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THE AMERICAN ISRAEL PUBLIC
AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

America's Pro-Israel Lobby

Vote for Kerry-Lugar Amendment to Budget Resolution Oppose Further Cuts to International Affairs Spending

April 1, 2009

Dear Senator,

We are writing to urge you to support an amendment to the Senate Budget Resolution by Senators John Kerry and Richard Lugar that would restore \$4 billion in cuts taken from President Obama's original request of \$53.8 billion in international affairs spending for fiscal year 2010. We also urge you to oppose any efforts to further cut the international affairs budget function.

The international affairs budget directly funds vital security assistance that enables Israel to defend itself against increasing threats, including the prospect of a nuclear-armed Iran and military buildups by Hamas and Hizballah.

In addition to providing security assistance to Israel and other key countries, the international affairs budget provides vital resources to help ensure continued American leadership around the world. Foreign aid and diplomacy, which are funded through Function 150 of the federal budget, are critical components of American national security policy and complement the defense budget.

In fact, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates has urged Congress to fully fund the President's international affairs budget request. Last year, Secretary Gates said it is "clear that America's civilian institutions of diplomacy and development have been chronically undermanned and underfunded for far too long—relative to what we traditionally spend on the military, and more important, relative to the responsibilities and challenges our nation has around the world."

At a time of global economic crisis, this part of the budget is critical in fostering economic and political stability in the Middle East and elsewhere. It will also spur international economic development, which helps to create jobs here at home.

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Spending about one penny of every federal dollar on preventing war, the spread of terrorism, disease and poverty is a wise investment in America's national security that ultimately saves the taxpayers money.

We respectfully urge you to support the Kerry-Lugar amendment and to reject any efforts to impose further cuts to the vital international affairs account.

Sincerely,

Howard Kohr
Executive Director

Bradley Gordon
Director, Policy and
Government Affairs

Marvin Feuer
Director, Policy and
Government Affairs

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