

## Aug. 8, 2008: Michael Cromartie, Leonard Leo, and Elizabeth Prodromou Re-Appointed to Commission

WASHINGTON—Michael Cromartie, Leonard A. Leo, and Dr. Elizabeth H. Prodromou have been reappointed to the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, an independent, bipartisan federal body.

“We welcome these re-appointments and look forward to the ongoing contributions and insights of each Commissioner,” said Felice D. Gaer, Chair of the Commission. “Michael Cromartie has advanced our work with his leadership of the Commission, his unfailingly humane perspective, and his generous commitment of time and energy. Leonard Leo’s legal expertise and commitment to advancing religious freedom have enabled the Commission to be more active on many policy questions. Dr. Elizabeth Prodromou, by bringing the Commission academic rigor and an international relations perspective, has enriched Commission deliberations and supported a sophisticated approach to religious freedom and related human rights matters.”

Commissioner Cromartie, who has served on the Commission since September 2004 and now serves as a Vice Chair, is Vice President of the Ethics and Public Policy Center. He directs the Evangelicals in Civic Life and the Media and Religion programs at the Center, which was set up in 1976 to reinforce the bond between the Judeo-Christian moral tradition and domestic and foreign policy issues. He is also a Senior Advisor to The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life in Washington and a Senior Fellow with The Trinity Forum. A former Chair of the Commission, Mr. Cromartie was reappointed by President George W. Bush.

Commissioner Leo, who was appointed to the Commission in 2007, is Executive Vice President of the Federalist Society for Law and Public Policy Studies. He manages the projects, programs and publications of the Lawyers Division of the Society, an organization of over 40,000 conservatives and libertarians dedicated to limited, constitutional government and interested in the current state of the legal order. He also helps manage the Federalist Society’s government, media, and corporate relations, as well as special initiatives such as the organization’s Supreme Court Project and International Law Project. Mr. Leo served as a U.S. delegate to the U.N. Commission on Human Rights in 2005, has been an observer to the World Intellectual Property Organization, participated in two World Health Organization delegations in 2007, and is involved with the U.S. National Commission to UNESCO. President Bush reappointed him to the Commission.

Commissioner Prodromou, who has served on the Commission since October 2004, is Assistant Professor in the Department of International Relations at Boston University and Research Associate at the university’s Institute on Culture, Religion and World Affairs. A regional expert on Southeastern Europe and the Eastern Mediterranean, she has published widely on issues of religion and human rights, democracy, and security in Europe and the United States and has served as consultant at the U.S. State Department, the Foreign Affairs Training Center of the Foreign Service Institute, the U.S. Defense Intelligence Council, the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, and the Council on Foreign Relations. Commissioner Prodromou, who is serving as a Commission Vice Chair, was reappointed by House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA).

The Commission was created by the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (IRFA) to monitor violations of the right

to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion or belief abroad, as defined in IRFA and set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and related international instruments, and to give independent policy recommendations to the President, Secretary of State, and Congress. It is the first government commission in the world with the sole mission of reviewing and making policy recommendations on the facts and circumstances of violations of religious freedom globally. The Commission consists of nine voting members and the Ambassador at Large for Religious Freedom, who is a non-voting member. Three Commissioners are selected by the President. Three are appointed by the President pro tempore of the Senate, of which two are appointed upon the recommendation of the Senate Minority Leader. Three are appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, of which two are appointed upon the recommendation of the House Minority Leader.

Other currently serving Commissioners include Preeta D. Bansal, Dr. Richard D. Land, Dr. Don Argue, Imam Talal Y. Eid, and Nina Shea.