

Thomas M. Susman
Director
Governmental Affairs Office

AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION
740 Fifteenth Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005-1022
(202) 662-1760
FAX: (202) 662-1762

March 31, 2009

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the American Bar Association, I write to urge you to vote in support of an amendment sponsored by Senators Kerry and Lugar to restore \$4 billion in funding for the FY10 International Affairs budget.

One of the main goals of the American Bar Association is to promote the rule of law in the world. The International Affairs budget is a key component of the United States' leadership role in that effort. This account funds programs and agencies that work toward goals such as the development of trade and economic opportunities abroad, the promotion of international human rights, the protection of refugees, and the establishment of independent judicial and legal systems. For the U.S. to continue its longstanding leadership role in the international community, which is needed more today than ever before, we must devote adequate resources to our International Affairs budget.

Although accounting for less than 2% of federal spending, the International Affairs budget funds activities that strengthen our national security, enhance our economic prosperity, and support our humanitarian and democratic values. This is a small investment that results in significant returns for the interests of the United States. We strongly urge you to vote in favor of the Kerry-Lugar amendment to restore the International Affairs budget to the level requested by the Administration, and to oppose any amendments that may be offered to cut this vital funding.

Sincerely,



Thomas M. Susman
Director