

CONGRESSWOMAN SHEILA JACKSON LEE (TX-18)

STATEMENT BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE ON STATE AND FOREIGN OPERATIONS

MEMBER DAY HEARING ON STATE AND FOREIGN OPERATIONS APPROPRIATIONS ACT FOR FY2021 THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2020 HT-2, THE CAPITOL 2:00 P.M.

Chairwoman Lowey, Ranking Member Rogers and distinguished Members of the Subcommittee:

- As a senior member of the Judiciary, let me offer my appreciation and thanks to Chairwoman Lowey and Ranking Member Rogers for the difficult work and choices that must be made to produce a truly bipartisan State and Foreign Operations spending bill, and for their commitment to producing a bill that fairly reflects the interests and priorities of the American people.
- Madam Chairwoman, I understand that my entire statement will be made part of the record so I will keep my remarks brief.
- In the few minutes allotted I wish to highlight the diplomatic, peace and security, and development programs which warrant the Committee's continuing attention and support.

I. PROGRAMS

I support \$70 billion for the International Affairs Budget.

Our national security includes development and diplomacy programs, alongside a strong defense. Without this three-pronged approach, we will fail in our efforts to fight terrorism, support our allies, build new markets for U.S. goods and services, combat pandemics, and provide life-saving humanitarian assistance. The International Affairs Budget comprises just 1% of the total federal budget, but the programs it funds help to

make recipients more accountable and create a greater return on our own investments. It also serves as a force multiplier, encouraging contributions from our partners in the private sector and other governments. For example, the initial U.S. commitment of \$7 billion for Power Africa has leveraged over \$31 billion in private sector commitments to catalyze economic development in sub-Saharan Africa.

I support \$3.3 billion for International Security support for Israel

Today, Israel faces an unprecedented amount of threats stemming from the growing instability gripping in the Middle East. These challenges require a significant increase in Israeli defense expenditures. America must continue to help ensure that Israel has the resources to respond decisively to threats ranging from Hezbollah in the short term, to a potential nuclear armed Iran in the longer term.

I support \$110 million for the Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance

Escalating violence and instability in many parts of the world have placed increasing demands on ERMA, an emergency draw-down account that provides an important “safety valve” during emergencies. This will enhance our country’s ability to respond quickly to unanticipated crises, and expeditious, draw-down authority provided to the Secretary of State.

I support \$875 million for Child Survival and Maternal Health

While progress have been made, over 16,000 children still die each day - mostly from treatable causes like diarrhea, pneumonia, or malnutrition. Over 800 women die daily from complications with pregnancy and childbirth.

I support \$450 million for long-term drinking water supply, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) projects

Today, nearly 800 million people lack access to clean water and an additional 2.5 billion lack sanitation facilities, even pit latrines. Every day, women and girls spend a combined 200 million hours collecting water, limiting access to educational and employment

opportunities. A strong investment in WASH programs is critical not only for humanitarian reasons, but also for our own strategic interest.

I support \$2.95 billion for International Disaster Assistance

This funding is needed to provide lifesaving assistance following natural and man-made disasters, including conflicts, earthquakes, floods, droughts, and pandemics like the Ebola and Zika viruses.

I support \$265 million to Combat Trafficking in Persons

The State Department devotes critical assistance designed to prevent future crimes from taking place, assisting victims of trafficking and modern-day slavery, and investigating and prosecuting perpetrators of these heinous crimes. Assistance to victims as they transition to survivors is critical to the fight against trafficking.

I support \$70 million for the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative

The Caribbean Basin Security Initiative helps Caribbean partners improve their capacity to combat crime and violence.

I support \$7 million for Middle East Regional Cooperation Program

The Middle East Regional Cooperation (MERC) program fosters direct scientific cooperation between Arabs and Israelis. These competitive, peer-reviewed grants have produced cutting-edge research to eliminate diseases prevalent in the region, improve crop management in local desert climates, and advance new water reclamation technologies.

I support \$265 million for education and empowerment for girls

This funding will help promote the education and empowerment of adolescent girls including, but not limited to, support for the Let Girls Learn initiative.

I support \$425 million for Peace Corps.

Peace Corps is a vital element of America's soft power because a well-resourced Peace Corps enhances our credibility and moral standing in the world. New funding is the key to creating new and expanded Peace Corps programs in important countries, where the

United States seeks improved relations. In 2009, 15,000 Americans applied to serve in the Peace Corps, but only 4,000 were placed. Additional funding is needed to ensure that more Americans have the opportunity to serve their country in the Peace Corps.

General support for the Charles B. Rangel International Affairs Program

The Charles B. Rangel Program is a collaborative effort between Howard University and the State Department that seeks to attract and prepare outstanding young people, especially members of minority groups historically underrepresented in the Foreign Service, for careers as diplomats in the Department of State.

General support the USAID – Donald M. Payne Fellowship Program

The Donald M. Payne Fellowship Program encourages the application to USAID of members of minority groups who have historically been underrepresented in development careers. The Fellowship is modeled after the U.S. Department of State's Rangel Fellowship program.

I support \$40 million for the U.S. Institute of Peace

USIP serves as the key link between U.S. national security agencies and their global counterparts to prevent and resolve conflicts. Its mission and work are critical to our national security and foreign policy objectives.

I support \$640 million for Educational and Cultural Exchange programs

State Department Educational and Cultural Exchange programs are a proven and cost-effective way to remain internationally competitive, develop American leaders, engage current and future international leaders, and promote American values. These programs reach emerging leaders in more than 160 countries around the world, dramatically increasing America's global reach.

I support \$1.1 billion for the USAID's family-planning program

USAID provides critical family-planning funds to overseas health centers. USAID funded family-planning program have had important real-world effects on the health of

women and families worldwide, resulting in fewer unintended births, abortions, and miscarriages and reducing maternal and infant deaths.

I support \$7.1 million for diversity initiatives in the State Department

This funding will support diversity initiatives in the Department of State to increase workforce diversity and development programs.

I support \$4.88 billion for Development of HIV/AIDS Vaccine

Since 1985, HIV/AIDS has claimed an estimated 39 million lives. Today, 37 million people live with HIV and 2 million become infected annually. In addition to maintaining our commitments to PEPFAR and the Global Fund, we must invest in research and development of vaccines as part of a global strategy for an AIDS-free generation.

I support \$85 million Combatting Wildlife Trafficking Programs

This funding will help USAID advance the National Strategy to Combat Wildlife Trafficking, especially in Africa, Asia, and Latin and South America.

CONCLUSION

Madam Chairwoman, I thank you and the Ranking Member for your leadership and for extending me this opportunity to share my major priorities with the Subcommittee.