

Subcommittee on National Security, Department of State and Related Programs
Members Day
Prepared Testimony
Rep. Jim Costa (CA-21)

- Thank you for the opportunity to present my priorities to the subcommittee for the next fiscal year.
- We are living in a seminal moment in world history, requiring the United States to remain engaged abroad.
- Many of you recognize the value of what I call “smart power” tools such as foreign aid to advance U.S. national security interests, and this appropriations bill must make clear to the administration that this is a priority for the American people.

Foreign Aid

- I am a cosponsor of the Protect U.S. National Security Act, which prohibits funds to abolish USAID.
- I urge the committee to follow this example and exercise its Article One responsibilities, as Congress has not authorized the destruction of USAID.
- The United States’ active role on the international stage allows us to build and maintain strong relationships with our allies, together with which we project our power and ensure the prosperity of our fellow Americans.

Ukraine:

- Chief among U.S. national security priorities is a free and democratic Ukraine and a weakened, deterred Russia.
- Ukrainians are valiantly fighting and dying for all of us to protect democracy from autocrats and dictators.
- U.S. assistance to Ukraine has helped weaken and degrade the Russian military without putting U.S. troops in harm's way.
- The humanitarian and economic assistance funding that falls under the jurisdiction of this subcommittee is critical to this effort.
- Congress should robustly fund and require the Administration to continue assisting Ukraine in its defense against the dictator and war criminal Vladimir Putin.
- We must continue to assist Ukraine in areas including demining, documentation of human rights violations, the return of kidnapped children, and robust assistance for the Europe, Eurasia, and Central Asia Program Title to assist Ukraine and other democracies in the region.

Armenia

- A former Soviet Republic surrounded by hostile neighbors, Armenia is seeking to break ties with Russia, as the pro-Western Armenian government signed a [strategic partnership](#) with the United States in January.
- The Committee should provide funding to advance this partnership strengthening U.S.-Armenia relations, including:
 - Economic Assistance, Foreign Military Financing, and International Military and Education Training for Armenia;
 - Robust funding to support Armenian refugees from Nagorno-Karabakh who were forced to flee after Azerbaijan's unprovoked, rapid military takeover of their homeland;
 - Relatedly, the Biden Administration rightly declined to renew a waiver allowing U.S. military assistance to Azerbaijan. Congress should follow up on this progress by including language prohibiting military aid for Azerbaijan in this year's funding bill.
- Thank you for considering the above priorities and I urge you to include them in your draft of the Fiscal Year 2026 appropriations bills.