



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**DIVERSE GROUP OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS SENDS LETTER TO
PRESIDENT BUSH ON CUBA**

Letter urges President to lift restrictions on academic and family travel

WASHINGTON, February 25, 2008 – Today NAFSA: Association of International Educators, with the Fund for Reconciliation and Development, the Latin America Working Group, the Latin American Studies Association, the National Foreign Trade Council, USA*Engage, and the Washington Office on Latin America, issued the following letter to President Bush about restrictions on academic and family travel to Cuba:

February 25, 2008

The President
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

I write on behalf of the organizations listed below to urge you to lift the restrictions that you imposed on academic and family travel, as well as remittances, to Cuba in 2003 and 2004, in recognition of Cuba's first presidential succession in nearly 50 years and as a way to increase U.S. contacts with Cuba as it now begins a transition to a new generation of leadership.

With respect to academic programs, we urge you to restore the availability of licenses for:

- ♦ short-term study and teaching in Cuba;

- ♦ study in Cuba under third-party programs—i.e., programs other than those of degree-granting higher education institutions;
- ♦ study in Cuba under programs other than those of the institution in which the student is enrolled;
- ♦ academic travel to Cuba by any bona fide professor or researcher, including, e.g., adjunct faculty;
- ♦ people-to-people exchanges unrelated to academic coursework; and
- ♦ programs of secondary schools for study in Cuba.

In addition, we ask that you restore the availability of multi-year licenses for academic programs in Cuba, and that Cuban scholars be granted visas to attend academic conferences and events and to conduct research in the United States.

Finally, we ask that you rescind the 2004 restrictions on family visits to Cuba, on the amount of money that family visitors can spend while in Cuba, on cash remittances to Cuba, and on the personal baggage of travelers to Cuba.

These modest steps would leave in place the trade embargo of Cuba and indeed all of the restrictions on Cuba transactions that existed prior to 2003. They would, however, begin the process of restoring contacts with the Cuban people as the transition in Cuba proceeds.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,
Marlene M. Johnson
Executive Director and CEO
NAFSA: Association of International Educators

On behalf of:
Fund for Reconciliation and Development
Latin America Working Group
Latin American Studies Association
National Foreign Trade Council
USA*Engage
Washington Office on Latin America

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