

Testimony of Congressman Jonathan L. Jackson (IL-01)
House Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on National Security,
Department of State, and Related Programs
Member Day, March 25, 2026

Dear Chairman Diaz-Balart, Ranking Member Frankel, and Members of the Subcommittee:

As a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, I thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of robust funding for accounts that help strengthen resilience for the most vulnerable populations, reduce global poverty, prevent violent conflict, support democratic systems, and create greater political and economic stability.

The Fiscal Year 2027 National Security, Department of State, and Related Programs Appropriations bill provides Congress the opportunity to correct the incredible mistakes made by President Trump's administration over the last year. I urge all of my colleagues on this committee to prioritize fully funding U.S. foreign aid and assistance programs that remain one of our most effective diplomatic tools. The U.S. must lead with diplomacy, not militancy, and compassion instead of cruelty.

Congress must provide the resources needed for diplomatic, development, and defense investments in the State Department and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) that will benefit our country's national security. Further proposed cuts in FY27 would jeopardize decades of hard-fought gains and undercut the work of courageous diplomats and development workers around the world. I would like to take this opportunity to highlight a few key programs I believe this subcommittee should prioritize when drafting the fiscal year 2027 spending bill.

US-Africa relations have evolved with more emphasis on partnership, investment, and addressing global challenges. This is why it is vital to provide robust funding for trade capacity building assistance to implement the landmark African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). AfCFTA will strengthen development within the continent and reduce corruption to enable nations to be less dependent on aid. This also helps provide a much more friendly investment environment for U.S. business.

The Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) partners with the world's poorest countries that are committed to just and democratic governance, economic freedom and investing in their populations. This initiative has already helped lift millions out of poverty across the globe. These investments in core infrastructure and policy and institutional reforms are key interventions that are expected to benefit nearly 400 million people across 47 countries. MCC investments support stability and prosperity in partner countries all while furthering American interests.

PEPFAR is one of the most impactful lifesaving initiatives in the history of US foreign assistance. In the height of the global HIV-AIDS crisis, this initiative saved millions of lives across the world. It enables people with the virus to live a normal life and also prevent further transmission of the virus, especially from mother to child. The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (Global Fund) must remain consistent with the administration's pledge of \$4.6 billion over three a year funding cycle.

USAID has historically been one of the most effective soft power tools in U.S. diplomacy. The attacks, recissions, and reductions in force carried out by

President Trump, Secretary of State Marco Rubio, and the unqualified and immoral employees of “DOGE” have unquestionably weakened our nation while providing no benefit to U.S. foreign policy.

President Trump and Secretary Rubio have prioritized coercion over compassion in their diplomatic efforts. U.S. foreign policy cannot build its foundation on such principles. I urge this subcommittee to fund the programs that have proven time and again to have the greatest benefit to U.S. foreign policy and to our most noble national endeavor to reduce poverty, promote peace abroad, and heal the sick.