THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

May 27, 2011

Dear Senator Kirk:

Thank you for your letter regarding my visit to Poland and your recent introduction of the Secure Travel and Counterterrorism Partnership Program Act of 2011 (S. 497/H.R. 959) to restructure the Visa Waiver Program (VWP).

I write to express my strong support for the Secure Travel and Counterterrorism Partnership Program Act of 2011. I share your view that our counterterrorism and security partnerships have evolved and it makes sense to pursue a restructuring of the program. Countries that are willing to cooperate with the United States on our global priorities, including on counterterrorism initiatives, information sharing, and prevention of terrorist travel, deserve the opportunity to become part of our VWP.

I also share your support for Poland and disappointment that this close NATO ally has been excluded from the VWP to date. Poland's strong and steadfast support during our missions in Iraq and Afghanistan demonstrates the deep alliance we have forged and the close partnership between our two countries.

It is my hope that my trip to Poland will help to strengthen the enduring bonds between the American and Polish people. Thank you again for your leadership on this important issue of interest to both countries.

Sincerely,

The Honorable Mark Kirk
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510