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October 16, 2008

The Honorable George W. Bush
President of the United States
Washington, DC

VIA HAND DELIVERY

Dear Mr. President:

The 10 million strong Polish American community of the United States is deeply distressed that your Administration has not taken sufficient steps to include Poland among the countries you will announce as eligible for the United States Visa Waiver program on October 17, 2008.

It was Poland's Solidarity that broke the communist yoke in Central and Eastern Europe leading to the liberation of their neighbors, the fall of the Soviet Union, and greater security of the United States. Poland was among the first three countries to join an expanding NATO. Poland has agreed to host the missile shield that will defend Europe and the United States, despite repeated Russian threats. Poland's troops have fought shoulder-to-shoulder with American troops in Iraq and Afghanistan in far greater numbers than those of nations that currently enjoy, or are being admitted to, the Visa Waiver Program.

Yet these same Poles, true allies of the United States, continue to be subjected to the U.S. visa regime, including a non-refundable \$100 visa application fee, visa processing delays and possible refusal to permit entry. Surely these same Poles cannot be a greater security threat to the United States than their neighbors who can travel freely to the United States without a fee, delays, and the possibility of refusal. You and we know, in fact, that Polish citizens are not a security threat to the United States.

Polish Americans constitute one of the largest ethnic groups in the United States. We feel discriminated by our American government because our relatives, unlike those of other EU ethnic groups, cannot travel freely to the United States. We value our ties with family and friends living in Poland and suffered greatly for forty-five years when the communist regime restricted our parents, siblings, relations and friends from visiting us. Fortunately that is no

*60th
Anniversary*

SERVING THE INTERESTS OF POLISH AMERICANS SINCE 1944

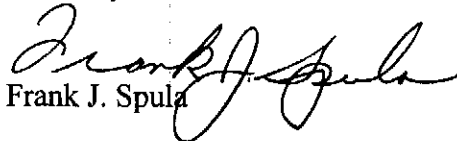
longer the case. Now neither the Polish government nor Poland's neighbors restrict the travel of Polish citizens.

Poles can travel freely without a passport throughout the European Union and even work in many EU countries. They also can travel to Canada and other countries without a visa. Unfortunately that is not the case for the United States, even though it is in our national interest that they get to know our country and maintain their ties with the Polish American community in the United States. We take them for granted at our peril.

The Polish American Congress and the Polish American community of the United States believe that the visa requirement should have been waived for Polish citizens long ago. We consider the continued visa requirement as against the best interests of the United States and inexplicably discriminatory towards our ethnic group.

We respectfully urge that you correct this injustice in the remaining days of your Administration.

Sincerely


Frank J. Spula