

## POLITICAL EXCHANGE PROGRAMS

The promotion of close relations between Japanese leaders and their overseas counterparts through political exchange has been a centerpiece of JCIE's programs since its inception. In 1968, JCIE's first US-Japan Political Exchange Program brought eight US Congressional members to Tokyo for an unprecedented series of meetings and discussions with leading Japanese political and social figures. Over the years, JCIE has expanded the breadth of its political exchange programs, including exchanges for young political leaders from Japan and the United States since 1973, for senior US Congressional staff since 1982, and for young Australian and Japanese political leaders since 1991.

The increasing complexity and interconnectedness of the international and domestic environment has made the development of meaningful connections between international leaders all the more imperative. As the bilateral relations between Japan and its partner countries have matured, JCIE has also increasingly placed an emphasis on discussion of issues of common concern during its exchanges, such as energy security, environmental policy, and climate change. As its network of program alumni has grown, JCIE has expanded its programs to include frequent study meetings and roundtables both in Japan and abroad on key policy issues of critical concern in order to keep this important network connected and engaged.



# US-Japan Parliamentary Exchange Program

Established in 1968, the US-Japan Parliamentary Exchange Program is the longest-running exchange between members of the US Congress and the Japanese Diet. This nongovernmental, nonpartisan program has brought more than 270 members of the US Congress and Japanese Diet to each other's countries for a series of intensive dialogues with leaders from a broad range of fields. It is designed to enhance dialogue between American and Japanese political leaders on bilateral and global policy issues and to strengthen bilateral cooperation on issues of shared concern.

## Japan Seminars and Meetings

JCIE conducts a variety of activities to promote substantive exchange between Japanese legislators and American leaders, and in the past couple of years, this program has hosted a number of prominent US and Japanese politicians on individual visits overseas. On March 14–22, 2008, JCIE organized a special visit program for US Senator Jeff Bingaman in Tokyo, including a roundtable with Japanese leaders from the government, business, and nonprofit sectors as well as American embassy representatives and business leaders living in Japan. Senator Bingaman spoke about the state of the US-Japan relationship and the American perspective on future US involvement in Asia Pacific.

## Washington Seminars and Meetings

JCIE also works to encourage US Congressional members to engage in substantive discussions and activities related to US-Japan relations. On March 18,

2009, JCIE organized a Capitol Hill roundtable on the “Congress, the Diet, and New Opportunities for US-Japan Partnership” for a bipartisan group of five Congressional members. The participants discussed how the Diet and Congress can work together more effectively on key issues such as national security, the environment, and global development, as well as ways to better facilitate and expand parliamentary exchange between the two countries.



2008 US Congressional Staff Exchange Program participants visit the Japanese Diet

# US Congressional Staff Exchange Program

JCIE established the US Congressional Staff Exchange Program in 1982 in recognition of the vital role that staff members play in legislative and policymaking processes. The one-week program provides senior Congressional staffers with the opportunity to meet a wide range of Japanese legislators, policymakers, and experts, thus giving them a sense of Japan's policymaking process and of recent trends in politics, economics, and foreign policy. Participants bring their heightened understanding of US-Japan relations and the politics of Japanese policymaking back to their work in the US Congress. Alumni of the program are encouraged to take part in other JCIE programs.

## 20th Congressional Staff Delegation to Japan

Five Congressional staff participated in the 20th US Congressional Staff Exchange Program, which was held on August 23–30, 2008, in Tokyo. The delegation, which consisted primarily of staff members focusing on financial and economic issues, met with a wide range of Diet members, government officials, business leaders, policy experts, and journalists to discuss the changing political dynamics in Japan, the role of US-Japan relations in an evolving East Asian context, and US-Japan cooperation on international trade and financial issues.

The delegation met with high-ranking Diet Members, included Chair of the House Committee on the Budget Ichiro Aisawa of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), former LDP Secretary General Koichi Kato, and former Senior Vice Minister of Finance Isamu Ueda of the New Komeito Party. The delegation also had several in-depth meetings on Japanese business strategy, including discussions with Shigemitsu

Sugisaki, vice chairman of Goldman Sachs and former deputy managing director of the International Monetary Fund, and executives at the Nippon Keidanren (Japan Business Federation). The delegation also met with NEC Corporation executives and visited an NEC plant to discuss innovative industry initiatives on environmental and energy policy. On the final day of the study trip, the Congressional staff members met with US-Japan Conference on Culture and Educational Interchange (CULCON) members to discuss strengthening grassroots and political exchange between the two countries.

### *Participants*

JEFF CHOUDHRY, *Legislative Director, Office of Representative Trent Franks (R-AZ)*

DEREK DORN, *Counsel for Tax and Economic Policy, Office of Senator Jeff Bingaman (D-NM); Staff Director, Senate Finance Subcommittee on Energy, Natural Resources, and Infrastructure*

JASON EDGAR, *Senior Legislative Assistant, Office of Representative Dave Reichert (R-WA)*

DAVID OXNER, *Professional Staff Member, House Committee on Financial Services*

ROBERT PRIMUS, *Chief of Staff, Office of Representative Mike Capuano (D-MA); Senior Policy Advisor, Committee on House Administration*

# US-Japan Young Political Leaders Exchange Program

Since 1973, JCIE has worked with the American Council of Young Political Leaders to operate the US-Japan Young Political Leaders Exchange Program. This intensive two-week study program is designed to expose young leaders from each country to the political, social, and economic conditions of the other country; enhance their understanding and appreciation of US-Japan relations; and create personal networks among the two nations' leaders. In addition to visiting the host nation's capital for meetings with national leaders, participants travel to at least two additional cities to gain a more diverse perspective.

During the course of the program, delegates meet with a wide range of senior government officials, political party representatives, industry executives, and community leaders. American delegates typically include state and local elected officials as well as staff members, and efforts are made to select equal numbers of Democrats and Republicans each year. The Japanese delegates primarily consist of Diet staffers and prefectural and local elected officials from the major ruling and opposition parties.

## 25th US Delegation to Japan

The nine members of the 25th US delegation to Japan visited Tokyo, Nagano, and Ibaraki on November 8–21, 2008. They began their stay in Tokyo, where the delegation discussed Japan's shifting domestic political landscape with leaders from both of Japan's two major parties, including Nobuteru Ishihara, acting LDP secretary-general, and Katsuya Okada, vice president of the opposition Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ). The delegation also met with officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, visited senior journalists at the headquarters of the *Asahi Shimbun*

for a briefing on current Japanese politics, and met with the US Ambassador J. Thomas Schieffer and other senior officials at the US Embassy. In addition, the group spoke with Japanese business leaders in a luncheon meeting hosted by the Nippon Keidanren and met with members of CULCON to discuss the promotion of US-Japan exchange.

After five days in Tokyo, the delegates traveled to Nagano City, where they met the mayor, Shoichi Washizawa, and spoke with local Diet members and Nagano prefectural assembly members. The group then left for Ibaraki, where they visited the Ibaraki prefectural government and paid a visit to Kiyoshi Nakagawa, mayor of Tsuchiura City. In Ibaraki prefecture, the delegation also toured local businesses and schools and met with several local research organizations to discuss energy and environment issues in the region.

### *Participants*

SARAH ANDERSON, Member, Minnesota House of Representatives (R)

CHAD CAMPBELL, Member, Arizona House of Representatives (D)

TRICIA ANN COTHAM, Member, North Carolina House of Representatives (D)

JASON CROWELL, Member, Missouri State Senate (R)

JARET GIBBONS, Member, Pennsylvania House of Representatives (D)

RONALD THOMAS, Special Counsel, Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough, Washington DC (R)

ANGELA WILHELMS, Chief of Staff, Office of the Oregon House Minority Leader (R)

SANDRA WILLIAMS, Member, Ohio House of Representatives (D)

*Delegation Escort*

RICH GOLICK, Member, Georgia House of  
Representatives (R)



The 2008 US-Japan Young Political Leaders Exchange Program  
delegation to Japan

# Australia-Japan Young Political Leaders Exchange Program

In 1991, JCIE and the Australian Political Exchange Council launched the Australia-Japan Young Political Leaders Exchange Program in order to build a network among the next generation of leaders in both countries and to promote bilateral dialogue. The economies of Japan and Australia have been growing increasingly interdependent with each passing year, and a sound, cooperative relationship between both countries is important for the future growth of the region. The delegations include all political persuasions and consist of federal and local members of parliament and their staff members.

## 18th Australian Delegation to Japan

A delegation of Australian political leaders visited Tokyo, Kobe, and Kyoto on February 28–March 6, 2009, to exchange views on the future of Australia-Japan relations and to discuss opportunities for cooperation on common challenges such as the global financial crisis and regional security. The six-member delegation, led by Senator Louise Pratt, engaged in discussions in Tokyo with political figures such as Hon. Yohei Kono, Speaker of the House of Representatives (LDP), and Hon. Yukio Hatoyama, secretary general of the DPJ.

The delegation participated in meetings with 16 Diet members from Japan's three major political parties and met with ministry officials, Japanese business executives, and representatives from Japan's leading research institutions. The Japanese government's strategy to address the financial crisis was a major topic of discussion as were sociopolitical developments in Japan such as the upcoming elections. Energy and environment issues such as climate change and regional security issues of shared concern between Japan and

Australia also featured prominently in the discussions. After Tokyo, the delegation traveled to Kobe and Kyoto, where they met with members of the Hyogo Prefecture government and visited the Disaster Reduction and Human Renovation Institution to discuss natural disaster preparedness in Japan.

### *Participants List*

LOUISE PRATT, Delegation Leader; Senator for West Australia (Labor Party)

SIMON BIRMINGHAM, Senator for South Australia (Liberal Party of Australia)

MITCHELL FIFIELD, Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities, Carers and the

Voluntary Sector; Senator for Victoria (Liberal Party of Australia)

BEN MORTON, State Director of the Liberal Party of Australia (West Australia) (Liberal Party of Australia)

KERRY REA, Federal Member for Bonner (Queensland) (Labor Party)

KIM BAKER, Director, Australian Political Exchange Council