



MINUTES

International Relations Committee of the Legislative Council

February 15, 2000

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Senator Nancy Boettger,
Chairperson
Senator Bill Fink

Representative Willard Jenkins,
Vice Chairperson
Representative Paul Bell
Representative Jack Drake
Representative Chuck Gipp
Representative Jane Greimann
Representative Paul Scherrman

MEETING IN BRIEF

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- I. Procedural Business.
 - II. Presentations.
 - III. Future Meetings.
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International Relations Committee of the Legislative Council

I. Procedural Business.

Call to Order. The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Boettger at 5:10 p.m. in Committee Room 24 of the Statehouse and was adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

Announcements. Chairperson Boettger led a discussion of Committee members regarding recent visits of foreign dignitaries to the General Assembly and the need for formal protocol procedures.

II. Presentations.

Leslie Mamoorian. Ms. Mamoorian, Associate Director for International and Graduate Admissions, Drake University, reviewed statistics relating to international and foreign students in the United States and United States students studying abroad. She stated that, in 1998, there was an international student population of 490,933 in the United States and only 113,959 students from the United States were studying abroad. She stated that, in 1995, only 7.6 percent of college undergraduates in the United States were studying a foreign language.

Ms. Mamoorian stated that, in recruiting international and foreign students, a recruiting effort must be broad-based and not narrowly focused on one region of the world due to political and financial instability around the world. She stated that the United States is facing increased competition in recruiting international and foreign students from the countries of New Zealand, Australia, the United Kingdom, and Canada.

Ms. Mamoorian stated that international and foreign students seek an education in the United States because of the accessibility of education, flexibility in curriculum, an interest in a liberal arts and sciences education, a sense in joining a community, and because, in some academic fields, the United States is recognized as a leader. She stated that it is estimated that international and foreign students contribute approximately \$1.3 billion to the United States economy.

Lynn Crenshaw. Ms. Crenshaw, International Student Advisor, Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC), stated that enrollment of international and foreign students at DMACC has increased even though such students pay double the amount of tuition that students from Iowa pay. Ms. Crenshaw stated that international and foreign students have an impact in the classroom by broadening the perspective of students and teachers and by adding diverse perspectives to classroom discussions. Ms. Crenshaw stated that international and foreign students benefit communities in the United States by interacting with people in the community and adding to the local economies. She stated that international and foreign students benefit from DMACC through small class sizes, an informal education setting, preparation for continued higher education, familiarization with the way of life in the United States, and English as a second language programs.

Ms. Crenshaw stated that many international and foreign students learn about the opportunities at DMACC by word of mouth after a student returns to their home country and spreads the word about the positive experiences of the student.

Dennis Peterson. Mr. Peterson, Director, International Education Services, Iowa State University, stated that Iowa State University has approximately 2,400 international and foreign enrolled students and approximately 500 international and foreign scholars.

International Relations Committee of the Legislative Council

Mr. Peterson discussed the need to change certain peculiar immigration laws which prevent some students from studying in the United States for various reasons. He stated that some of these laws make the United States less competitive in recruiting international and foreign students.

Mr. Peterson stated that Iowa State University is attempting to maintain contact with international and foreign alumni after the students return to their home country. He stated that it can be very beneficial to invite alumni back to the United States to meet people since these alumni are frequently very well-connected in their home countries. Mr. Peterson stated that maintaining contact is often difficult due to cultural differences.

III. Future Meetings.

Chairperson Boettger stated that there would be no meeting of the Committee during the week of February 21, 2000. The next meeting of the Committee will be held the week of February 28, 2000.

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