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UNITED STATES–POLAND PARLIAMENTARY YOUTH EXCHANGE PROGRAM OF 2007

MARCH 9, 2007.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. BIDEN, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany S. 377]

The Committee on Foreign Relations, having under consideration an original bill to establisha United State–Poland parliamentary youth exchange program, and for other purposes, reports favorably thereon and recommends that the bill do pass.

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I. PURPOSE

The purpose of the United States-Poland Parliamentary Youth Exchange Program is to demonstrate to the youth of the United States and Poland the benefits of friendly cooperation between the U.S. and Poland based on common political and cultural values. Student exchange programs do more than benefit individual scholars and advance human knowledge. Such programs expand ties between nations, improve international commerce, encourage cooperative solutions to global problems, prevent war, and give participants a chance to develop a sense of global service and responsibility.

Funding a great foreign exchange program is a sign of both national pride and national humility. Implicit in such a program is the view that people from other nations view one's country and educational system as a beacon of knowledge—as a place where international scholars would want to study and live. But it is also

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an admission that a nation does not have all the answers—that our national understanding of the world is incomplete. It is an admission that we are just a part of a much larger world that has intellectual, scientific, and moral wisdom that we need to learn.

The United States and Poland have enjoyed close bilateral relations since the end of the Cold War. Most recently, Poland has been a strong supporter of efforts led by the United States to combat global terrorism, and has contributed troops to and led coalitions in both Afghanistan and Iraq. Poland also cooperates closely with the United States on such issues as democratization, human rights, regional cooperation in Eastern Europe, and reform of the United Nations. As a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union (EU), Poland has demonstrated its commitment to democratic values and is a role model in its region.

After receiving for many years international and U. S. financial assistance, Poland is now determined to invest its own resources toward funding a U.S.-Poland exchange program. To this end the Polish Foreign Minister unambiguously stated that Poland welcomed the opportunity to be an equal partner in funding important efforts.

II. COMMITTEE ACTION

On January 24, 2007, Senator Lugar introduced S. 377, United States-Poland Parliamentary Youth Exchange Program Act of 2007. At a business meeting on March 7, 2007, by a voice vote, the committee ordered the bill reported favorably.

III. COST ESTIMATE

Pursuant to Rule XXVI, paragraph 11(a) of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following cost estimate has been provided by the Congressional Budget Office.

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

March 9, 2007

S. 377

UNITED STATES-POLAND PARLIAMENTARY YOUTH EXCHANGE PROGRAM ACT OF 2007

AS ORDERED REPORTED BY THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS ON MARCH 6, 2007

S. 377 would authorize the Secretary of State to establish a youth exchange program with Poland and would authorize the appropriation in 2008 of such sums as may be necessary for that purpose. Based on information from the State Department about a similar program—the Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange—CBO estimates the proposed program would require an appropriation of $5 million for 2008. (Outlays from that appropriation would occur over a few years.) CBO expects that continuing the program beyond 2008 would incur additional costs of about $5 million a year, as-

suming appropriation of the estimated amounts. Enacting the bill would not affect direct spending or receipts.

S. 377 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would not affect the budgets of state, local, or tribal governments.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Sunita D'Monte. This estimate was approved by Peter H. Fontaine, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

IV. Evaluation of Regulatory Impact

Pursuant to Rule XXVI, paragraph 11(b) of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the committee has determined that there is no regulatory impact as a result of this legislation.

V. Changes in Existing Law

In compliance with paragraph 12 of Rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the committee has determined that there are no changes in existing law made by the bill, as reported.

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