

September 27, 2001: President Bush Nominates Ambassador-at-Large

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 27, 2001 Contact:

Lawrence J. Goodrich, Communications Director, (202) 523-3240, ext. 27

The White House announced September 26 that President Bush intends to nominate John V. Hanford III for the position of Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom. The ambassador, when confirmed by the Senate, also serves as a nonvoting, ex officio member of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom under the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998. Mr. Hanford replaces Ambassador Robert Seiple, the first person to hold the position. Ambassador Seiple returned to the private sector in September 2000. "Ambassador Seiple made a significant contribution to the work of this Commission and the Commissioners valued him as a colleague," said Commission Chair Michael K. Young, who served with him. "We welcome Mr. Hanford, who has a long interest in these issues, and look forward to a similarly fruitful relationship." "The ambassador-at-large, who reports directly to the Secretary of State, plays a vital role in keeping the issue before U.S. policymakers and in conducting U.S. diplomacy," Chairman Young said. "We're very pleased that the president has moved to fill this crucial job."

Michael K. Young, Chair

- Felice D. Gaer Firuz Kazemzadeh Richard D. Land Bishop William Francis Murphy Leila Nadya Sadat Nina Shea The Hon. Charles R. Stith The Hon. Shirin Tahir-Kheli Steven T. McFarland, Executive Director