

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1519

To require a United States security strategy for the Western Hemisphere,
and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 10, 2023

Mr. RUBIO (for himself and Mr. CASSIDY) introduced the following bill; which
was read twice and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

A BILL

To require a United States security strategy for the Western
Hemisphere, 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 “Western Hemisphere
5 Security Strategy Act of 2023”.

6 **SEC. 2. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

7 It is the sense of Congress that—

8 (1) the security, stability, prosperity, and state
9 of democratic governance in the countries of the
10 Western Hemisphere are vital to the national inter-

1 ests of the United States and to the national inter-
2 ests of such countries;

3 (2) the harmful and malign influence in Latin
4 America and the Caribbean of the Government of
5 the People’s Republic of China, the Government of
6 the Russian Federation, and the Government of the
7 Islamic Republic of Iran poses risks to—

8 (A) the people and countries of the West-
9 ern Hemisphere; and

10 (B) the national interests of the United
11 States;

12 (3) the United States should expand its engage-
13 ment in the Western Hemisphere by—

14 (A) strengthening its alliances and part-
15 nerships with countries in the Western Hemi-
16 sphere;

17 (B) fostering security cooperation among
18 countries in the Western Hemisphere to facili-
19 tate trade, investment, training, and humani-
20 tarian assistance in the near and long term;
21 and

22 (C) working with security and law enforce-
23 ment agencies in the Western Hemisphere—

24 (i) to address the shared challenges
25 of—

1 (I) narcotics trafficking, includ-
2 ing the trafficking of fentanyl, the il-
3 licit use of which is now the leading
4 cause of death among adults in the
5 United States between the ages of 18
6 and 45 years;

7 (II) human trafficking;

8 (III) other forms of illicit traf-
9 ficking;

10 (IV) transnational criminal orga-
11 nizations; and

12 (V) cybersecurity; and

13 (ii) to support the rule of law, democ-
14 racy, and human rights in the region;

15 (4) the United States should maintain credible
16 security capabilities dedicated to Latin America and
17 the Caribbean—

18 (A) to build partner country capacity;

19 (B) to support the delivery of humani-
20 tarian assistance and disaster relief;

21 (C) to deter acts of aggression; and

22 (D) to respond, if necessary, to regional
23 threats and threats to the national security of
24 the United States; and

1 (5) the Department of State and the Depart-
2 ment of Defense should continue to commit addi-
3 tional assets and increase investments in the West-
4 ern Hemisphere so as to maintain robust United
5 States security partnerships with countries in the re-
6 gion.

7 **SEC. 3. SECURITY STRATEGY FOR THE WESTERN HEMI-**
8 **SPHERE.**

9 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the
10 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State
11 and the Secretary of Defense shall jointly submit to the
12 appropriate committees of Congress a multi-year strategy,
13 to be known as the “Western Hemisphere Security Strat-
14 egy”—

15 (1) to enhance diplomatic engagement and se-
16 curity assistance and cooperation;

17 (2) to promote regional security and stability;
18 and

19 (3) to advance United States strategic interests
20 in the Western Hemisphere.

21 (b) ELEMENTS.—The strategy required by subsection
22 (a) shall include the following:

23 (1) A proposal for increasing and improving
24 United States bilateral and multilateral security as-

1 sistance and cooperation in Latin America and the
2 Caribbean.

3 (2) Activities to build the defense and security
4 capacity of partner countries in Latin America and
5 the Caribbean so as to enable such countries to de-
6 fend themselves against conventional and unconven-
7 tional threats, including cyberattacks.

8 (3) Activities to counter—

9 (A) malign influence by state actors;

10 (B) transnational criminal organizations
11 with connections to—

12 (i) illicit trafficking of gold, narcotics,
13 and weapons;

14 (ii) human trafficking and smuggling;
15 and

16 (iii) terrorism; and

17 (C) corruption and kleptocracy in govern-
18 ments of countries in the Western Hemisphere.

19 (4) Efforts to disrupt, degrade, and counter
20 transnational illicit trafficking, with an emphasis on
21 illicit narcotics and precursor chemicals that produce
22 illicit narcotics.

23 (5) Activities to increase transparency in, and
24 support for, strong and accountable defense, secu-
25 rity, and law enforcement institutions through insti-

1 tutional capacity-building efforts, including efforts to
2 ensure respect for human rights and direction and
3 oversight by civilian authorities.

4 (6) Programs and initiatives to enhance public
5 diplomacy and engagement with the people of the
6 Western Hemisphere for the purpose of dem-
7 onstrating that the security of their countries is en-
8 hanced to a greater extent if their countries are
9 aligned with the United States and democratic val-
10 ues rather than with authoritarian countries such as
11 the People’s Republic of China, the Russian Federa-
12 tion, and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

13 (7) Efforts to expand bilateral and multi-
14 national military training exercises with partner
15 countries in the Western Hemisphere.

16 (8) Humanitarian assistance and disaster relief
17 initiatives to support partner countries by promoting
18 the development and growth of responsive institu-
19 tions through activities such as—

20 (A) the provision of appropriate equip-
21 ment, training, and logistical support;

22 (B) transportation of humanitarian sup-
23 plies or personnel of foreign security forces;

24 (C) making available, preparing, and
25 transferring on-hand nonlethal supplies, and

1 providing training on the use of such supplies,
2 for humanitarian or health purposes to respond
3 to unforeseen emergencies;

4 (D) the provision of Department of State
5 humanitarian demining assistance; and

6 (E) conducting medical support operations
7 and medical humanitarian missions, such as
8 hospital ship deployments and base-operating
9 services, to the extent required by the oper-
10 ation.

11 (9) Continued support for the women, peace,
12 and security initiatives of the Department of State
13 to support the capacity of partner countries in the
14 Western Hemisphere—

15 (A) to ensure—

16 (i) the safety and security of women
17 and girls; and

18 (ii) that the rights of women and girls
19 are protected; and

20 (B) to promote the meaningful participa-
21 tion of women in—

22 (i) the defense and security sectors;
23 and

24 (ii) mediation and negotiation proc-
25 esses seeking to prevent, mitigate, or re-

1 solve violent conflict, in accordance with
2 the Women, Peace, and Security Act of
3 2017 (Public Law 115–68; 131 Stat.
4 1202).

5 (10) Professional military education initiatives,
6 such as the Department of State’s International
7 Military and Education Training program.

8 (11) A detailed assessment of the resources re-
9 quired to carry out such strategy and a plan to be
10 executed not later than fiscal year 2024.

11 (c) IMPLEMENTATION.—

12 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days
13 after the date on which the Western Hemisphere Se-
14 curity Strategy is submitted under subsection (a),
15 the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense
16 shall commence implementation of the strategy.

17 (2) BRIEFING.—Not later than 1 year after the
18 date on which the implementation of the Western
19 Hemisphere Security Strategy commences, and an-
20 nually thereafter, the Secretary of State and the
21 Secretary of Defense shall jointly provide a briefing
22 to the appropriate committees of Congress on the
23 implementation of the strategy.

1 (3) **TERMINATION.**—The authority under this
2 section shall terminate on the date that is three
3 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

4 (d) **APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS DE-**
5 **FINED.**—In this section, the term “appropriate commit-
6 tees of Congress” means—

7 (1) the Committee on Foreign Relations and
8 the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate; and

9 (2) the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the
10 Committee on Armed Services of the House of Rep-
11 resentatives.

12 **SEC. 4. REPORT ON EFFORTS TO CAPTURE AND DETAIN**
13 **UNITED STATES CITIZENS AS HOSTAGES.**

14 (a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 30 days after the
15 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State
16 shall submit to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the
17 Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the
18 House of Representatives a report on efforts by the
19 Maduro regime of Venezuela to detain United States citi-
20 zens and lawful permanent residents.

21 (b) **ELEMENTS.**—The report required by subsection
22 (a) shall include, regarding the arrest, capture, detain-
23 ment, and imprisonment of United States citizens and
24 lawful permanent residents—

1 (1) the names, positions, and institutional affili-
2 ation of Venezuelan individuals, or those acting on
3 their behalf, who have engaged in such activities;

4 (2) a description of any role played by
5 transnational criminal organizations, and an identi-
6 fication of such organizations; and

7 (3) where relevant, an assessment of whether
8 and how United States citizens and lawful perma-
9 nent residents have been lured to Venezuela.

10 (c) FORM.—The report required by subsection (a)
11 shall be submitted in unclassified form, but shall include
12 a classified annex, which shall include a list of the total
13 number of United States citizens and lawful permanent
14 residents detained or imprisoned in Venezuela as of the
15 date on which the report is submitted.

16 **SEC. 5. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.**

17 The Secretary of State, in coordination with the Sec-
18 retary of the Treasury, the Attorney General, the United
19 States Trade Representative, and the Chief Executive Of-
20 ficer of the Development Finance Corporation, shall pro-
21 vide technical assistance to partner countries in the West-
22 ern Hemisphere to establish frameworks or mechanisms,
23 similar to the frameworks set forth in section 721 of the
24 Defense Production Act of 1950 (50 U.S.C. 4565), for the
25 purpose of enabling such partner countries to screen, re-

1 view, and address the long-term financial sustainability
2 and national security implications of investments in stra-
3 tegic sectors or services, including energy, telecommuni-
4 cations, and infrastructure, by entities controlled or di-
5 rected by the governments of adversarial countries, includ-
6 ing—

- 7 (1) the People’s Republic of China;
- 8 (2) the Russian Federation;
- 9 (3) the Islamic Republic of Iran;
- 10 (4) the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea;
- 11 and
- 12 (5) any other country the Secretary of State de-
13 termines to be adversarial to the national security
14 interests of the United States.

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