In September 2005, the long-standing Parliamentary Development Project for Ukraine (PDP), under the direction of Charles Wise (School of Public and Environmental Affairs, IUB), received $500,000 in the form of a cooperative agreement from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). This agreement will help facilitate legislative reform in Ukraine over its next two parliamentary sessions and supplements a $4.98 million, five-year agreement issued to the PDP in 2003 (see International News, December 2003).

“Extraordinary events have occurred in Ukraine over this past year,” says U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Richard Lugar. “A free press has revolted against government intimidation and reasserted itself. An emerging middle class has found its political footing. A new generation has embraced democracy and openness. A society has rebelled against the illegal activities of its government . . . . A secure and democratic Ukraine is in the national security interests of the United States, NATO, the European Union, and Russia.”

The new funds will enable PDP to focus its efforts to advance the role of parliament under Ukraine’s new constitution and proportional system of election that took place in January 2006. PDP staff will assist parliament in four areas: legislation to combat corruption, administrative reform, local government reform, and legislation to facilitate integration into international protocols such as the World Trade Organization, Palermo Convention, and European Union.

PDP, a nonpartisan organization with offices in Kiev and Bloomington, has worked since 1994 with members of the Ukrainian Parliament to draft new and reform current legislation that will allow the country to fully democratize, to strengthen the parliament as a transparent, effective, democratic institution through improved legislative-executive relations and increased citizen involvement. It has been assisting parliamentarians in these areas by engaging in policy analysis, legislative drafting support, regional public hearing support, committee hearing support, roundtables with U.S. Congressional representatives, and plenary consideration support.

“This agreement will enhance an already exciting relationship between Indiana University and Ukraine,” continues Lugar. “This partnership provides a wonderful opportunity for one of Indiana’s top educational institutions to share its research and expertise with a burgeoning democratic nation.”


—Parliamentary Development Project, SPEA

For a profile of Charles Wise and the PDP, see www.indiana.edu/~speaweb/magazine/winter05/pdp.html