

Talking Points on Senate Action on the FY12 International Affairs Budget

These Cuts Will Diminish America's Global Leadership and Competitiveness

- International Affairs programs help tackle the root causes of conflict and extremism, respond to humanitarian crises, and build new markets for U.S. goods and services.
- But these programs are being forced to shoulder disproportionately deep budget cuts – cuts that are not in our nation's best interests.
- The International Affairs Budget absorbed nearly 20% of the total spending cuts in the final FY11 spending agreement earlier this year, even though it's only 1.4% of the budget.
- With the FY12 State-Foreign Operations bill on the Senate floor, the International Affairs Budget is very vulnerable to amendments that would make additional deep cuts.
- These amendments, if adopted, could result in the steepest cuts to International Affairs programs since the height of the Cold War.
- These are real cuts with harmful consequences.
- We urge you to oppose any cutting amendments to the FY12 State-Foreign Operations bill during Senate floor consideration.

The International Affairs Budget is Vital to Our National Security

- The International Affairs Budget pays dividends in terms of our national security and preventing another 9/11.
- We need allies in the war on terror (to gather and share intelligence), and developed countries are more stable and less likely to fuel violent extremism.
- These funds are especially critical at a time when we are asking State, USAID and other civilian-led programs to take on greater responsibilities in Iraq and Afghanistan.
- Military leaders – including former Secretary Gates, Admiral Mullen, and General Petraeus – have all been adamant that budget cuts to State and USAID are detrimental to our national security.

The International Affairs Budget Boosts U.S. Job and Economic Growth

- More than 1 out of 5 American jobs are tied to international trade.
- We have to go where the customers are: 95% of the world's consumers live outside our borders.
- Other countries, especially China, are outpacing the U.S. in international investments, which threatens America's leadership and influence.
- More than 50 leading U.S. businesses – from Caterpillar to Walmart – wrote to Congress this summer in support of a strong and effective International Affairs Budget.
- The U.S. Chamber of Commerce has come out in support of fully funding the FY12 International Affairs Budget.

The International Affairs Budget Saves Lives

- All over the world, American humanitarian efforts have saved millions of lives, cured diseases, provided life-saving treatment to those living with HIV, promoted democracy, and built the foundation of local economies – all while reinforcing the values and compassion of the United States.
- Americans are committed to helping those in dire needs and they are responding with generosity to the current crisis in the Horn of Africa as they did to the earthquake in Haiti.
- These programs leverage significant private charitable contributions and donations.

- U.S. development programs also address the root causes of poverty and help people improve their own lives, and the lives of their families, communities, and countries for the long-term.
- U.S. development assistance has produced real results by:
 - Cutting the number of children dying before their fifth birthday in half worldwide;
 - Reducing polio cases by 99% in just 20 years;
 - Protecting tens of millions of lives from malaria through nets, spraying, and antimalarial treatments; and
 - Teaching millions of children to read and write.

The International Affairs Budget is a Strategic & Cost-Effective Investment

- The International Affairs Budget is strategic and cost-effective, helping achieve U.S. goals abroad at lower cost (in lives and dollars) than using the military.
- As former Secretary Gates said, “Development is cheaper than war.”
- Further deep cuts to these programs will cost us more in the long run through more costly military involvement and humanitarian crises.