

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
Washington, DC 20515

June 24, 2004

The Honorable Bill Frist, M.D.  
Majority Leader of the United States Senate  
S-230Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Majority Leader Frist:

We write to express our strong support for the Senate Foreign Relations Committee's resolution of ratification for United States accession to the United Nations Convention on Law of the Sea. We urge you to schedule a vote on the resolution language as soon as possible so that the Senate may give its advice and consent to the Convention.

As you know, the Foreign Relations Committee drafted its resolution with the partnership of the Administration, after multiple hearings that solicited the involvement and active support of a wide range of interests, including the shipping, fishing, oil and gas industries, the U.S. military, the environmental community, and more. The Presidential-appointed U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy has expressed its unanimous support for U.S. participation in the Convention, as well as its support for the resolution language adopted by the Foreign Relations Committee. Additionally, the Departments of Defense, Commerce, State, and Interior agree that ratification is in the best interests of US economic and military strengths.

Critics of the treaty cite the Reagan Administration's objection to the treaty. President Reagan did so because the treaty, in its original form, contained unfavorable deep seabed mining proposals. These critics fail to mention that the 1994 Part XI Implementing Agreement remedied these objections. They also fail to mention Reagan's 1983 Ocean Policy Statement that directed the U.S. to abide by the non-deep seabed provisions of the Convention.

If the United States fails to accede to the Convention, we gain nothing but lose much. We urge you to fully support expeditious ratification of this agreement to allow the United States to guide and shape international ocean policy for future generations.

Sincerely,

  
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Earl Blumenauer

Carolyn D. By

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Neil Abernethy

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