

August 27, 2015

Franklin Center & Ripon Society Hold Policy Conference Looking at Key Issues Facing U.S. & Czech Republic

WASHINGTON, DC – The Franklin Center and The Ripon Society held a policy conference in Prague from August 5-9 looking at some of the key issues impacting the relationship between the United States and the Czech Republic.

Called the *TransAtlantic Capital to Capital Exchange*, the conference included keynote addresses and panel discussions examining such topics as defense and the role of NATO, global trade, health care, cybersecurity, energy production, transportation and infrastructure, and international tax reform.

“The Czechs are one of our staunchest allies in Central Europe,” stated Jim Conzelman, the President & CEO of the Franklin Center and Ripon Society. “They’ve sent troops to fight alongside U.S. forces in Iraq and Afghanistan, and they are the protecting power for U.S. interests in Syria today. Moreover, as the current head of the Visegrad Group, the Czech Republic leads an alliance of countries that collectively represents the fifth largest economy in Europe and the twelfth largest economy in the world.

“Beyond their military and economic contributions, I think it is also important to remember their story and the example they have set for the rest of the world. The Czech people lived under oppression for over 50 years, then gained their independence and built a democracy. They know what freedom means and they know what it represents. They also know that freedom must be fought for and defended everyday. With ISIS on the rise and Russia on the march, theirs is a story worth remembering, and an example worth calling attention to.”

According to Conzelman, participants in the *TransAtlantic Capital to Capital Exchange* included representatives from the Czech Republic’s public and private sectors, and Members of the United States Congress, as well. The Members included U.S. Representatives Renee Ellmers (R/NC-2) and Jim Renacci (R/OH-16), who served as Co-Chairs of the policy conference. Also participating were U.S. Representatives Marsha Blackburn (R/TN-7); Larry Bucshon (R/IN-8), Mike Capuano (D/MA-7), Rodney Davis (R/IL-13), Jeff Denham (R/CA-10), Sean Patrick Maloney (D/NY-18), Pat Meehan (R/PA-7), Bill Pascrell (D/NJ-9), Erik

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Armed Services Committee Member Jackie Walorski delivers remarks during a discussion about “Defense and NATO.” Also participating were (from l to r): Czech Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Jakub Kulhánek and Petr Gandalovič, the Czech Republic’s Ambassador to the U.S.

Paulsen (R/MN-3), Tom Reed (R/NY-23), Steve Scalise (R/LA-1), Pete Sessions (R/TX-32), Bill Shuster, (R/PA-9), and Jackie Walorski (R/IN-2). Also attending and helping to lead the panel discussions was former Ambassador and Representative Connie Morella (MD-8), who serves as Chair of the Franklin Center.

In addition to the panel discussions, Conzelman noted that the conference included a visit to the headquarters of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty. The visit featured a briefing by RFE/RL Editor-in-Chief Nenad Pejic on the mission of the 55-year old organization, and presentations by RFE/RL reporters on the organization’s ongoing efforts to promote freedom and democracy in Russia, the Middle East, and other oppressed regions of the world.

Conzelman added that the conference also included a visit to the Czech Chamber of Deputies and a meeting with members of the Czech-U.S. Friendship Group, including: Jaroslava Jermanová, a Member of the Czech Parliament who serves as First Deputy Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies; Martin Novotný, a Member of Parliament who serves as Chairman of the Friendship Group; and Marek Černoch, a Member of Parliament.

In addition, the conference featured a presentation by Ambassador Hynek Kmonicek, who serves as head of the International Relations Department in the Office of the Czech President and who, in his remarks, discussed Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and how the Czech Republic may be impacted down the road.



Rep. Ellmers presents Amb. Schapiro with a gift of appreciation for his and his staff's assistance with the policy conference.

The conference kicked off with an in-country briefing by the U.S. Ambassador to the Czech Republic, Andrew Schapiro, and members of his staff at the U.S. Embassy in Prague. The briefing was followed by nine panel discussions over the next three days which focused on a number of key areas, including:

“Defense and NATO” – which featured an examination of the current defense cooperation between the U.S. and the Czech Republic and ways in which the NATO alliance can help mitigate regional concerns related to Russian aggression.

Participants included: Rep. Walorski; Czech Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Jakub Kulhánek; and, Petr Gandalovič, the Czech Republic’s Ambassador to the U.S. who moderated the discussion.

“International Trade and the Economy” – which featured an examination of bilateral trade cooperation between the U.S. and Czech Republic and ways this relationship can be expanded. The panel also examined the proposed Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership and the impact TTIP could have on the global economy.

Participants included: Rep. Pascrell; Rep. Paulsen; Rep. Renacci; Vladimír Bártl, Deputy Minister of Industry and Trade; and, Ivan Jančárek, the Junior Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs. The discussion was moderated by Amb. Morella.

“Health Care and Health Policy” – which featured an examination of what the U.S. and Czech Republic can learn from each other regarding their health insurance and health care delivery systems. The panel also examined the balance between industry regulation and rapid innovation, and the role of government in research and health care.

Participants included: Rep. Blackburn; Rep. Bucshon; Rep. Ellmers; Pavel Hroboň, Managing Partner for Advance Healthcare Management Institute; and, Tomáš Kolář, Managing Director, & CEO of Linet. The discussion was moderated by Kelli Briggs, the Chief of Staff for Rep. Pat Tiberi (R/OH-12).

“Technology & Telecommunications” – which featured an examination of what the U.S. can learn from the Czech Republic’s “Digital Czech Republic v. 2.0” and discussion of the role of government in encouraging technological innovation.

Participants included: Rep. Scalise; Rep. Maloney; Milan Vašina, CEO of T-Mobile Czech Republic; and, Filip Šváb, Executive Director of International External Affairs for AT&T Germany, CEE Region and Russia. The discussion was moderated by Kelli Briggs.

“Cybersecurity, Data Protection, and Privacy” – which featured an examination of areas where the U.S., EU and Czech Republic agree with regard to the protection of consumer, corporate and government data while also balancing issues of privacy and national security.

Participants included: Rep. Capuano; Rep. Blackburn; Rep. Walorski; Rep. Meehan; Jaroslav Šmíd, Deputy Director of the National Security Authority of the Czech Republic; and, Aleš Špidla, Manager of

Risk Assurance Solutions for PwC. The discussion was moderated by Mike Sommers, the Chief of Staff for Speaker John Boehner.

“Energy Production and its Trade” – which featured an examination of the historic changes in domestic energy production and availability, both in the U.S. and Czech Republic, and a discussion of, among other topics, ways in which government can best utilize its country’s natural resources in an uncertain geopolitical climate.

Participants included: Rep. Bucshon; Rep. Shuster; Rep. Davis; Rep. Denham; Rep. Reed; Václav Bartuška, Ambassador-at-Large for Energy Security at the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs; and, Peter Stračár, CEO of General Electric for Central and Eastern Europe. The discussion was moderated by Mike Sommers.

“The Agenda for the 114th Congress” – which featured an examination of the accomplishments of the 114th Congress’s first session and the agenda for the remainder of 2015 and 2016.

Participants included: Rep. Scalise; Rep. Capuano; Rep. Ellmers; and, Rep. Sessions. The discussion was moderated by Mike Sommers.

“Transportation & Infrastructure: Facilitating Trade & Travel” – which featured an examination of the need to rebuild and expand physical infrastructure and put in place proper regulations in the U.S., the Czech Republic, and throughout the EU in anticipation of TTIP and in order to encourage economic growth. The panel also examined technological advancements, including energy efficiency and safety measures, and discussed what role government should play in encouraging industry adoption of such measures.

Participants included: Rep. Shuster, who serves as Chairman of the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee and delivered keynote remarks to open the discussion; Rep. Denham; Rep. Davis; Rep. Maloney; Pavel Telička, who serves on the Committee on Transport and Tourism in the European Parliament; and Ivan Hodač, a Member of the Board of Directors for the Aspen Institute Prague and the former Secretary-General of the European Automobile Manufacturers’ Association. The discussion was moderated by Rep. Renacci.

“International Taxation and Reform” – which featured an examination of the current state of international taxation and a discussion of ways – including reform and targeted tax breaks like repatriation – the U.S. can increase revenue while also boosting our global competitiveness and nation’s economy. Among other topics, the discussion focused on recent OECD activity regarding base erosion and profit sharing (BEPS) and other international tax developments in the EU and the Czech Republic.

Participants included: Rep. Pascrell; Rep. Paulsen; Rep. Renacci; Rep. Meehan; Rep. Reed; and Peter Chrenko, the Tax and Legal Services Leader for PwC Czech Republic. The discussion was moderated by Rep. Sessions.



With other Members looking on, Rep. Renacci presents Deputy Minister Kulhánek with a commemorative plate following the panel discussions Thursday morning.



Rep. Paulsen talks about the importance of trade during a discussion on the issue. Amb. Morella is shown on the left.



Rep. Renacci delivers remarks to introduce the panel on transportation and infrastructure.



Rep. Capuano makes a point during a panel discussion on cybersecurity. Mike Sommers is shown on the right.



Reps. Ellmers, Blackburn, and Walorski and Amb. Morella pose for a photo with Deputy Speaker Jaroslava Jermanová following their meeting in the Czech Chamber of Deputies.



With Rep. Sessions and Mike Sommers listening on, Rep. Scalise discusses the agenda of the 114th Congress during a panel discussion on the topic.



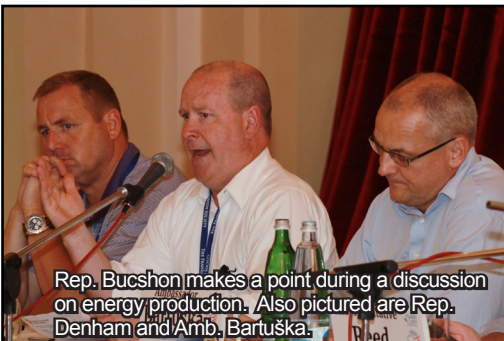
U.S. Representatives listen to a presentation by Irina Lagunina, the Director of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Russian Service (Radio Svoboda), during a visit to RFE/RL Headquarters in Prague.



Reps. Meehan discusses the importance of tax reform during a panel discussion on the topic while Reps. Reed and Pascrell look on.



Reps. Maloney and Denham share a lighthearted moment with fellow panelist Ivan Hodač during a discussion on transportation and infrastructure.



Rep. Bucshon makes a point during a discussion on energy production. Also pictured are Rep. Denham and Amb. Bartuška.



Chairman Shuster delivers keynote remarks on the importance of investing in transportation and infrastructure.



Rep. Davis discusses transportation policy during a discussion on the topic. Pavel Telička is shown on the right.



TRANSATLANTIC CAPITAL TO CAPITAL EXCHANGE
PRAGUE, CZECH REPUBLIC AUGUST 5-9, 2015

AGENDA AT A GLANCE

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 5, 2015

- 8:00 am - 4:00 pm - Registration & check-in at hotel
- 4:30 - 4:45 pm - Welcome by Reps. Renacci and Ellmers
- 4:45 - 6:00 pm - In Country briefing by Amb. Schapiro and U.S. Embassy staff
- 6:00 pm - Bus to opening reception
- 6:30 - 8:30 pm - Opening reception and dinner at residence of Amb. Schapiro

THURSDAY, AUGUST 6, 2015

- 6:45 - 8:00 am - Breakfast at hotel
- 8:00 am - Bus to Černín Palace, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- 9:00 am - 12:00 pm - Policy Panels
- *Panel on Defense and NATO*
 - *Panel on Trade*
 - *Meeting and group discussion on Czech-U.S. Relations*
 - *Deputy Minister Vladimír Bártl*
 - *Deputy Minister Jakub Kulhánek*
 - *Jr. Deputy Minister Ivan Jancárek*
 - *Amb. Petr Gandalovič*
- 12:00 pm - Bus to St. Agnes of Bohemia Convent
- 12:30 pm - Lunch with Speaker
- *Nenad Pejić – Editor-in-Chief, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*
- 1:45 pm - Policy Panel
- *Panel on Health Care*
- 3:00 pm - Walk to Jewish Quarter
- 3:15 - 5:30 pm - Historian-led visit of Prague's Jewish Quarter
- 5:30 pm - Walk to hotel to prepare for dinner
- 6:45 pm - Meet to depart for small group dinners
- 7:00 pm - Group dinner discussions
- 9:30 - 11:00 pm - After dinner coffee at hotel

FRIDAY, AUGUST 7, 2015

- 6:45 - 9:00 am - Breakfast at hotel
- 7:45 am - Members of Congress and spouses bus to Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty
- 8:30 - 10:00 am - Members of Congress and spouses visit Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

FRIDAY, AUGUST 7, 2015 (CONT'D)

- 10:15 am - All other conference attendees bus to Zofin Palace-Small Hall
- 10:45 am - 2:15 pm - Policy Panels and lunch
- *Panel on Tech. and Telecomm.*
 - *Panel on Cybersecurity, Data Protection, and Privacy*
 - *Panel on Energy*
- 2:15 pm - Bus to Chamber of Deputies and Senate
- 2:45 - 4:30 pm - Visit to Czech Republic Chamber of Deputies and Senate. Delegation meeting with Czech-U.S. Friendship Group
- 4:30 pm - Bus to hotel to prepare for dinner
- 6:45 pm - Meet to depart for small group dinners
- 7:00 pm - Group dinner discussions
- 9:30 - 11:00 pm - After dinner coffee at hotel

SATURDAY, AUGUST 8, 2015

- 6:45 - 8:30 am - Breakfast at hotel
- 8:30 am - Bus to Prague Castle
- 9:00 am - 12:15 pm - Policy Panels
- *Panel on Agenda of 114th Congress*
 - *Panel on Transportation and Infrastructure*
- 12:15 pm - Lunch with Speaker
- *Amb. Hynek Kmoníček*
Head of the International Relations Department, Office of the President of the Czech Republic
- 1:15 pm - Policy Panel
- *Panel on International Taxation*
- 3:00 pm - Historian led visit of Prague Castle
- 5:00 pm - Bus to hotel to prepare for dinner
- 6:45 pm - Meet in lobby to bus to closing reception & dinner
- 7:00 - 10:00 pm - Closing reception & dinner at Smetana Hall, Obecní dům – Municipal House
- 10:00 pm - Bus to return to hotel
- 10:15 pm - After dinner coffee at hotel

SUNDAY AUGUST 9, 2015

- 6:45 - 9:00 am - Breakfast at hotel & departure