

February 19, 2008

The Honorable Condoleezza Rice
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Rice,

The decision by Cuba's government to choose new leadership should be the occasion for a tough-minded review of U.S. policy.

President Castro has departed from his office voluntarily. An orderly succession has occurred in Cuba, without violence or upheaval. The Cuban government, under a new leadership, is reportedly already considering changes in the economic arrangements on the island to give the Cuban people a long-sought improvement in their living standards.

For five decades, U.S. policy has tried economic sanctions and diplomatic isolation to force changes in Cuba's government. These developments demonstrate that the policy has not worked. Allies and adversaries alike have rejected our approach and instead engage the Cuban government directly on diplomatic issues and make billions of dollars in economic investments on the island, making it even less likely that our sanctions will ever achieve their stated purpose.

Our policy leaves us without influence at this critical moment, and this serves neither the U.S. national interest nor average Cubans, the intended beneficiaries of our policy. A complete review of U.S. policy is clearly in order now. This would send a useful signal to the Cuban people that we intend to engage with their government in new and positive ways, and also provide a new hearing for U.S. policy in many places around the region.

After fifty years, it is time for us to think and act anew.

Sincerely,

List of 104 Bipartisan Signatories Attached

Bipartisan Congressional Letter to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice
Calling for Tough-Minded Review of U.S.-Cuba Policy
February 19, 2008
104 Signatories

James P. McGovern (MA)
Jo Ann Emerson (MO)
Bill Delahunt (MA)
Jeff Flake (AZ)

Neil Abercrombie (HI)
Tammy Baldwin (WI)
Xavier Becerra (CA)
Marion Berry (AR)
Judy Biggert (IL)
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Rick Boucher (VA)
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Stephen Cohen (TN)
John Conyers, Jr. (MI)
Jim Cooper (TN)
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Rahm Emanuel (IL)
Bob Etheridge (NC)
Sam Farr (CA)
Bob Filner (CA)
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John Lewis (GA)
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Ron Kind (WI)
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Jim McDermott (WA)
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Gregory Meeks (NY)
Michael Michaud (ME)
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Dennis Moore (KS)
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