



BUDGET COMMITTEE



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PREPARED OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATE BUDGET COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN JUDD GREGG

HEARING ON ADMINISTRATION'S FY 2007 FEDERAL BUDGET WITH CONDOLEEZZA RICE, SECRETARY, DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Good Morning Madame Secretary and thank you for taking the time to join us today. You continue to do an outstanding job serving our country and we look forward to discussing the President's request for the State Department budget with you.

Of note, one of the last times I was scheduled to attend a hearing in the Russell Caucus Room was several years ago when I was the Ranking Member of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee. The Committee had invited First Lady Laura Bush to speak on the importance of early childhood learning programs. That was September 11, 2001, and of course we cancelled the hearing after learning of the events of that morning. I mention that because it seems appropriate given the topics we will be covering today.

In my role as the Chairman of the former Commerce, Justice and State Subcommittee, I convened a series of hearings in May 2001 to investigate our ability to prevent and respond to a terrorist attack. At that time, we had already witnessed attacks on our embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, the World Trade Center bombing in 1993, and the destruction to the U.S.S. Cole in 2000. Four months after these hearings, we witnessed the deaths of nearly 3,000 people in New York, Washington, and Pennsylvania on 9/11.

Since that time, a number of demands have been placed on the State Department as we expanded our diplomatic and military efforts to fight terrorism and spread democracy. I commend you Madame Secretary for your fine work to reach out to foreign governments to assist us in the War on Terror and to make the world a safer place.

As the War on Terror continues in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the men and women of our armed forces and our allies work with the governments of these countries to put

them on a secure path to democracy, it is critical the State Department has all of the resources it needs to succeed in its mission. I hope we can work together to ensure that happens.

In addition to working with the Departments of Homeland Security and Defense in the War on Terror, the State Department supports a number of programs to improve the lives of millions of people around the world, and I look forward to your testimony today Madame Secretary to learn how we may assist in you in your numerous diplomatic and humanitarian efforts.