005

The Committee on Finance reviewed and approved recommendations on proposed legislation implementing the U.S. Bahrain Free Trade Agreement by a Roll Call Vote of 20 ayes, 0 nays. Ayes: Grassley, Hatch, Lott, Snowe, Kyl, Thomas, Santorum, Frist, Smith, Bunning, Crapo, Baucus, Rockefeller, Conrad, Jeffords, Bingaman, Kerry, Lincoln, Wyden, Schumer (proxy)

MEMORANDUM

To: Reporters and Editors
Re: Committee recommends U.S.-Bahrain Free Trade Agreement
Da: Wednesday, Nov. 9, 2005

Today the Committee on Finance reviewed and approved recommendations on proposed legislation implementing the U.S.-Bahrain Free Trade Agreement. The committee unanimously approved the recommendations on the proposed legislation on a roll call vote of 20 ayes, 0 nays. The next step is for the President to send the formal implementing bill to Congress. Then the bill will be formally introduced in Congress, starting a deadline for formal congressional consideration. Sen. Chuck Grassley, chairman of the Committee on Finance, which has jurisdiction over international trade, made the following comment on today's developments.

“The U.S.-Bahrain Free Trade Agreement will benefit U.S. farmers, workers, manufacturers, and service industries. Under this agreement, 100 percent of trade between the United States and Bahrain in industrial and consumer products will become duty-free immediately. Bahrain will grant duty-free access on day one of the agreement for 98 percent of U.S. agricultural tariff lines, and tariffs on the remaining 2 percent of agricultural tariff lines will be phased out over ten years. Bahrain will also provide significant market access for U.S. service providers.

“Bahrain isn't a large market, but the U.S.-Bahrain Free Trade Agreement will indeed result in real benefits for Americans, including Iowans. The HNI Corporation, an office furniture manufacturer based in Muscatine, Iowa, looks forward to increased business in Bahrain on account of this agreement. Lennox, which manufactures residential heating and cooling products in Marshalltown, Iowa, has a strong interest in the Bahrain market and anticipates growing sales there following the implementation of the agreement. A small Iowa company that supplies halal foods and food service equipment to restaurants, hotels, and distributors worldwide – the Midamar Corporation of Cedar Rapids – also stands to gain from this agreement

“In addition, the U.S.-Bahrain Free Trade Agreement will serve as a model for other trade agreements that the United States will negotiate in the Middle East. In this way, the U.S.-Bahrain Free Trade Agreement ultimately will lead to even further liberalization in the region. Thus, the benefits that the HNI Corporation, Lennox, the Midamar Corporation, and other U.S. businesses will receive from this agreement will be multiplied as other Arab countries adopt agreements that will be modeled in large part upon our agreement with Bahrain. I’m glad to see the process move forward with today’s vote. I commend the President’s continued efforts to advance peace, democracy and free trade in the Middle East. Today’s agreement is a good step forward.”