



NEBRASKA HUMANITIES COUNCIL

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N E W S R E L E A S E

For release: March 23, 2006

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U.S. lawmakers to participate in Capitol Forum

LINCOLN—Two members of Nebraska's congressional delegation and Nebraska Attorney General Jon Bruning have confirmed plans to participate in the eighth annual Nebraska Capitol Forum on America's Future on March 27 at the State Capitol.

U.S. Rep. Jeff Fortenberry and Bruning will attend the day's events in person. U.S. Sen. Chuck Hagel will participate via video conferencing from Washington, D.C.

More than 95 high school students and 20 teachers will gather at the daylong forum to discuss the U.S. role in today's world. The forum is a collaboration of the Nebraska Humanities Council and Secretary of State John Gale. The students and teachers will represent 19 high schools in Lincoln, Omaha, Bellevue, Millard, Ashland, Cambridge, Chadron, Crofton, Holdrege, Howells, Lynch, Plainview, Springfield, Sterling, Sumner, Valentine, Wausa, and Wilcox.

Capitol Forum is a civic education initiative designed to give high school students a voice in public policy. For six months, students have studied and deliberated foreign policy issues in the classroom. On March 27, student representatives from each school will engage in discussion among themselves and with policymakers and other elected officials on such issues as immigration, nuclear proliferation, terrorism, global economics, and the environment. They will deliberate on four distinct options for the future of U.S. foreign policy, culminating in a conversation with members of Nebraska's congressional delegation and state officials.

The deliberation begins in the Warner Chamber at 1:40 p.m. The students' conversation with Sen. Hagel, Rep. Fortenberry, and Attorney General Bruning is scheduled for 2:45 p.m.

After the March 27 forum, teachers and students will return home to share their experiences with classmates, broadening the impact of Capitol Forum to hundreds of students statewide. These classes will complete a ballot describing their view of America's future role in the world. Results of the ballot will be compiled and distributed to elected officials, Nebraska schools and news media.

Capitol Forum is a Choices for the 21st Century Project, an outreach program of Brown University's Watson Institute for International Studies.

In Nebraska, Capitol Forum is funded in part by the "We the People" initiative of the National Endowment for the Humanities and by the Cooper Foundation.

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Editors: For an interview with Secretary of State John Gale, call Shelley Harrold at (402) 471-1572. News media are welcome to attend all sessions of Capitol Forum. For details on the day's agenda, call Erika Hamilton, NHC program officer, at (402) 474-2131, ext. 104.