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Statement by American Foreign Service Association (AFSA) President John Naland and Gays and Lesbians in Foreign Affairs Agencies (GLIFAA) President J. Michelle Schohn
Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Government Affairs
Thursday, October 9, 2008
Subject: Domestic Partner Benefits and Obligations Act S. 2521 and H.R. 4838

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Collins and distinguished members of the committee, our names are John K. Naland, President of AFSA, and Michelle Schohn, President of GLIFAA, and we are submitting this statement on behalf of the American Foreign Service Association (AFSA) and Gays and Lesbians in Foreign Affairs Agencies (GLIFAA).

We are very pleased to submit the following statement on the Domestic Partner Benefits and Obligations Act for inclusion in the committee's record on this very important matter.

Upon review of S. 2521 and H.R. 4838, the American Foreign Service Association and Gays and Lesbians in Foreign Affairs Agencies wish to convey our support for the important issues raised in these bills. The following story, written by a Foreign Service officer serving our country overseas, exemplifies why it is so critically important that we focus on equity and fairness:

“My partner accompanied me to three overseas posts and, like many spouses, he sacrificed advancement in his own career in order to do so. Unlike other families, however, we paid for his transportation to and from post and home leave, the lawyer's fees for his visa, his tickets to travel with me on rest-and-recreation leave, his language training, his immunizations and medical tests, and his medical