

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1802

To authorize the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative, to enhance the United States-Caribbean security partnership, to prioritize natural disaster resilience, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 27, 2023

Mr. ESPALLAT (for himself, Ms. SALAZAR, and Mr. GREEN of Tennessee) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

A BILL

To authorize the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative, to enhance the United States-Caribbean security partnership, to prioritize natural disaster resilience, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Caribbean Basin Secu-
5 rity Initiative Authorization Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

7 In this Act:

1 (1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMIT-
2 TEES.—The term “appropriate congressional com-
3 mittees” means—

4 (A) the Committee on Foreign Relations
5 and the Committee on Appropriations of the
6 Senate; and

7 (B) the Committee on Foreign Affairs and
8 the Committee on Appropriations of the House
9 of Representatives.

10 (2) BENEFICIARY COUNTRIES.—

11 (A) IN GENERAL.—The term “beneficiary
12 countries” means—

13 (i) Antigua and Barbuda;

14 (ii) the Bahamas;

15 (iii) Barbados;

16 (iv) Dominica;

17 (v) the Dominican Republic;

18 (vi) Grenada;

19 (vii) Guyana;

20 (viii) Jamaica;

21 (ix) Saint Lucia;

22 (x) Saint Kitts and Nevis;

23 (xi) Saint Vincent and the Grena-
24 dines;

25 (xii) Suriname; and

1 (xiii) Trinidad and Tobago.

2 (B) UPDATES.—The President or the Sec-
3 retary of State may add or remove one or more
4 countries from the list under subparagraph (A)
5 upon written notification to the appropriate
6 congressional committees.

7 **SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION FOR THE CARIBBEAN BASIN SECU-**
8 **RITY INITIATIVE.**

9 (a) AUTHORIZATION FOR THE CARIBBEAN BASIN SE-
10 CURITY INITIATIVE.—The Secretary of State and the Ad-
11 ministrator of the United States Agency for International
12 Development may carry out an initiative, to be known as
13 the “Caribbean Basin Security Initiative”, in beneficiary
14 countries to achieve the purposes described in subsection
15 (b).

16 (b) PURPOSES.—The purposes described in this sub-
17 section are the following:

18 (1) To promote citizen safety, security, and the
19 rule of law in the Caribbean through increased stra-
20 tegic engagement with—

21 (A) the governments of beneficiary coun-
22 tries; and

23 (B) elements of local civil society, including
24 the private sector, in such countries.

1 (2) To counter transnational criminal organiza-
2 tions and local gangs in beneficiary countries, in-
3 cluding through—

4 (A) maritime and aerial security coopera-
5 tion, including—

6 (i) assistance to strengthen capabili-
7 ties of maritime and aerial interdiction op-
8 erations in the Caribbean; and

9 (ii) the provision of support systems
10 and equipment, training, and maintenance;

11 (B) cooperation on border and port secu-
12 rity, including support to strengthen capacity
13 for screening and intercepting narcotics, weap-
14 ons, bulk cash, and other contraband at air-
15 ports and seaports; and

16 (C) capacity building and the provision of
17 equipment and support for operations tar-
18 geting—

19 (i) the finances and illegal activities of
20 such organizations and gangs; and

21 (ii) the recruitment by such organiza-
22 tions and gangs of at-risk youth.

23 (3) To advance law enforcement and justice sec-
24 tor capacity building and rule of law initiatives in
25 beneficiary countries, including by—

1 (A) strengthening special prosecutorial of-
2 fices and providing technical assistance—

3 (i) to combat corruption, money laun-
4 dering, human, firearms, and wildlife traf-
5 ficking, financial crimes, extortion, and
6 human rights crimes; and

7 (ii) to conduct asset forfeitures and
8 criminal analysis;

9 (B) supporting training for civilian police
10 and appropriate security services in criminal in-
11 vestigations, best practices for citizen security,
12 and the protection of human rights;

13 (C) supporting capacity building for law
14 enforcement and military units, including
15 professionalization, anti-corruption and human
16 rights training, vetting, and community-based
17 policing;

18 (D) supporting justice sector reform and
19 strengthening of the rule of law, including—

20 (i) capacity building for prosecutors,
21 judges, and other justice officials; and

22 (ii) support to increase the efficacy of
23 criminal courts; and

1 (E) strengthening cybersecurity and
2 cybercrime cooperation, including capacity
3 building and support for cybersecurity systems.

4 (4) To promote crime prevention efforts in ben-
5 eficiary countries, particularly among at-risk-youth
6 and other vulnerable populations, including
7 through—

8 (A) improving community and law enforce-
9 ment cooperation to improve the effectiveness
10 and professionalism of police and increase mu-
11 tual trust;

12 (B) increasing economic opportunities for
13 at-risk youth and vulnerable populations, in-
14 cluding through workforce development training
15 and remedial education programs for at-risk
16 youth;

17 (C) improving juvenile justice sectors
18 through regulatory reforms, separating youth
19 from traditional prison systems, and improving
20 support and services in juvenile detention cen-
21 ters; and

22 (D) the provision of assistance to popu-
23 lations vulnerable to being victims of extortion
24 and crime by criminal networks.

1 (5) To strengthen the ability of the security
2 sector in beneficiary countries to respond to and be-
3 come more resilient in the face of natural disasters,
4 including by—

5 (A) carrying out training exercises to en-
6 sure critical infrastructure and ports are able to
7 come back online rapidly following natural dis-
8 asters; and

9 (B) providing preparedness training to po-
10 lice and first responders.

11 (6) To prioritize efforts to combat corruption
12 and include anti-corruption components in programs
13 in beneficiary countries, including by—

14 (A) building the capacity of national jus-
15 tice systems and attorneys general to prosecute
16 and try acts of corruption;

17 (B) provide technical and financial assist-
18 ance to independent media and investigative re-
19 porting;

20 (C) increasing the capacity of national law
21 enforcement services to carry out anti-corrup-
22 tion investigations; and

23 (D) encouraging cooperative agreements
24 among the Department of State, other relevant

1 Federal departments and agencies, and the at-
2 torneys general of relevant countries.

3 (7) To promote the rule of law in beneficiary
4 countries and counter malign influence from authori-
5 tarian regimes, including China, Russia, Iran, Ven-
6 ezuela, Nicaragua, and Cuba, by—

7 (A) monitoring security assistance from
8 such authoritarian regimes and taking steps
9 necessary to ensure that such assistance does
10 not undermine or jeopardize United States se-
11 curity assistance;

12 (B) evaluating and, as appropriate, re-
13 stricting the involvement of the United States
14 in investment and infrastructure projects fi-
15 nanced by authoritarian regimes that might ob-
16 struct or otherwise impact United States secu-
17 rity assistance to beneficiary countries;

18 (C) monitoring and restricting equipment
19 and support from high-risk vendors of tele-
20 communications infrastructure in beneficiary
21 countries;

22 (D) countering disinformation by pro-
23 moting transparency and accountability from
24 beneficiary countries; and

1 (E) eliminating corruption linked to invest-
2 ment and infrastructure facilitated by authori-
3 tarian regimes through support for investment
4 screening, competitive tendering and bidding
5 processes, the implementation of investment
6 law, and contractual transparency.

7 (8) To support the effective branding and mes-
8 saging of United States security assistance and co-
9 operation in beneficiary countries, including by de-
10 veloping and implementing a public diplomacy strat-
11 egy for informing citizens of beneficiary countries
12 about the benefits to their respective countries of
13 United States security assistance and cooperation
14 programs.

15 (c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
16 authorized to be appropriated to the Department of State
17 and the United States Agency for International Develop-
18 ment \$82,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2024 through
19 2028 to carry out the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative
20 to achieve the purposes described in subsection (b).

21 **SEC. 4. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN.**

22 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the
23 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State,
24 in coordination with the Administrator of the United
25 States Agency for International Development, shall submit

1 to the appropriate congressional committees an implemen-
2 tation plan that includes a timeline and stated objectives
3 for actions to be taken in beneficiary countries with re-
4 spect to the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative.

5 (b) ELEMENTS.—The implementation plan required
6 by subsection (a) shall include the following elements:

7 (1) A multi-year strategy with a timeline, over-
8 view of objectives, and anticipated outcomes for the
9 region and for each beneficiary country, with respect
10 to each purpose described in section 3.

11 (2) Specific, measurable benchmarks to track
12 the progress of the Caribbean Basin Security Initia-
13 tive toward accomplishing the outcomes included
14 under paragraph (1).

15 (3) A plan for the delineation of the roles to be
16 carried out by the Department of State, the United
17 States Agency for International Development, the
18 Department of Justice, the Department of Defense,
19 and any other Federal department or agency in car-
20 rying out the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative, to
21 prevent overlap and unintended competition between
22 activities and resources.

23 (4) A plan to coordinate and track all activities
24 carried out under the Caribbean Basin Security Ini-
25 tiative among all relevant Federal departments and

1 agencies, in accordance with the publication require-
2 ments described in section 4 of the Foreign Aid
3 Transparency and Accountability Act of 2016 (22
4 U.S.C. 2394c).

5 (5) A description of the process for co-locating
6 projects of the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative
7 funded by the United States Agency for Inter-
8 national Development and the Bureau of Inter-
9 national Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs of
10 the Department of State to ensure that crime pre-
11 vention funding and enforcement funding are used
12 in the same localities as necessary.

13 (6) An assessment of steps taken, as of the
14 date on which the plan is submitted, to increase re-
15 gional coordination and collaboration between the
16 law enforcement agencies of beneficiary countries
17 and the Haitian National Police, and a framework
18 with benchmarks for increasing such coordination
19 and collaboration, in order to address the urgent se-
20 curity crisis in Haiti.

21 (c) ANNUAL PROGRESS UPDATE.—Not later than 1
22 year after the date on which the implementation plan re-
23 quired by subsection (a) is submitted, and annually there-
24 after, the Secretary of State, in coordination with the Ad-
25 ministrator of the United States Agency for International

1 Development, shall submit to the appropriate congres-
2 sional committees a written description of results achieved
3 through the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative, including
4 with respect to—

5 (1) the implementation of the strategy and
6 plans described in paragraphs (1), (3), and (4) of
7 subsection (b);

8 (2) compliance with, and progress related to,
9 meeting the benchmarks described in paragraph (2)
10 of subsection (b); and

11 (3) funding statistics for the Caribbean Basin
12 Security Initiative for the preceding year,
13 disaggregated by country.

14 **SEC. 5. PROGRAMS AND STRATEGY TO INCREASE NATURAL**
15 **DISASTER RESPONSE AND RESILIENCE.**

16 (a) PROGRAMS.—During the 5-year period beginning
17 on the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary
18 of State, in consultation with the Administrator of the
19 United States Agency for International Development, the
20 President and Chief Executive Officer of the Inter-Amer-
21 ican Foundation, and the Chief Executive Officer of the
22 United States International Development Finance Cor-
23 poration, shall promote natural disaster response and re-
24 silience in beneficiary countries by carrying out programs
25 for the following purposes:

1 (1) Encouraging coordination between bene-
2 ficiary countries and relevant Federal departments
3 and agencies to provide expertise and information
4 sharing.

5 (2) Supporting the sharing of best practices on
6 natural disaster resilience, including on constructing
7 resilient infrastructure and rebuilding after natural
8 disasters.

9 (3) Improving rapid-response mechanisms and
10 cross-government organizational preparedness for
11 natural disasters.

12 (b) STRATEGY.—Not later than 180 days after the
13 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State,
14 in coordination with the Administrator of the United
15 States Agency for International Development and in con-
16 sultation with the President and Chief Economic Officer
17 of the Inter-American Foundation, the Chief Executive
18 Officer of the United States International Development
19 Finance Corporation, and nongovernmental organizations
20 in beneficiary countries and in the United States, shall
21 submit to the appropriate congressional committees a
22 strategy that incorporates specific, measurable bench-
23 marks—

24 (1) to achieve the purposes described in sub-
25 section (a); and

1 (2) to inform citizens of beneficiary countries
2 about the extent and benefits of United States as-
3 sistance to such countries.

4 (c) ANNUAL PROGRESS UPDATE.—Not later than 1
5 year after the date on which the strategy required by sub-
6 section (b) is submitted, and annually thereafter, the Sec-
7 retary of State, in coordination with the Administrator of
8 the United States Agency for International Development,
9 shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees
10 a written description of the progress made as of the date
11 of such submission in meeting the benchmarks included
12 in the strategy.

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