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NZ US COUNCIL ASSISTS MPS TO VISIT WASHINGTON

The New Zealand United States Council is sponsoring a visit to Washington DC by Hon Shane Jones and Craig Foss MP, respectively Chair and Vice Chair of the New Zealand United States Parliamentary Friendship Group in the 49th Parliament.

“This visit comes at a time when the relationship with the United States is, in the words of Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, ‘the best it’s been in 25 years’. That’s a remarkable transformation and continuing to enhance Congressional support for the relationship remains central to New Zealand’s interests in the United States”, said the Council’s Executive Director, Stephen Jacobi.

In Washington DC 20-23 July Shane Jones and Craig Foss will meet their counterparts from the Friends of New Zealand Congressional Caucus, Rick Larsen (D – Washington) and Kevin Brady (R – Texas) as well as several Caucus members. They will also meet with Administration representatives, the US NZ Council and a range of business and trade contacts. On 23 July they will travel to Los Angeles to meet with the New Zealand business community and local contacts before returning home.

The MPs’ visit comes as the US Administration considers whether to confirm participation in negotiations to join the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP).

“The visit provides a timely opportunity to build Congressional support for TPP which is critical if these negotiations are to proceed and to be concluded successfully”.

In March 2009 the Friends of New Zealand Congressional Caucus [wrote to US President Barack Obama](#) to urge the Administration to continue negotiations for the United States' participation in TPP.

The NZ US Council is meeting the costs of domestic travel in the United States and related on-the-ground costs.

For further information

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About the NZUS Council – www.nzuscouncil.com

The NZ US Council is a non partisan body funded by both business and the Government to promote New Zealand’s broader relationship with the US. Two-way trade with the US is valued at over \$8 billion and the US is a leading source of investment, innovation and business ideas. The third Partnership Forum organised by the US NZ Council will be held in Washington DC 6-8 October 2009.