



# MINUTES

## International Relations Committee

Monday, February 12, 2024

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### MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Annette Sweeney, Chairperson  
Senator Kevin Alons  
Senator Nate Boulton  
Senator William A. Dotzler Jr.

Representative Eddie Andrews, Vice Chairperson  
Representative Ako Abdul-Samad  
Representative Jon Dunwell  
Representative Thomas D. Gerhold  
Representative Elinor A. Levin  
Representative Brad Sherman  
Representative Mark I. Thompson

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### **I. Procedural Business**

**Call to Order and Adjournment.** The meeting of the International Relations Committee was called to order by Chairperson Sweeney at 11:05 a.m. on February 12, 2024, in Room 116 of the State Capitol, Des Moines. The meeting was adjourned at 11:58 a.m. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

### **II. Presentation by Escucha Mi Voz**

Father Trevino, pastor at St. Joseph's Catholic Church in West Liberty and in Columbus Junction, thanked the committee for the opportunity to speak at the meeting and provided background information about Escucha Mi Voz (Hear My Voice). He emphasized that immigrants make essential contributions to the state. Next, he introduced four individuals who spoke about immigration. The committee heard from four individuals describing their immigration journeys to Iowa. They described their previous lives in their home countries and their contributions to this state. Ms. Emily Sinnwell, Catholic Worker House Iowa City, stated that it is important to support immigrant communities and emphasized there are many immigration issues that we should all be able to agree upon. Senator Dotzler thanked the leadership of the committee for scheduling Escucha Mi Voz to speak at the meeting, and described the contributions of immigrants in his senate district in Waterloo.

### **III. Presentation by U.S. Foreign Policy — Global Challenges Team**

Vice Chairperson Andrews provided background information about the U.S. Foreign Policy — Global Challenges Team of the U.S. Department of State (Global Challenges Team). Ms. Hannah Huisman, Iowa International Center, described the interactions of the Iowa International Center with the Global Challenges Team. The U.S. Department of State's Program invites over 4,000 persons to the United States each year to discuss foreign policy topics. The Global Challenges Team tours areas of the United States discussing foreign policy and learning about the United States. There were ten members of the Global Challenges Team present at the meeting and each introduced themselves to the committee. Mr. Dominik Gerald Holl, Global Challenges Team, discussed the Global Challenges Team current trip through the United States. Representative Levin discussed the history and purpose of the committee. The members of the committee provided the Global Challenges Team with their backgrounds and interests in foreign affairs.