

Testimony of Chairman Michael T. McCaul
Before the Committee on House Administration
Re: 118th Congress Foreign Affairs Committee Funding Request
March 1, 2023

Chairman Steil, Ranking Member Morelle, and Members of the Committee, thank you for this opportunity to testify on the funding needs of the Committee on Foreign Affairs for the 118th Congress, along with my good friend Ranking Member Meeks.

Before I outline our budget request for this Congress, let me briefly tell you about our Committee. The House Foreign Affairs Committee dates back to the Continental Congress with Benjamin Franklin as its first Chairman. This Committee deals with the issue of war and peace. We conduct State Department and USAID oversight and accountability, export controls, weapons sales to our allies, AUMFs and declarations of war.

There is no doubt that weakness invites aggression, and the world is becoming an increasingly dangerous place. Our constituents only have to turn on their TV or look at the newsfeed on their phone to see the daily horrors of Russian aggression, China overly spying on America or Iran killing innocent protestors and destabilizing the middle east. In these tumultuous times, this Committee has never been more relevant with the global challenges and the threats we face from our foreign adversaries. It is our job, regardless of party, to help ensure America is as safe as possible. And I am asking for your support to help us to the best job possible for our country and for our constituents.

We have a Constitutional duty to conduct vigorous oversight of the Executive branch. When we do our jobs, we ensure the American people are more confident in our institutions. We are respectfully requesting a 13 percent budget increase for 2023 and 2024. This increase is in large part due to the creation of a seventh subcommittee – the Oversight and Accountability Subcommittee and with the hiring of four additional staffers for the majority and at least one for the minority, including several attorneys. This subcommittee will be crucial to ensure taxpayer

dollars are spent correctly by identifying and rooting out waste, fraud, and abuse at the State Department and other agencies we oversee.

We'd also like to conduct Full Committee and Subcommittee field hearings, which hasn't been done in the last few years due to the pandemic. It's important that Members travel to our communities to show Americans how our policies abroad have consequences at home. For example, I plan to hold a full Committee hearing at the United Nations this year to discuss accountability and reform we all know are truly needed. We will also highlight the malign activities of China and Russia at this and other International Organizations – as you all here know, strategic competition is not just done across the oceans. We'd also like to increase Member and staff domestic travel, so that they can visit State and Commerce Department facilities to conduct a more hands on level of oversight the past few years have made more than challenging.

As we speak, the largest land war in Europe since World War II is being waged. And our adversaries – Putin in Russia, Xi in China, Kim in North Korea, and the Ayatollah in Iran – are trying to redraw the maps. They are endangering our service members, our constituents, our companies, and our allies. We are truly facing a struggle for the global balance of power. Our work this Congress must be more aggressive than ever to counter these rising threats.

Thank you for your time and I look forward to answering any questions you may have.