



WHO is

WORKING to

END the

TRAVEL BAN

to CUBA?

The
FREEDOM
to
TRAVEL
CAMPAIGN



Center for
International Policy

THE FREEDOM TO TRAVEL CAMPAIGN IS dedicated to changing U.S. policy toward Cuba by lifting the prohibition on legal travel by Americans to the island.

We believe that the travel ban is wrong. It denies Americans their constitutional right to travel. It denies profits to U.S. air carriers and others in the travel industry and keeps them from creating jobs. Most important, it prevents the American people and the Cuban people from meeting and learning from each other.

At its core, Freedom to Travel is a public education campaign on the need to lift the travel ban. We have brought scores of U.S. Members of Congress to Cuba; we have enabled farmers, entrepreneurs, and performing artists to learn from their Cuban counterparts. Finally, we have worked in coalition with business and industry groups, policy activists and other organizations of conscience to campaign for a new Cuba policy and an end to the travel ban.

We are at the leading edge of progress. In 2003, a strong majority of Democrats and Republicans voted to advance the cause of freedom in Cuba and the constitutional rights of Americans to travel where they wish. But more needs to be done.

In the weeks and months ahead, we will intensify our campaign to help the Cuba Working Groups in the House and the Senate educate and motivate their colleagues to change U.S. policy toward Cuba.

Together we will expand support for a policy that is in the economic and national security interests of the United States and which will benefit the Cuban people: Repeal of the ban on travel to encourage more contact and commerce between the people of the United States and Cuba.



Rep. Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) visiting Havana's Jewish community center. ▲

TRIPS to CUBA

"I have seen first-hand the exceptional job CIP does when it leads a delegation to Cuba; how thoughtfully they balanced our exposure to the government, political dissidents, the nascent private sector, and other participants in civil society, so we could see for ourselves an unedited picture of what is happening in Cuba. This is important for educating Members of Congress so that we have the facts to debate our country's Cuba policy."

- U.S. SENATOR KENT CONRAD (D-ND)

CIP'S FREEDOM TO TRAVEL CAMPAIGN has led numerous trips to Cuba with Members of Congress and other policy and business leaders. In 2003 it co-sponsored a delegation from the bipartisan House Cuba Working Group, another led by Senator Kent Conrad (D-ND), and also one led by Senator Max Baucus (D-MT). On all of our trips, Members of Congress have stressed the importance of political reform while expanding diplomatic and economic relations with Cuba.

The Freedom to Travel Campaign also hosted a trip to Cuba after the crackdown to meet with the leaders of the political dissident movement there. We had lengthy meetings in the homes of several dissident leaders, including Oswaldo Paya and Elizardo Sanchez. We then reported back in the U.S. on what we heard directly from the dissidents to ensure that their voices were heard during travel policy debate in Washington.

CONFERENCES

and REPORTS

THE FREEDOM TO TRAVEL CAMPAIGN publishes scholarly works connected to U.S. - Cuba policy. In 2002, we hired The Brattle Group, an independent economic research firm, to study the potential economic benefits for the U.S. airline industry if the travel ban were lifted. The report's findings have been cited repeatedly in congressional debate and the media, and are found at <http://ciponline.org/cuba/travel/cuba.final.pdf>.

Along with three allied organizations, we hosted a "Freedom to Travel Forum and Day of Action" on Capitol Hill in July 2003. Cuban-Americans from around the United States attended the conference and then lobbied their congressional representatives. The conference included senior Senators and Representatives from both political parties, and policy experts in fields ranging from economics to human rights.

<http://www.ciponline.org/cuba/ipr/freedomtotravel.pdf>

ORGANIZING for ACTION

IN JANUARY, 2003, THE FREEDOM TO TRAVEL Campaign hosted a strategy session in California that brought together Cuba policy experts, Members of Congress, activists, political consultants, moderate leaders in the Cuban-American community and core supporters. We developed a 50-page strategy plan for building support to lift the embargo and we are continuing to implement the essential elements of that plan with new and significant levels of cooperation.

The Freedom to Travel Campaign launched and operates www.cubacentral.com, a website dedicated to Cuba travel. The site is co-sponsored by 20 organizations, and has built a list of over 10,000 Cuba activists from around the country. These activists receive regular email alerts and are repeatedly mobilized to make their voices heard to congressional representatives, the president, and other government leaders. To take action, go to <http://action.ciponline.org/action/index.asp?step=2&item=11673>



▲ Vote for Freedom bumper stickers were distributed to congressional offices and passed out to commuters at Capitol Hill metro stops before the 2003 House vote.

▲ Carole King with Cuban singer/songwriter Carlos Varela and his guitarist, after impromptu performance together in Havana.



▲ Through the action center, thousands of Cuba activists automatically email messages to congressional representatives urging support for lifting the travel ban to Cuba.



▲ Freedom to Travel Forum speakers Senator Larry Craig (R-ID) and Joan Slote, 70-year old gold medal cyclist fined by the Treasury Department for bicycle tour of Cuba.



▲ Rep. William Delahunt (D-MA) with Cuban dissidents Vladimiro Roca and Oscar Chepe Espinoza.



▲ Rep. Denny Rehberg (R-MT) discusses human rights with President Castro.



▲ Senator Michael B. Enzi (R-WY) speaking at the Freedom to Travel Forum.



▲ Rep. Sam Farr (D-CA) in conversation with local Cuban in Old Havana.



▲ Senator Kent Conrad (D-ND) touring a sugar plantation with North Dakota constituents.



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FREEDOM TO TRAVEL



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