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Committee on Foreign Affairs:
Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere
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"The President's New Cuba Policy and U.S. National Security"

Chairman Duncan, ranking member Sires, distinguished committee members, thank you for the opportunity to share my analysis of Cuban events and U.S.-Cuban relations with you in my capacity as an economist and as an observer of Cuba in the hemisphere.It is an honor to be here.

Mr. Chairman, of events in Cuba it can be truly stated that the more things change the more they stay the same. The chronic economic woes, the political control by a ruling elite and the alliances with nefarious and extra-regional actors have underscored, and often overturned, whatever possible economic and political reforms appear from time to time or the best intentions for normal relations.

Today, as the U.S. considers a new policy toward Cuba it is imperative that we separate intentions from realities and neither underestimate nor overestimate Cuba's strength and threats. My testimony will focus on three areas of concern: economic, political and foreign policy/national security.



Pictured left to right: Chris Simmons (Cuba Confidential and former intelligence analysts), Fernando Menéndez (SFS Senior Fellow), Dr. José Azel (Univ. of Miami Center for Cuban Studies), and former Ambassador Dennis Hays.



Pictured left to right: Rep. Sires (D-NJ, ranking member), Chris Simmons, Rep. Jeff Duncan (R-SC, chair), Dr. Azel, Amb. Hays, Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL), and Fernando Menéndez

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