

# *U.S. Senate Committee Passes Pro-Engagement Cuba Amendments*

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Washington, June 17 (RHC)-- The U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee overwhelmingly voted Thursday to include four pro-engagement Cuba amendments in a must-pass Fiscal Year 2017 appropriations bill.

An amendment offered by U.S. Senators John Boozman (R-AR) and Jon Tester (D-MT) to allow American farmers to extend private financing for the export of agricultural commodities to Cuba passed by a vote of 22-8, with the support from Committee Chairman Thad Cochran (R-MS). An amendment offered by Senators Patrick Leahy (D-VT) and Jerry Moran (R-KS) to end the travel ban on Cuba then passed by voice vote.

Additional amendments offered by Senator Tom Udall (D-NM) and Senator Susan Collins (R-ME), allow for the export of telecommunication services and the refueling of planes at Bangor Airport for international flights en route to or from Cuba, respectively. Both amendments were passed by voice vote.

The group Engage Cuba applauded the senate committee passage of the four amendments. About the amendment lifting the travel ban, James Williams, President of Engage Cuba said: "The travel ban is

inconsistent with our values as a free society and I'm glad the Senate Appropriations Committee made it overwhelmingly clear they want that to change.”

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