

STAY IN TOUCH

WASHINGTON
1535 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
202.225.4806

LINCOLN
301 South 13th Street, Suite 100
Lincoln, NE 68508
402.438.1598

NORFOLK
125 South 4th Street, Suite 101
Norfolk, NE 68701
402.379.2064

FREMONT
629 North Broad Street
Fremont, NE 68025
402.727.0888

ON THE WEB
fortenberry.house.gov

NEBRASKA ACTIVITIES

My office can help you in a variety of ways on federal issues. If you need assistance or have questions, please contact us using the information below. Here is an overview of some of our work in Nebraska in 2008:

- › Provided assistance with questions or problems regarding federal programs and matters (Social Security, Medicare, Immigration, Veterans Affairs, Transportation, and others) to thousands of Nebraskans in the First District
- › Conducted one-on-one meetings with hundreds of constituents and families throughout the district
- › Sponsored an educational conference for small business entrepreneurs in conjunction with the Nebraska Business Development Center, Small Business Administration, USDA Rural Development, and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln
- › Visited First District high schools and elementary schools to speak with students about current events and educational opportunities
- › Conducted “telephone townhall” meetings, reaching Nebraskans over the telephone from DC to discuss congressional issues and answer constituent questions
- › Helped Elkhorn Valley Schools in Tilden celebrate the first Nebraska “Wind for Schools” project, a functional wind turbine at the school
- › Discussed and reviewed the operations of a number of Nebraska manufacturers, agriprocessors, and small businesses in communities throughout the First District
- › Helped the Department of Veterans Affairs Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System celebrate a new health care clinic for veterans in Norfolk and northeast Nebraska
- › Helped Plattsmouth rehabilitate and reopen its Missouri River Bridge with federal support
- › In the House appropriations process, requested and secured funding for important Nebraska projects involving flood control and environmental protection, transportation, and military research and construction
- › Presented an approved House resolution honoring Chief Standing Bear at the Nebraska Indian Commission’s annual Standing Bear breakfast in Lincoln



Congressman Fortenberry shares a story with a member of the Nebraska City Rotary Club (left) and discusses current issues with students at David City High School (right).



The Year-End Report

Congressman Jeff Fortenberry December 2008



Congressman Fortenberry, with former U.S. Senator Bob Dole, thanks Nebraska World War II veterans visiting Washington, D.C. as part of the Nebraska Honor Flight program (left) and receives recognition from the Center for National Policy for his work creating the House Nuclear Security Caucus (right).



Dear Friends,

It is an honor to serve you in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Our home, the First Congressional District, is reflective of Nebraska’s great diversity: bountiful farmland, prairie, and wildlife habitat; Husker pride and the State Capitol; small town traditions that emphasize hard work, faith, and family. I am proud of this heritage, and I am proud to be a member of Nebraska’s delegation in Congress.

As you well know, we face tremendous challenges as a nation. Financial instability creates economic uncertainty and hardship in our communities. We struggle to build a culture that respects and protects the rights of all persons and provides nurturing environments for families and children.

Political volatility, ideological extremism, and nuclear weapons proliferation abroad threaten national and global security.

But America is a nation of extraordinary capacity. Previous generations met difficult challenges by embracing our nation’s foundational values – the ideals of liberty, justice, and goodness. They served our nation with a spirit of sacrifice and purpose, emphasizing hard work, community, and stewardship.

Now is a time for renewal, our chance to build new opportunity. My efforts in Congress are focused on five important areas for our nation’s well-being: national security and global stability, alternative energy and environmental sustainability, small business entrepreneurship and rural vitality, patient-centered health care reform, and family life and culture.

The following information provides an overview of this work. Your thoughts and ideas about our progress are important. Please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jeff Fortenberry".

Jeff Fortenberry
Member of Congress

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- › Financial Stability and Economic Opportunity
- › Energy and Environmental Policy
- › Health Care Reform
- › National Security and Global Stability
- › Family Life and Culture
- › Nebraska Activities



Printed on recycled paper with soybean-based ink.



This mailing was prepared, published and mailed at taxpayer expense.

NEWS IN WASHINGTON

Financial Stability and Economic Opportunity

America faces serious economic challenges. Fortunately in Nebraska, our strong agricultural economy, economic diversity, and strength of character and responsibility in fiscal matters have prevented the deeper troubles many others are experiencing.

In September, national markets tumbled and the federal government became very involved in managing the economic situation. As we work to restore opportunity in challenging times, America must look to the best traditions of our nation's past for a new way centered on responsibility, discipline, entrepreneurship, and stewardship. More than any bailout crafted by Washington or Wall Street, it is a return to these values that will most help Americans build a more secure future in the years to come.

Corporate Bailouts

As you know, Congress was recently faced with a decision to adopt a \$700 billion plan to nationalize bad corporate debt. The Secretary of the Treasury and Chairman of the Federal Reserve urgently appealed to lawmakers to pass this remedy.

I had serious concerns. For instance, what were the alternatives to that kind of taxpayer obligation? Many Nebraskans, who had made responsible financial decisions, had serious reservations as well. I voted against the bailout measure twice.

While tumultuous financial markets remain a serious concern, the choice at that time was not between action and inaction. Rather, it was a choice about whether to adopt a potential \$700 billion taxpayer liability to nationalize bad corporate debt or to consider alternatives that may be less costly, easier to implement, and fairer to most Americans who have no blame for these financial market difficulties.

I am also concerned that the monies spent on the first half of the \$700 billion bailout have not been used in the manner first described. Treasury originally planned to use the bailout funding for buying up troubled assets, but shifted intentions shortly after the money was approved. Recently I called for a vote by Congress on using the second installation of the bailout.

Additional congressional oversight of U.S. Treasury and Federal Reserve spending is important. I believe it is critical that Congress has the responsibility to review how the original bailout funding has been spent and whether it is having the desired effect before more money is obligated.



Congressman Fortenberry speaks at a Small Business Committee hearing on renewable energy and entrepreneurs (top) and speaks about small business entrepreneurship issues at a Lincoln Independent Business Association (LIBA) luncheon (bottom).

Accountability and Oversight

Taxpayer money should not be used to reward those who engaged in financial recklessness or misuse of public funds. Recently I helped introduce legislation to prevent the former CEOs of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, the government-sponsored housing entities, from receiving golden parachutes, millions of dollars in severance pay.

Having committed hundreds of billions of taxpayer dollars to pay for bad corporate debt, Congress must ensure strict oversight of the actions of participating companies. Just days after it received an \$85 billion loan from the government, the insurance company AIG reportedly spent nearly \$440,000 on employees attending a retreat at an exclusive California resort. I, along with 85 of my colleagues, called on the Treasury Secretary and the Federal Reserve Chairman to demand that AIG reimburse the federal government for any taxpayer funds used to pay for these expenses.

I have also urged the U.S. Attorney General to investigate any and all financial institutions, corporations, and individuals that are suspected of criminal action relating to our current economic crisis. I asked the Attorney General to conduct a thorough investigation, cooperating with financial crime units across federal agencies.

Economic Stimulus

In the coming weeks, Congress will likely debate an economic stimulus package in the form of national infrastructure spending and alternative energy. During the upcoming discussions, policymakers should carefully weigh the benefits of additional stimulus with the risks of additional borrowing. A focus on energy and transportation infrastructure needs at this time may be a reasonable approach.

Congress should include as part of any stimulus package a mechanism to begin a process for addressing the nation's fiscal imbalances. Even though deficit-reducing measures could be delayed until the economy has been stabilized,

NEWS IN WASHINGTON

Human Rights and International Accountability

Public policies that recognize the inherent dignity and rights of the human person are essential to preserve liberty and justice, the indispensable prerequisites for achieving social and economic sustainability in civil societies.

I introduced House Concurrent Resolution 332 in the House of Representatives this year to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This bipartisan resolution passed in the House in June. It draws attention to the noble legacy of our Founding Fathers and to the unique contribution of the United States in inspiring the nations of the world to promote justice and peace on the basis of inalienable human rights.

As a member of the House Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health, I was pleased to introduce a successful amendment to the *Tom Lantos and Henry J. Hyde United States Global Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria Reauthorization Act of 2008*, calling for accountability by subcontractors receiving U.S. taxpayer funds through this program. The U.S. remains the world's largest donor in the fight against preventable diseases that destroy lives throughout the developing world. It is important that we use these funds effectively, employing evidence-based programs that respect the wisdom and values of local communities.

Family Life and Culture

The strength of our nation depends on the strength of its families and communities. Communities are strengthened in a culture that respects the dignity and rights of all, protects vulnerable persons, and promotes stewardship and responsibility.

Care for Life

I recently introduced the *Care for Life Act of 2008* to assist women who long for help during pregnancy and after childbirth but lack adequate family and community support. Persons in vulnerable circumstances deserve to know they are not alone during difficult times in their lives. This legislation seeks to encourage and assist women throughout their pregnancies and after childbirth by providing services to help alleviate financial, social, emotional, and other difficulties that may otherwise lead to decisions for abortion.

Families Affected by Autism

Many Nebraska families are affected by the challenges of autism. As a member of the House Autism Caucus, this year I cosponsored several measures designed to

increase awareness of autism and promote funding to combat it. I am a cosponsor of a bill to establish a task force to identify and disseminate evidence-based educational strategies and best-practices to improve the quality of learning for individuals with autism. I am also supporting legislation directing the Secretary of Health and Human Services to conduct a comprehensive study of autism risk. It is my sincere hope that such efforts will lead to advances that provide additional hope for families affected by autism.

Preventing Violence Against Women

While challenges remain, the House of Representatives made progress last year in ongoing efforts to protect women from violence. The *Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act of 2008*, which passed in the House with my support, seeks to increase funding for the Office of Violence Against Women by \$10 million, providing \$4 million for engaging men and youth in prevention programs and \$1 million for the National Resource Center on Workplace Responses to assist victims of violence.

Conquering Cancer

According to the American Cancer Society, 2008 saw a decrease in U.S. cancer cases for the first time in a decade. I was pleased to support several initiatives this year to fund treatment and research on breast and childhood cancer. Most recently, I cosponsored legislation that would call for group health plans to insure medical and surgical benefits for inpatient coverage and radiation therapy for breast cancer patients. I also cosponsored the *Conquer Childhood Cancer Act*, which would authorize \$20 million annually to enhance and expand biomedical research through the National Cancer Institute, and establish a childhood cancer database to evaluate childhood cancer trends and enable investigations of genetic epidemiology to further cures.



Congressman Fortenberry presents a congressional certificate of thanks to Fremont Boy Scouts and troop leaders for their actions in the wake of a tornado at the Little Sioux Scout Ranch in Iowa (top) and discusses culture of life issues with Nebraska students at the national mall in Washington, D.C. (bottom).

NEWS IN WASHINGTON

Afghanistan

In Afghanistan, U.S. efforts seek to bring stability to a region in conflict and a point of origin for attacks on civilians worldwide. As the lawless border region between Afghanistan and Pakistan poses a renewed threat to global stability, our military and civilian leaders are contemplating the commitment of additional U.S. troops to Afghanistan to reinforce the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) led by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). While the situation in Afghanistan remains complex and difficult, the lessons learned and security gains made by U.S. troops in Iraq should strengthen counterinsurgency and international development efforts in the Afghan theater.

Civilian Corps

The Nebraska National Guard is involved in a new diplomatic approach to our security efforts in Afghanistan. Drawing on Nebraska's citizen soldiers with professional agricultural expertise, the Nebraska Guard deployed a team of experts in fields such as hydrology and soil chemistry to both help Afghans develop viable agricultural economic enterprise and combat illicit opium production and trade.

I have urged the Department of Defense to expand this diplomatic mission model by creating a new American Diplomatic Expeditionary Reserve Corps. Under this proposal, civilian experts would commit to short-term targeted impact expeditions to provide real expertise for economic and civil institutions. This new diplomatic corps would help supplement our security efforts and create goodwill by tapping into a wealth of expertise and a surplus of talent in the United States.

Military and Veterans

America's veterans have served us; now we have the obligation to serve them. I supported the *FY 2009 Military Construction and Veterans Appropriations Act*, which provides a 10 percent increase in veterans health programs.

In the last few years, I have had the opportunity to welcome our Nebraska National Guard members home from their deployments in the Middle East. These are wonderfully joyous occasions. At the current time, a vast majority of Nebraska National Guard members have returned home from deployments. It is important we remember their sacrifices, and honor those fallen heroes who gave their lives in service to us.

Secure Borders and Legal Immigration

Uncontrolled borders and illegal entry are serious threats to national security and good immigration policy. Effective border security and robust enforcement of existing immigration laws are critical. I remain committed to strengthening our border patrol

and enhancing our border security resources. We must also penalize unscrupulous employers who exploit vulnerable persons and distort U.S. markets by creating illicit demand for illegal labor.

By the end of 2008, the Department of Homeland Security expects to complete 670 miles of fencing along the Southwest border, using the latest technologies and natural geographic barriers. Since 2006, Congress has provided more than \$2.7 billion for border security fencing, infrastructure, and technology. Also, the number of border patrol agents increased by 17 percent this year.

These and other enforcement measures appear to be having an effect. An immigration policy organization recently estimated that the number of illegal entrants in the U.S. dropped 10 percent in the last year. Many Nebraska communities are forced to address the consequences of illegal immigration. I am committed to addressing the matter through increased border security, enhanced enforcement, streamlined legal immigration policies, and constructive foreign policy initiatives. Blanket amnesty is not a just or wise policy approach.

Nuclear Security

The threat of nuclear terrorism is one of the most urgent security issues facing our nation today. To help spur congressional action on nuclear threat reduction, I created the Nuclear Security Caucus. This congressional working group aims to draw from leading congressional, executive, and private sector initiatives to identify the most obvious security vulnerabilities and to improve nuclear safeguards, secure fissile materials, and prevent the misuse of sensitive nuclear materials and technologies. Earlier this year, the Center for National Policy recognized this initiative at the Edmund S. Muskie Distinguished Public Service Award ceremony.

starting the discussion of how to remedy the government's fiscal imbalances over time is critical to our country's long term economic well-being.

Deficit / Budget Reform

Our national deficit is deepening rapidly. Next year it is projected to exceed \$1 trillion, or 7 percent of GDP. The national debt has nearly doubled in eight years to almost \$11 trillion.

Earlier this year, I cosponsored H.R. 2469, the *Biennial Budgeting Act*. Each year, Congress scrambles to complete the federal budget, deadlines are not met, and important priorities are not considered. This bill requires the President to submit a two-year budget. During the first session, Congress would produce a budget resolution and 12 appropriations bills to cover a two-year period. During the second session, Congress would consider any authorization or emergency spending bills, and would engage in oversight of federal agencies. A biennial budget would help bring order to the budgeting process and encourage long-term thinking in the development of national spending priorities.

I also cosponsored H.R. 3654, the *SAFE Commission Act*, creating a commission that will seek to bring about federal solvency of entitlement programs through fact finding, deliberations, and legislation. It would review both entitlement and tax policies, examining imbalances between spending and projected revenues, the revision of the budget process, and the implications of foreign ownership of federal debt instruments.

These measures are just a start. A comprehensive plan for budget reform should be developed during the 111th Congress. We must find sensible, long-term solutions that transcend partisanship and ideological divides in order to achieve real results and alleviate the unfair debt burden being passed to children and the next generation.

NEWS IN WASHINGTON

Small Business: Entrepreneurial Opportunity

America is home to nearly 27 million small businesses. They create the majority of new jobs, drive our economy, and are part of the solution to help lead us out of economic downturns.

As ranking member of the Small Business Subcommittee on Rural and Urban Entrepreneurship, earlier this year I announced proposals for strengthening small business entrepreneurship. Specifically, I proposed broadening the small business expensing provision of the tax code from \$125,000 to \$250,000. This would help small business speed up investment in equipment and machinery. I was pleased the provision was included in H.R. 5140, the *Recovery Rebates*

and *Economic Stimulus for the American People Act* that passed in February.

Another approach to assisting small business entrepreneurs is to improve access to capital by increasing Small Business Administration (SBA) lending, one of the largest sources of long-term capital for small businesses. Small Business Committee hearings on this matter were instrumental to creating a new facility called the Term Asset-Backed Securities Loan Facility (TALF), which supports the market for SBA lending and provides liquidity for small business loans. Under the TALF, the Federal Reserve will lend up to \$200 billion on highly-rated securities backed by small business loans and other assets.

Agricultural Entrepreneurship / Farm Bill

We Nebraskans are rooted in the land—one in three Nebraskans works in agriculture, helping our state remain a national leader in livestock and grain production. The values of hard work, family life, and personal responsibility are found most profoundly on the family farm. Good farm policies should help maintain these traditions while creating new opportunities for our farmers and ranchers.

Earlier this year, the federal Farm Bill, legislation that guides agriculture policy, was enacted with my support. I believe the overall impact and general direction of the bill promoted agricultural stability and diversification, ag-based energy production, and good conservation and land stewardship practices. As with any complicated legislation, it is not perfect. For instance, I am concerned that farm payment limitation restrictions did not go far enough.

As a member of the House Agriculture Committee, I was pleased three of my initiatives were adopted in the committee and included in the Farm Bill:

* A new Rural Energy Self-Sufficiency Initiative that would provide grants to rural communities seeking to become self-sufficient in energy production



Congressman Fortenberry discusses military issues with an officer at a homecoming ceremony for Nebraska National Guard members (top) and presents the Congressional Medal of Merit to Sgt. Frank Cockerill of Gretna for his heroic service in World War II (bottom).



Congressman Fortenberry speaks to students about economic issues at Norfolk Senior High School (top) and joins Nebraska USDA Rural Development director Scot Blehm in presenting a USDA Energy Efficiency Grant to small business owners in Beatrice (bottom).

NEWS IN WASHINGTON

through the use of renewable sources such as wind and solar, biomass, biofuels, and biogas.

* A provision allowing school systems and other government institutions to purchase local foods from local farmers.

* A change to the Value-Added Producer Grants Program that would help target assistance to farmers with small or mid-sized farms who develop new uses and creative marketing strategies for their products.

The Farm Bill also strengthens several rural development efforts important to Nebraska. In addition to improving rural infrastructure and housing programs, it creates a new micro-entrepreneurial assistance program and expands broadband access efforts in rural areas. The legislation also reauthorizes a distance learning and telemedicine program and creates a loan program for locally or regionally produced food products. These efforts create new opportunities in rural communities that strengthen local economies.

Energy and Environmental Policy

It is important to remember that high gas prices, which nearly reached \$4 per gallon this summer, precipitated the sharp economic downturn. Instability in energy markets and supplies can be a threat to economic security.

A Sustainable Energy Future

America needs a bold, new energy vision. We need a comprehensive energy policy to achieve energy independence while building a bridge to a more sustainable energy future. We can increase use of domestic resources in an environmentally responsible way while also fully integrating conservation, new technologies, and a variety of renewable sources such as wind, solar, geothermal, and biomass into our energy strategy.



Congressman Fortenberry examines a solar power project at Robert Byrnes' Energy Farm near Lyons (top) and congratulates the Nebraska Red Dawgs basketball team for winning the 2008 National Prep Wheelchair Basketball Championship (bottom).



We must begin by addressing the immediate problem of our overwhelming dependence on foreign oil. I am an original cosponsor of H.R. 6566, the *American Energy Act*. This measure is designed to increase domestic production of energy as well as enhance efficiency while promoting clean, renewable sources.

Renewable energy helps meet several important objectives. Renewables reduce our dependence on foreign energy, are environmentally sensitive, and often create economic opportunities for America's farmers and rural communities.

Wind Power

Wind energy is an exciting opportunity for Nebraska, as our state ranks among the highest in the nation in wind power potential. Earlier

this year, I helped introduce the *Rural Energy Equity Act* that seeks to expand opportunities for wind production. The bill makes construction of wind projects easier by repairing an inequity in the income tax code. Public policy can play an important role in encouraging wind power development.

Renewable Energy Entrepreneurship

As we move aggressively to build capacity for sustainable energy, Congress should encourage the creative and innovative role of small business entrepreneurs. Nebraskans are helping lead the way – a number of projects in the First District demonstrate the viability of small-scale renewable energy production.

Health Care Reform

The challenges of rising expenses in health care must be met with innovative policies that lower costs and improve care while protecting vulnerable persons in both private and public delivery systems. A patient-centered approach that focuses on prevention and wellness, proper nutrition, better risk pooling, community health centers, portable health care coverage, and Health Savings Accounts can help ensure access for all families and control costs.

Increased Choices, Lowered Costs

For those Americans responsible for a majority of their own health care costs, those whose chronic health conditions make it hard to find insurance coverage, and those who simply cannot afford the choices currently available to them, more affordable health insurance opportunities are needed.

To address these needs, I introduced *America's Affordable Health Care Act of 2008*. The legislation would promote affordable health insurance options for individuals who do not receive health coverage through their employer, and create health coverage opportunities for those with chronic health conditions who might otherwise be unable to secure health insurance for themselves or their families.

NEWS IN WASHINGTON

In addition to the *America's Affordable Health Care Act*, I will continue in the 111th Congress to advocate proposals that promote affordable health care opportunities for all Nebraskans.

Our Children's Health Care

For millions of families with children, the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) has provided quality health care coverage to those in need. It is a very important program for many Nebraskans.

Any potential expansion of SCHIP should be done in a responsible manner that ensures coverage for families most in need. In support of this goal, I have introduced the *SCHIP Plus Act of 2008*. SCHIP Plus would give eligible families the option of using SCHIP or receiving help to obtain (or retain) a family insurance plan. This sensible expansion of the program is an efficient use of taxpayer dollars and would ensure that participating Nebraska families have access to quality and affordable health insurance. I am hopeful that elements of this measure will be included in any long-term renewal of the SCHIP program.

Medical Research and Education

Advocating for federal policies that advance lifesaving research is one of my priorities. To further this goal, I have supported significant funding increases to the National Institutes of Health during my service in the House of Representatives. My hope is that additional research funding will further the search for a cure of diseases such as cancer, autism, Alzheimer's, and diabetes, among others.

Health and Wellness

A healthy lifestyle that includes good nutrition, community support, and physical activity can help reduce health care incidents and their costs. As Congress works on necessary health reform, I will continue to advocate for policies that encourage health, wellness, and prevention. A recent study showed that the costs to treat preventable chronic diseases account for more than 75 percent of the approximately \$2 trillion we spend each year on health care in the U.S.



Congressman Fortenberry speaks with Nebraska students and students in Islamabad, Pakistan, about international affairs in a "global classroom" at the University of Nebraska (top) and thanks Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice for her testimony on the Middle East at a House Foreign Affairs Committee hearing (bottom).



National Security and Global Stability

Providing security in an increasingly complex world is a primary duty of the federal government. Maintaining a strong military and securing our nation's borders are essential obligations. As a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, I have worked to foster international stability through the use of effective diplomacy while preserving our nation's longstanding commitment to inalienable human rights, especially for vulnerable populations.

Iraq and the Middle East

Although the situation in Iraq remains delicate, American troops under the leadership of General David Petraeus led Iraq to a dramatic drop in violence this past year, and worked diligently to help Iraqi troops take control of most provinces by the end of October 2008. Security advances also expanded opportunities for measurable political progress in Iraq, laying the groundwork for provincial and parliamentary elections in 2009.

The Status of Forces Agreement, negotiated successfully by the United States and Iraqi governments in November 2008, establishes a working foundation for the transfer of all security responsibilities to Iraqi Security Forces. The agreement seeks the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraqi cities and towns by the end of June 2009 and from Iraqi territory by December 31, 2011. It also sets forth the parameters of U.S. military operations in Iraq as the United States continues to work with Iraq's government to consolidate security gains made possible by the sacrifices of our men and women in uniform, and their families.

In seeking to foster a more secure and stable Middle East, I remain committed to strengthening effective U.S. diplomatic efforts with responsible members of the international community. As a member of the Middle East Subcommittee, I have discussed ways to mitigate the threats of geopolitical volatility with a number of Middle Eastern heads of state and leaders.

Earlier this year, I also called for congressional review of the plight of Iraqi religious minorities subject to violence and intimidation from insurgents. While the circumstances facing religious minorities in Iraq remain tenuous, I am pleased to report that the Iraqi government has responded rapidly to U.S. calls for protection of these populations.