



# Chairman Harold “Hal” Rogers

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House Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

July 19, 2017

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**CHAIRMAN HAL ROGERS’ OPENING STATEMENT:  
FY18 State and Foreign Operations, and Related Programs  
Full Committee Markup  
July 19, 2017**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I am pleased to present the fiscal year 2018 Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs appropriations bill to the Full Committee for consideration and approval.

I want to begin by thanking Chairman Frelinghuysen for his tireless work to move bills through the Committee. After today, the Committee will have completed its work on all twelve appropriations bills.

I also want to thank Mrs. Lowey for her work on the Committee and this Subcommittee. I know she cares deeply about the programs funded in this bill and while we do not always agree, we continue to work cooperatively to advance our nation’s security and interests.

The bill before us today provides \$47 billion in discretionary spending, a reduction of \$10 billion below fiscal year 2017 enacted levels, but \$7 billion above the President’s request. In a tough budget environment, the bill strikes a delicate balance between fiscal responsibility and support for continued United States leadership, diplomatic engagement, and foreign assistance.

It does so, first by providing over \$6 billion for embassy security. This funding will allow the State Department to address the security needs of more than 275 United States diplomatic facilities overseas in line with the recommendations of the Benghazi Accountability Review Board.

Second, the bill contains \$8.4 billion for security assistance, including maintaining support for key U.S. allies and partners. \$3.1 billion is provided for Israel, fully funding the last year of the current Memorandum of Understanding. To help foster stability in the Near East, we maintain Foreign Military Financing at \$1.3 billion for Egypt, \$450 million for Jordan, and \$65 million for Tunisia.

We provide increased security assistance for Ukraine and support other countries facing Russian aggression, including through a Countering Russian Influence Fund.

In our own hemisphere, we maintain partnerships with Colombia, Central America, and Mexico to help counter transnational criminal organizations and the flow of drugs.

Third, the bill promotes democracy around the world by providing funding for the National Endowment for Democracy and the Democracy Fund at the fiscal year 2017 level. In addition, the bill-wide funding directive of not less than \$2.3 billion for democracy programs is maintained.

Fourth, the bill includes \$8.3 billion for Global Health Programs and over \$5.9 billion for humanitarian assistance, which continues our country's strong tradition of providing humanitarian aid and helping the most vulnerable. These investments also make us better prepared to prevent, detect, and respond to emerging health crises.

And fifth, at a time when we must remain focused on balancing federal spending, this bill eliminates many programs, focuses on improving oversight and management, and takes steps to make our government more accountable to Congress and the American people.

The bill also ensures that prior to any reorganization of the Department of State and USAID, the Secretary of State is required to submit to the Committee a detailed report regarding such plans. I know that Members have concerns about some of the rumored elements of a reorganization. Once the report is received, we will have a chance to review the final plan and consider what action, if any, the Committee should take.

Before I conclude, I want to express my appreciation for the work of the staff.

From the majority staff, I want to thank the clerk, Craig Higgins, and his team - Susan Adams, Celia Alvarado, David Bortnick, Winnie Chang, and Lacy Kilraine. From my personal office, I also want to thank Megan Bell, Alex Pinson and Kelicia Rice.

From the minority staff, I want to thank Steve Marchese, Erin Kolodjeski, Matt Washington, Liz Leibowitz, and Dean Fischer.

We appreciate all of your help.

Thank you again, Chairman Frelinghuysen. I yield back.

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