



TO: Members of Congress
FROM: Amnesty International USA
DATE: March 26, 2019
RE: Appropriations Requests for Fiscal Year 2020

On behalf of Amnesty International USA (AIUSA) and our more than two million members and supporters across the country, we submit the following appropriations requests for Fiscal Year 2020 (FY20).

As Congress debates funding priorities in the coming months, we urge that the U.S.' contributions to global efforts ensure human rights are upheld, preserved, and protected. We request that the budgets for the Department of State (DOS) and the U.S. Agency for International Development's (USAID) topline accounts be robustly funded to support human rights functions.

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I. Asia

Country: Myanmar

Subcommittee: State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs

AIUSA recommends the Committee:

Under Subsection 4 of Section 7043(a), add the following Bill text changes:

- **Legal Determination:** The Secretary of State shall submit a report to Congress, 60 days after enactment of this provision into law, an assessment as to whether the serious human rights abuses perpetrated against the Rohingya ethnic minority constitute crimes against humanity and/or genocide. This report shall be made public.
- **Humanitarian Assistance:** AIUSA recommends Committee report language that changes the Rohingya language under Sec. 7043
 - Previous FY19 Report language: “The Committee recommends not less than the fiscal year 2018 assistance levels to address the needs of Rohingya refugees and affected communities in Cox’s Bazar and surrounding areas in Bangladesh. Such assistance should include water, sanitation, and protection services for women and children. The Committee urges the Secretary of State and USAID Administrator to assist humanitarian organizations in obtaining unrestricted access to Rohingya refugees.”
 - New FY20 Report language: “The Committee recommends at least 200 million more than the fiscal year 2019 assistance levels to address the needs of Rohingya refugees and affected communities in Cox’s Bazar and surrounding areas in Bangladesh and Myanmar. Such assistance should include durable housing, decongested camps, schooling, dignified livelihoods, water, sanitation, and protection services for women and children. The Committee urges the Secretary of State and USAID Administrator to assist humanitarian organizations in obtaining unrestricted access to Rohingya refugees.”
- **International Financial Institutions:** Require the Secretary of the Treasury to instruct the United States executive director of each international financial institution to use the voice and vote of the United States to support projects in Myanmar only if such projects are being made in accordance with international human rights law, including the right to non-refoulement, are done in consultation with all local communities, and are not entrenching discrimination and segregation.
- **Sanctions:** Require reporting by the Secretary of State, in consultation with the Secretary of Treasury, to the appropriate Congressional Committees, 90 days after enactment of this act, that details an international strategy for accountability and justice including imposing, in coordination with international partners at the United Nations, targeted financial sanctions on senior officials implicated in human rights violations and international crimes;
- **Prisoners of Conscience:** Substantially increase by no less than \$3,000,000 for civil society organization that work on the release of current prisoners of conscience and the support of former politically-motivated prisoners which includes livelihood training and mental health support for politically-motivated prisoners and their families, advocacy and documentation assistance, and legal support.
- **Rationale:** In 2017, the world was shaken by the Myanmar military’s [unconscionable](#) acts of violence against the Rohingya people. Almost two years later, a persistent culture of impunity remains for human rights violations committed by the security forces. Most perpetrators of

past and current human rights violations, including crimes under international law, have not been held accountable for their actions.

The U.S. State Department refuses to make a legal determination as to which crimes under international law were committed in Rakhine State, and media reports indicate that Sec. Pompeo has shelved a recommendation memo that would have called it crimes against humanity.¹ While the United States is the lead provider of humanitarian assistance to the crisis in Cox's Bazar more than 60% of the need remains unmet. Additionally, despite prisoner amnesties in April and May, prisoners of conscience remained in detention. The authorities continued to use a range of vaguely worded laws that restricted the rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly to arrest and imprison people solely for peacefully exercising their rights.

Issue: Uighurs

Subcommittee: State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs

AIUSA recommends the Committee:

Under Sec. 7043 create a new fund that goes for assistance towards the Uighur, Kazakh and other ethnic communities impacted by China's arbitrary detention of up to a million Uyghurs, Kazakhs, other ethnic Muslims, Christians, and other targeted groups in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region.

Funds appropriated by this Act under the heading "Economic Support Fund" shall be used, notwithstanding any other provision of law, following consultation with the appropriate congressional committees for:

- Civil Society organizations protection – Assistance shall be provided to help civil society organizations that are under constant harassment and intimidation, and reprisals, including legal defense, translation and interpretation, and access to multilateral and international forums.
- Diaspora group assistance – Mini-grants assistance shall be provided for diaspora community organizations representing the Uyghur, Kazakh, Christian, and other targeted groups impacted by China's arbitrary detention in Xinjiang. This assistance would be for translation, transcription of oral testimonies into written materials, multimedia dissemination of testimony and other documentation, legal defense, research and documentation costs, and core support.
- Human-rights defender support – assistance shall be provided for human-rights trauma recovery and rehabilitation that focus on supporting those who have escaped the so-called the "re-education camps" and their families.
- RFA: The Committee recommendation includes an addition \$1,000,000 for the Uyghur Service of Radio Free Asia to double daily radio broadcast from one to two hours and add capacity for television and video production of daily webcasts and a weekly interview program.

¹ https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/the-us-considered-denouncing-myanmar-for-crimes-against-humanity-it-didnt-happen/2018/11/14/8ae7bc30-cb6d-11e8-a85c-0bbe30c19e8f_story.html?utm_term=.aa820912308c

Issue: Asia Regional

Subcommittee: State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs

The Committee should appropriate and fully fund Title IV of “the Asia Re-assurance Initiative Act of 2018” titled – Promoting United States Value in the Indo-Pacific Region.

Rationale: The Asia Reassurance Initiative Act of 2018 authorizes funds for a holistic human rights strategy with respect to the Indo-Pacific. Subsequent funds need to be appropriated in order to ensure there is proper human rights personnel at Indo-Pacific embassies, a human rights strategy on engaging the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, Indo-Pacific human rights defenders and support youth people-to-people exchanges.

II. Americas

Country: Venezuela

Subcommittee: State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs

Request: AIUSA recommends that funds available for Venezuela be used to provide humanitarian assistance whose sole objective is to alleviate the suffering of the Venezuelan people. Such assistance should not be conditioned or politicized. AIUSA further recommends that funds under the Migration and Refugee Assistance account be channeled to assist neighboring countries who are receiving unprecedented numbers of Venezuelan migrants and refugees.

Rationale: The institutional crisis in Venezuela – fueled by deep political polarization and marked social deterioration in the country – has had a devastating impact on human rights. The government of Nicolas Maduro is engaging in a campaign of political repression and violating Venezuelans’ political and socioeconomic rights. Over 90 percent of Venezuelans now live in poverty, and over three million have been forced to flee the country. The crackdown on political dissent in the country continues to deteriorate. In January 2019, there were numerous mass protests against the Maduro government, particularly in the working-class areas where pro-government armed groups are concentrated. In 2019 Amnesty International concluded that the forces of the Maduro government engaged in a campaign of extrajudicial executions, arbitrary detention, and uses of excessive force. The team documented six extrajudicial executions at the hands of the Venezuelan Special Action Forces; two young men killed and one young man wounded by firearms deployed by the Bolivarian National Guard and the Bolivarian National Police; and the arbitrary detention of over 137 children and youth. All the targeted individuals had been linked to protests agitating for change and demanding access to basic goods, including food and medicine.

Country: Nicaragua

Subcommittee: State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs

Request: AIUSA requests that a portion of funds available under the Economic Support and Development account be allocated towards truth and reconciliation efforts following the brutal crackdown on political protests in April 2018, including the creation of an independent,

nonpartisan oversight mechanism to investigate extrajudicial executions and arbitrary detentions related to the protests. In addition, AIUSA recommends that a portion of the assistance available to Nicaragua be conditioned upon the government guaranteeing that human rights defenders and media workers are able to do their work without repression, attacks, harassment, and criminalization, and that those human rights organizations that were shut down, be allowed to operate openly again without any constraints.

Rationale: Following reforms to the social security system in April 2018, Nicaraguans began engaging in widespread protests. In response, the regime of Daniel Ortega in power since 2007, brutally cracked down on protesters, resulting in hundreds of deaths and thousands of injuries. While the reforms were ultimately scuttled, protestors continued to take to the streets to demand an end to the Ortega government and to the impunity in the wake of the deadly response to the protests. In June 2018 Amnesty International concluded that the Ortega government has adopted a strategy of indiscriminate repression, intending not only to stanch the protests but to punish those who participated and anyone who attempts to shine a light on the rampant corruption and rights abuses committed by the regime. The government has engaged in escalating attacks on the press, forcing over 60 journalists into exile.

In December 2018 the government cancelled the legal registration of the Nicaraguan Centre for Human Rights, a domestic NGO dedicated to educating Nicaraguans about their human rights and providing reporting on Nicaragua's compliance with its human rights guarantees. In December 2018, the Interdisciplinary Group of Independent Experts (GIEI, by its Spanish acronym) concluded that the Ortega government had committed crimes against humanity in its crackdown on the 2018 protests; that same month, the Nicaraguan government kicked out GIEI as well as the Special Follow-up Mechanism for Nicaragua, in a move the Organization of American States criticized as "further plac[ing] Nicaragua in the terrain of authoritarianism." Since 2018, many Nicaraguans have been forced to seek protection elsewhere, including in the United States.

Countries: El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala

Subcommittee: State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs

Request: AIUSA recommends that assistance to these countries, particularly under the Foreign Military Financing, International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement, and International Military Education and Training accounts, be conditioned on the continued operation of anti-corruption and pro-human rights enforcement and oversight mechanisms in each of the three countries. AIUSA suggests that the Committee require the Secretary of State to report periodically on the efforts of the three governments to:

- (1) Cooperate with commissions against corruption and impunity;
- (2) Fully comply with the recommendations and rulings of the Inter-American Commission and Court on Human Rights;
- (3) Investigate and prosecute in the civilian justice system members of the military and police forces who are credibly alleged to have violated human rights;
- (4) End the role of the military in internal policing;
- (5) Strengthen the independence of the judiciary and Office of the Attorney General;
- (6) Improve government transparency and accountability;
- (7) Protect the rights and life of human rights defenders, journalists, trade unionists, women,

LGBTI, environmental activists, and Indigenous leaders; and
(8) Establish and implement a policy of local consultation directly with the affected communities and civil society organizations in any development projects to ensure that it is in accordance with Free, Prior, and Informed Consent.

AIUSA recommends that of funds available under the Economic Support and Development Fund, \$1,000,000 shall be provided to the office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Honduras, \$500,000 to the office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Guatemala, and \$500,000 to support the programming of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in El Salvador, and no less than \$500,000 shall be available for initiatives to support the identification of the disappeared in all three countries.

Rationale: In Guatemala, President Jimmy Morales suddenly ended the mandate of the International Commission Against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG) in January 2019, and the government parliamentary body debated laws that would shrink the space for non-governmental organizations (Bill 5257) and provide amnesty to those suspected or found guilty of crimes against humanity that occurred during the internal armed conflict (Bill 5377). The Guatemalan government continues to engage in smear campaigns and the misuse of the criminal justice system to harass and intimidate human rights defenders continued. 26 human rights defenders were killed in Guatemala in 2018. Defenders working on land, territorial, and environmental issues were particularly at risk. People continued to flee the country to escape high levels of violence and impunity.

In El Salvador, increasing levels of violence continued to affect people's rights to life, physical integrity, education and freedom of movement. There were reports of excessive use of force by the security forces and of a surge in asylum applications by Salvadorans in various countries in the region.

In Honduras, a general climate of violence forced thousands of Hondurans to flee the country. Women, migrants, internally displaced people, and human rights defenders were particularly targeted with violence. A weak criminal justice system contributed to a climate of impunity. Security forces brutally repressed massive protests that have taken place after the Honduran presidential elections. Protesters took to the streets to denounce the lack of transparency around the presidential election on November 26. Security forces used excessive force against these protestors, including lethal weapons. According to the Ombudsperson, at least 31 people have been killed, and multiple cases of people injured by firearms or brutally beaten by security forces were reported, as well as cases that could amount to torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. Authorities arrested or detained hundreds of people during protests and the 10-day curfew implemented in December 2017.

Country: Mexico

Subcommittee: State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs

Request: AIUSA recommends that of the funds available for assistance to Mexico under the Foreign Military Financing (FMF) and International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement (INCLE) accounts, at least 25% be withheld until the Secretary of State determines and reports to the Committee that the Government of Mexico is:

- (1) Promptly, thoroughly, and impartially investigate and prosecute the killings of human rights defenders, which in 2018 alone, reached 48 HRDs assassinated;
- (2) Promptly, thoroughly, and impartially investigate and prosecute violations of human rights in civilian courts, including the killings at Tlatlaya in June 2014 and the enforced disappearance of 43 students at Ayotzinapa in September 2014, in accordance with Mexican law and international law;
- (3) Ensuring that authorities collaborate with the search mechanisms established under the General Law on Disappearances and that the specialized prosecutors' offices at the state and federal level are investigating and prosecuting enforced disappearances and disappearances committed by individuals;
- (4) Ensuring that special prosecutors' offices against torture at the state and federal level are investigating and prosecuting allegations of torture in accordance with the General Law to Prevent, Investigate and Sanction Torture and Other Cruel, Inhumane or Degrading Treatment;
- (5) Fully complying with the recommendations and rulings of the Inter-American Commission and Court on Human Rights.

AIUSA further recommends that any provisions allocating funding under the Migration and Refugee Assistance or Overseas Contingency Operations accounts to strengthen the Mexican asylum system clarify that such funding is not meant to render Mexico a "safe third country" or otherwise jeopardize the ability of asylum-seekers crossing via land through Mexico to exercise their right to seek asylum in the United States.

Rationale: Violence has continued to increase in Mexico. The lives of human rights defenders and journalists are in jeopardy: since the start of the new administration of Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador in December 2018, Amnesty International has been alarmed to learn that 14 human rights defenders have been reported killed. The armed forces continued to undertake regular policing functions, and President Lopez Obrador has proposed the creation of a National Guard supervised by the Ministry of Defense, which would effectively transfer policing functions to the military. Widespread arbitrary detentions continued to lead to torture and other ill-treatment, enforced disappearances and extrajudicial executions. Impunity persisted for human rights violations and crimes under international law. Mexico received a record number of asylum claims, mostly from nationals of El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala and Venezuela. Violence against women remained a major concern; new data showed that two thirds of women had experienced gender-based violence during their lives.

Country: Colombia

Subcommittee: State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs

Request: AIUSA recommends that of the significant funds available for Colombia under the Foreign Military Financing, International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement, and International Military Education and Training accounts, at least 25% be withheld until the Secretary of State certifies and reports to the Committee on Appropriations that:

1) Cases involving members of the Colombian military who have been credibly alleged to have violated human rights, including those in positions with command authority who ordered or covered up such crimes, are subject only to civilian court jurisdiction. This is especially critical in cases of extrajudicial execution "false positives.";

- 2) The Colombian military is cooperating with civilian prosecutors in such cases; and
- 3) Military officers credibly alleged to have committed gross violations of human rights are immediately removed from positions with command authority until the completion of judicial proceedings and appropriately punished if convicted;
- 4) The Government of Colombia is upholding its international obligations by holding accountable persons responsible for crimes against humanity, war crimes, and other gross violations of international law, and is not offering pardon to such persons;
- 5) The Government of Colombia is guaranteeing the rights of victims of the armed conflict to truth, justice, reparations, and non-repetition as one of the main pillars to eliminate the structural causes of violence in the country;
- 6) The Government of Colombia is continuing to dismantle any paramilitary structures that still exist despite their supposed demobilization in 2005 and promote criminal investigations into the alleged complicity of state officials with such structures;
- 7) The Government of Colombia is taking effective measures to stop the killings of human rights defenders and that judicial authorities are prosecuting those responsible for such attacks;
- 8) The Government of Colombia is taking effective steps to protect Afro-Colombian and Indigenous communities, incorporating gender-differentiated measures, and is respecting their rights, culture, and territory.

Rationale: While the signing of the Peace Agreement between the Colombian government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) in November of 2016 marked the official end of the five-decade old armed conflict between the two sides, violations of international humanitarian law and human rights continued to happen. The armed conflict intensified in some areas of Colombia as a result of armed confrontations between ELN guerrillas, paramilitary groups, and state security forces seeking to fill the power vacuum left by the demobilized FARC guerrillas. Paramilitary structures continued to operate in various parts of the country, despite their supposed demobilization under the terms of Law 975, passed in 2005. There has been a sharp increase in the amount of killings of social leaders since the Peace Agreement was signed, particularly hard hit have been Indigenous and Afro-descendant communities. In 2018 alone, over 126 human rights defenders were killed in Colombia, that is more than 1 out of every 3 HRDs killed globally.

III. Border Security and Immigration Detention

Subcommittee: Homeland Security

Request: AIUSA requests that Congress reject the following requests for unprecedented increases in enforcement and border security spending, including: (1) \$5 billion in border wall funding; (2) \$192 million to hire 750 new Border Patrol and Customs and Border Protection (CBP) agents; (3) \$314 million to hire an additional 1,000 Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officers; (4) \$2.7 billion for 54,000 immigration detention beds, an unprecedented high; and (5)

a Border Security and Immigration Enforcement Fund that would allow for the expansion of immigration detention capacity to over 60,000 (including 10,000 family detention beds).

Instead, Congress should seek to fund programs that promote protection screening at the southern border, including to facilitate fair and efficient access to asylum for individuals who express a fear of return to their home countries. These programs should immediately cease the practices of “metering” and the “Remain in Mexico” policy, both of which are ostensibly justified by DHS’s alleged capacity constraints. Congress should also fund an appropriate number of child welfare officers in response to the larger numbers of families and children seeking protection at the southern border. Rather than funding detention at historically high levels, Congress should instead fund and promote alternatives to detention programs, including the Family Case Management Program.

AIUSA additionally requests that any funds provided through the Unaccompanied Child Contingency Fund (for which the Department of Health and Human Services has requested \$738 million) be predicated upon investigation of abuses against children in the custody of shelters contracted by the Office of Refugee Resettlement and be directed towards robust alternatives to detention programs. Under no circumstances should funds be directed towards the operation of for-profit child detention centers.

Rationale: While the numbers of individuals apprehended at the border are at historic lows, the numbers of families, children, and asylum-seekers coming to the country to seek protection has increased in recent years and made up two-thirds of all individuals intercepted by CBP in February 2019. Because of the pernicious practice of “metering” – whereby individuals who lawfully present themselves at ports of entry and express their wish to seek asylum are pushed back to Mexico and forced to wait for weeks to months in precarious situations – an increasing number of individuals have been channeled into irregular, and significantly more dangerous, border crossings. This is illustrated by the fact that in February 2019, 66,450 migrants were apprehended between ports of entry. This phenomenon – which the President has deemed a “crisis” to justify historic levels of spending – is entirely of the administration’s own making. The real crisis is that increasing numbers of people, many of whom are seeking protection, are instead being pushed back at the southern border, denied the ability to make asylum claims and forced to wait in precarious conditions in Mexico; alternatively, they are being detained at for the duration of their proceedings. ICE is currently detaining a record 49,000 people per day, a practice that subjects individuals to significant trauma, makes their ability to contest their deportation proceedings exceedingly difficult, tears apart families, comes at significant taxpayer expense, and – because of the indefinite length of time individuals are subject to it and its often-deplorable conditions – may run afoul of the law. Rather than feeding the administration’s seemingly bottomless appetite for detention, Congress should instead promote humane alternatives, such as the now-defunct Family Case Management Program, and in no circumstances should fund the detention of children, as it is never in their best interests.

IV. Child, Early and Forced Marriage

Subcommittee: State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs

Request: We request no less than \$25,000,000 of the \$250,000,000 for adolescent girls be dedicated to the implementation of a coordinated and comprehensive effort to end child marriage and meet the needs of married girls in fulfillment of the mandated child marriage strategy provision of the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013. More than 12 million girls are married each year before their 18th birthdays. Married girls are often unable to complete their education, lack economic opportunities and face increased risks from early pregnancy, childbirth, and intimate partner violence, all of which often perpetuate a cycle of poverty. The civil society community engaged in working to end the practice of child marriage welcomes the opportunity to work with the Department of State, USAID and OMB to ensure that all relevant bureaus and offices of these entities are strategically engaged in a coordinated intra- and inter-agency response to child marriage and report on that work in a transparent manner.

Proposed Report Language: The Committee recommends funding at not less than \$25 million for programs that reduce the incidence of child and forced marriage and to meet the needs of already married adolescent girls. The Committee encourages the continued implementation of policies and programs that empower adolescent girls through diplomatic and development efforts, as well as coordination of all relevant U.S. government agencies, including but not limited to the U.S. Department of State, USAID, Peace Corps and the Millennium Challenge Corporation, to ensure the empowerment of adolescent girls worldwide, as a critical component to combat child marriage.

V. Europe and Central Asia

Country: Russia/North Caucasus, Georgia

Subcommittee: State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs

Request: Reject the president's proposed cut to U.S. Agency for Global Media (USAGM) budget from \$124 million in 201 to \$87 million in 2020.

Rationale: AIUSA is concerned about President Trump's request to slash the budget of the U.S. Agency for Global Media (USAGM), which oversees broadcasting by Radio Free Liberty/Radio Europe (RFE/RL), Voice of America, and other entities. The proposed cuts would necessitate the closure of RFE/RL's Georgian, Tatar-Bashkir, and North Caucasus language services, which provide accurate information in environments where media freedom is highly restricted.

In 2018, Amnesty International has extensively documented human rights violations in Russia in general and in the North Caucasus in particular. In March 2018, the campaign chief of Alexander Navalny, a prominent Russian opposition activist, was [detained](#) in the city of Ufa, capital of the Russian republic of Bashkortostan. In October 2018, an Amnesty International [researcher](#) observing demonstrations in the Ingushetian capital Magas was abducted, beaten, and subjected to a terrifying mock execution by masked men. In January 2019, Chechen authorities resumed large-scale [arrests](#) of individuals believed to be gay or lesbian, imprisoning and torturing them. This wave of arrests came on the heels of a similar purge in 2017 when authorities rounded up more than 100 men suspected of homosexuality and that at least three have been killed.

Most [media](#) in the Russia federation remains under effective state control and independent journalists are frequently attacked and sometimes killed. In March 2019, President Putin signed [a new law](#) that allows for the punishment of individuals who spread “fake news” and information which “disrespects the state.” The law is expected to further consolidate the government’s control over the media.

The State Department’s human rights report [highlights challenges](#) faced by independent media in Georgia. The Georgian government has taken multiple actions against critical media sources by attempting to impede funding disclosures, force changes to ownership, and place allies in charge of public broadcasting outlets.

In this restrictive climate, citizens of Georgia and the Russian Federation rely on information provided by U.S. government funded news sources including RFE/RL. The Trump administration’s proposed cuts would leave a lasting impact on freedom of information in Russia and Georgia. AIUSA urges congress to maintain funding to the USAGM account at least at prior levels.

Country: Eurasia Region

Subcommittee: State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs

Request: Reject the White House’s proposed consolidation of the Assistance for Europe, Eurasia and Central Asia (AEECA) and other separate accounts into a new Economic Support and Development Fund (ESDF) account and restore AEECA account funding to previous levels.

Rationale: The AEECA account was designed to provide U.S. government assistance to the 12 countries of the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. The AEECA account supports much needed programs including health sector reform, environmental protection, human rights promotion, and economic development for vulnerable populations.

A newly consolidated ESDF account that includes funds previously managed through the AEECA account would face substantial pressure to be disbursed based on the administration’s political calculus rather than traditional development objectives. A consolidated ESDF account similarly risks empowering the future presidential budget requests to scale down and ultimately zero out foreign assistance to Eurasia under the guise that current international assistance funding does not sufficiently support key strategic interests.

As such, Congress should retain a separate AEECA account and maintain funding at FY2019 levels.

Country: Hungary

Subcommittee: State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs

Request: Provide \$13 million dollars over four years to support civil society in Hungary.

Rationale: Over the past two years, Hungarian authorities enacted a series of laws plainly designed to muzzle civil society organizations critical of government policy. The LexNGO2017 law put in place multiple unjust obligations on nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) receiving

funding from abroad. LexNGO2018, a subsequent bill, introduced criminal penalties for a range of activities protected by international law, including the provision of basic assistance to asylum-seekers. As documented by [Amnesty International](#) and other human rights organizations, these laws post a serious threat to civil society and threaten the independence of Hungary's judiciary. This attack on civil society has not gone unnoticed in the international community. Partly owing to Hungary's attack on civil society actors, the European People's Party recently voted to [suspend](#) the Hungary's ruling Fidesz party from the European parliamentary bloc. The State Department's human rights report points to "political intimidation of and legal restrictions on civil society" as a major human rights issue in Hungary.

Still, Hungarian authorities have indicated no intention of abandoning their campaign against NGOs. Civil society continues to operate under severe pressure. Congress should express its support for Hungary's nongovernmental sector by providing \$13 million over four years. To prevent Hungarian officials from distributing the funds to political allies, Congress should include a limitation that stipulates that none of the funds appropriated by this Act may be made available for assistance for the central Government of Hungary.

VI. Gender-Based Violence and Gender Equality

Issue: Gender-based violence

Subcommittee: State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs

Request:

Gender-based violence (GBV): We request no less than \$200,000,000 to implement a multi-year strategy to prevent and respond to gender-based violence in both conflict and non-conflict settings.

- A. GBV is a horrific and widespread human rights abuse that requires a response. GBV occurs in many forms, including intimate partner violence; child, early, and forced marriage; rape; sexual assault; trafficking; female genital mutilation/cutting; and so-called "honor" killings.
- B. GBV occurs both in times of peace and in times of conflict and other humanitarian crises. Such violence is also an early warning sign of instability and violent conflict. Moreover, GBV undermine the effectiveness of existing U.S. investments in global health, development, and stability.
- C. Furthermore, we request no less than \$5,000,000 (aligned with FY17 enacted) for the purpose of supporting the UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Program on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C) to increase the abandonment of the practice and address the needs of those who have already undergone female genital mutilation/cutting. Additionally, we request new language requiring details on how this funding will be spent.

Proposed Report Language: The Committee notes that the November 2015 United States Department of State Evaluation of Implementation of the United States Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence Globally highlights a series of recommendations essential for continued and successful implementation of this Strategy. Among them is expansion of GBV-related programming, including through stand-alone and multi-sector programs, enhancement of public awareness of all forms of GBV, and expansion of externally-facing tools and resources related to GBV. Additionally, the Committee remains concerned at the extremely high rates of

gender-based violence resulting from violent conflicts and migration. The Committee recommends an increase in additional resources to fulfill to advance the implementation of the GBV Strategy, as recommended by the November 2015 Evaluation.

Issue: Gender equality

Request: We request robust funding be made available to promote gender equality in United States Government diplomatic and development efforts by raising the status, increasing the participation, economic empowerment, and ensuring the health and rights of women and girls worldwide.

Proposed Report Language: The Committee provides a total of \$1,900,000,000 for gender analysis, gender mainstreaming, and programs to promote women's political leadership, as well as implement multiyear strategies to prevent and respond to gender-based violence, increase women's economic empowerment, and support execution and monitoring of a strategy to implement the Women, Peace and Security Act.

VII. Gun Violence

Topic: Robustly fund evidence-based research

Request: Congress should acknowledge firearm violence is a public health issue, repeal the Dickey Amendment and robustly fund evidence-based research, including by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and others, on causes and effects of gun violence in order to research and develop viable strategies for gun violence prevention and to inform policy making aimed at reducing firearm related deaths and injuries.

Rationale: The significant impact of firearms on those living in the United States is irrefutable and yet, for more than 20 years, federal legislation known as the Dickey Amendment has worked to restrict federal funding for firearm research through publicly-funded entities. These restrictions have had a substantial negative effect on gun violence research and, for over two decades, researchers, policy makers, and experts have been inadequately resourced to fill huge gaps in knowledge about the causes, consequences, and prevention of gun violence in the U.S. The U.S. has also failed to fund research and the development of all potential mechanisms of firearms safety to inform evidence-based policy-making aimed at reducing firearms violence, and/or to allow the release of identifying information regarding firearm acquisition, possession and use, for purposes of conducting further firearm research on gun violence prevention policies.

Topic: National Instant Criminal Background Check System

Subcommittee: Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies

Request: Robustly fund the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) in order to allow the system to implement the more comprehensive and rigorous background checks called for in H.R. 8 and H.R. 1112 and call upon the Senate to pass S.42 (the Background Check Expansion Act).

Rationale: Federal law does not currently require universal comprehensive background checks with each and every transfer or purchase of a firearm in the U.S. As a result, studies have shown that 22% of all firearm acquisitions are conducted without any background check. Even when a background check is required, it may not be adequately comprehensive or accurate because relevant records are often not properly and/or rapidly submitted for inclusion in state and federal databases. The House of Representatives made history in February when it passed H.R. 8 and H.R. 1112 and while passage by the Senate is the next step in the legislative process, the House of Representatives must provide the resources necessary to make robust background checks meaningful and effective.

Topic: Gun violence prevention and intervention programs

Request: Congress should study and fund successful state based gun violence prevention and intervention [programs](#) to reduce the high levels of firearm violence in low-income and minority communities, recognizing the long-term socio-economic impact of gun violence. This should include long term adequately-funded, evidence-based projects tailored towards specific social, economic and cultural contexts, and working in partnership with the affected communities.

Rationale: Urban firearm violence, and specifically firearm homicide, disproportionately impacts minority communities and particularly young black men. For example, while African Americans represented approximately 13% of the U.S. population in 2017, they made up 58.5% of gun homicides nationwide and a black male aged 15-34 was more than 10 times more likely to die from firearm homicide than a white male of the same age group. In fact, firearm homicide was the leading cause of death for black men and boys ages 15-34 in 2017.

The causes of gun violence in communities of color are multi-faceted and there are deep-seated issues around poverty, discrimination, and economic, social and cultural rights that require further research and analysis in order to inform additional recommendations. Much of the gun violence in urban communities is attributed to gang activity. It is clear is that gang members are likely to own guns with many claiming to own more than one, and that armed gang members exert control over the streets in their self-designated territories, retaliate against rival gangs in other territories, and often endanger the lives of uninvolved people who are caught in the crossfire. Firearms used in violent crimes across the U.S., including those used in communities of color have often been trafficked, or deviated out of the legal commerce stream and into the illegal market. Most gang killings remain unsolved and unprosecuted, resulting in impunity for the perpetrators, and feeding the cycle of gun violence. Reducing access to firearms is a key element in reducing gun violence in these communities.

Where patterns of firearms possession and use lead to chronic insecurity, States' obligations are to protect life and ensure security for all through human rights-compliant law enforcement; community interventions and tightening regulations on firearms possession and use.

The solutions to urban firearm violence in the United States must include legislation which disrupts the illegal firearm market as well as violence intervention and reduction initiatives. In fact, several federal and state- funded initiatives have proven effective in decreasing gun violence. Most importantly, they have been able to combat and reduce gun violence while simultaneously offering life-altering opportunities for individuals living in high-crime neighborhoods. Unfortunately,

despite the success and numerous available models for these programs, lack of funding and lack of political will have prevented sustained and adequate implementation of these initiatives.

VIII. Human Rights Commissions

Subcommittee: Legislative Branch

Request: Congress should appropriate no less than \$250,000 for the salaries and expenses of professional staff for the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission, a vital bipartisan commission of the House of Representatives working to raise awareness of human rights issues in the U.S. Congress. Further, the Senate should establish and suitably fund an equivalent human rights commission, as currently contained in S. Res. 80, a resolution establishing the John S. McCain III Human Rights Commission.

Rational: The Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission's mission states, in part, that its mandate is to "promote, defend and advocate internationally recognized human rights norms as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and other relevant human rights instruments, in a nonpartisan manner." The work of the Commission complements the traditional work of Congressional committees by holding hearings and briefings on issues that transcend the jurisdiction and interests of multiple committees – including Appropriations, Armed Services, Foreign Affairs, Government Oversight, and Judiciary – and covering topics that the committees do not have time to cover at such depth. Foreign governments pay close attention to the Commission's hearings and briefings, which also serve as an important platform for civil society to share with Congress its concerns and expertise. The Commission also helps focus the efforts of its bipartisan members in support of fundamental freedoms and the rights to life, liberty, and freedom from torture or government-led repression around the world.

IX. Human Rights Defenders

Subcommittee: State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs

Amnesty International calls for the immediate and unconditional release of all human rights defenders (HRDs) imprisoned solely for their peaceful human rights work. HRDs around the world are routinely the target of judicial harassment, smear campaigns, intimidation, death threats, arbitrary detention, sexual violence, assault, torture, enforced disappearances, and even assassination by governments. Since the signing of the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders in 1998, over 3,500 human rights defenders have been killed worldwide. In 2018 alone, 321 human rights defenders were assassinated for their work, up from 312 killed in 2017.

Amnesty International further calls on governments to investigate all murders of HRDs and to pursue the prosecution of those found responsible for those murders, including the intellectual authors of such crimes. We also call for the implementation of concrete measures to protect HRDs including the repeal of any legislation that criminalizes or restricts the work of HRDs.

Recommendations for Congress:

- Press governments to immediately suspend, investigate, and prosecute state actors implicated in attacks or threats against human rights defenders and to end false prosecutions of human rights defenders.
- Require that the State Department and USAID hold regular consultations with civil society organizations in country and in Washington, to evaluate HRD Programs and to implement said organizations recommendations. These consultations should not be limited to USAID grantees and should include a full range of civil society groups, outside the capitols and include those addressing numerous different human rights issues. The State Department and USAID should then provide Congress with a report on the situation of HRDs that includes this civil society assessment of the impact of U.S. funded programs in support of HRDs.
- Increase funding for State Department and USAID programs, such as the Human Rights Defenders' Fund and Lifeline: The Embattled NGOs Assistance Fund.
- Ensure that the State Department and US Embassies worldwide regularly and publicly recognize the importance and legitimacy of HRDs and their work.

Urge governments to end impunity for security force abuses against human rights defenders, journalists, trade unionists, women, LGBTI, environmental activists, and Indigenous leaders. This is particularly important where security forces have used excessive and even lethal force against peaceful protesters with no accountability. According to Frontline Defenders annual report, 77% of those human rights defenders who were killed in 2018 were those working on land, Indigenous Peoples', and environmental rights. Many of those killed were documenting human rights abuses committed by companies involved in large-scale development projects. Strengthening the government's protection mechanisms to protect human rights defenders is key, not only with one-time funding, but long-term sustainability. The international community must encourage progress in investigating and prosecuting attacks and threats against human rights defenders, including the intellectual authors of such crimes. The U.S. government should press governments to suspend, investigate, and prosecute state actors implicated in attacks or threats against human rights defenders and to end false prosecutions of human rights defenders. Strong diplomacy is needed to press governments in particular to ensure their actions and public statements do not place defenders in jeopardy. Partnerships with civil society should be expanded to ensure emergency evacuation and safe shelter for defenders in urgent need of protection.

X. Humanitarian Assistance and U.S. Refugee Admissions Program

Issue: U.S. Refugee Admissions Program

Subcommittee: State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs

Report Language Request: The Committee believes U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) serves as a reflection of U.S. humanitarianism, as well as the nation's strategic interests. The USRAP provides for the safe resettlement of some of the world's most vulnerable refugees - not only saving lives but strengthening U.S. national security by providing support and shared

responsibility for strategic allies and regions. Therefore, the Committee recommends [\$2.7 billion in FY 2020 for the Refugee and Entrance Assistance account and \$3.6 billion in FY20 for the Migration and Refugee Assistance Account.

Rationale: Since 2017, Administration actions have resulted in a substantial reduction in the admission of refugees to the United States, including the lowest refugee admission ceiling ever set. It is important for Congress to reaffirm U.S. humanitarian values, and diplomatic and strategic interests in refugee protection and resettlement, to lead the country back to more historically typical refugee admissions levels, and thereby rescue refugees currently in harm's way, reunite separated refugee families, and allow welcoming U.S. communities to experience all of the benefits that refugees bring.

Issue: Emergency Refugee and Migrant Assistance

Subcommittee: State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs

Report Language Request:

The committee recognizes with disapproval that, in the past two years, the Administration has not utilized the Emergency Refugee and Migrant Assistance (ERMA) account. The committee rejects the administration's multiple attempts to eliminate this emergency Presidential drawdown account, as it allows the U.S. to respond quickly and effectively to unanticipated crises in order to support regional stability. As an expression of continued support for the account, the committee provided \$1 million for ERMA and urges the President to make use of the account, as his predecessors did.

Rationale: ERMA has been fully funded at its authorized \$100 million level and topped off by Congress to indicate their continued support for the account. Unfortunately, the Administration has refused to utilize this tool and has called for ERMA to be zeroed out. It is critical that Congress safeguard this emergency account and urge the President to make use of it, as his predecessors did. The need is clear given that we are experiencing the worst displacement crisis the world has ever seen. Examples of how ERMA has provided lifesaving support in recent years include food, shelter, health care and/or protection for internally displaced persons (IDPs) and/or refugees from Mali, Sudan and Ethiopia (2012); from Syria (2013); and from South Sudan (2014). ERMA was also used to meet unanticipated costs in the refugee admissions program (2016).

Issue: Refugee Admissions Reporting Requirements

Subcommittee: State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs

Report Language Request:

(a) The Committee is concerned about the slow pace of refugee admissions in Fiscal Year 2018 and the first two quarters of Fiscal Year 2019 and would like to identify where the delay is occurring and why. The Committee directs the Department of State to submit to the Committee and make available to the public on its website not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this act the following information, broken down by applicants' nationality, most recent country of residence, and religion.

- (1) For each of Fiscal Years 2019, 2018, 2017, 2016, 2015 and 2014, the average time of each step of the refugee screening process, the number of approvals and denials of refugee applications the agency issues, the number of cases placed on hold, the number of cases that are pending, the reasons that cases were placed on hold, and the length of time for which cases were on hold or pending, including corresponding reasons for delayed resolution;
- (2) For the current fiscal year, the number of refugees in theUSRAP pipeline: pre-USCIS interview; post-USCIS interview; approved for travel; denied; and admitted, including specifically for follow-to-join cases and for applicants for the Direct Access Program for U.S.-Affiliated Iraqis both residing in Iraq and outside of Iraq;
- (3) Any and all changes made to the USRAP process since January 20, 2017, as well as changes in refugee processing times, including for follow-to-join cases and Iraqi Direct Access Program applicants, based on the implementation of Executive Orders 13,769, 13,780, and 13,815; and
- (4) Any steps that the Department, or any agency or entity thereof, has taken or is taking to increase refugee admissions and/or improve efficiency of processing for Iraqi Direct Access Program applicants.

(b) For each Fiscal Year following the date of enactment of this act, if by the end of the second quarter of the Fiscal Year the number of refugees admitted through USRAP is less than fifty percent of the Presidential Determination on Refugee Admissions for that Fiscal Year, the Committee directs the Department to submit to the Committee and make available to the public on its website not later 30 days after the end of the second quarter of that Fiscal Year the following information for the first and second quarters of that Fiscal Year, broken down by quarter and by applicants' nationality, most recent country of residence, and religion:

- (1) The average time of each step of the refugee screening process, the number of approvals and denials of refugee applications the agency issues, as well as the number of cases placed on hold and that are pending and the length of time for which cases were on hold or pending, including corresponding reasons for delayed resolution;
- (2) The number of refugees in the USRAP pipeline: pre-USCIS interview; post-USCIS interview; pending travel; denied; and admitted, including specifically for follow-to-join cases and Iraqi Direct Access Program applicants residing in Iraq and outside of Iraq.
- (3) A remedial plan describing the steps that the Department, and any agency or entity thereof, will take to ensure that the Department is doing everything within its power to meet the Presidential Determination on refugee admissions for that Fiscal Year.

(c) The Department shall also submit to the Committee and make available to the public on its website, not later than 30 days after the end of the Fiscal Year, the information described in subsection (b) if at the end of the Fiscal Year the number of refugees admitted through USRAP is less than one hundred percent of the Presidential Determination on refugee admissions for that Fiscal Year.

(d) If the pace of refugee admissions in any Fiscal Year triggers the reporting requirements in subsections (b) or (c), the Department shall brief the Committee within 14 days of submitting the information required by subsection (b) or (c) and no later than 60 days following the close of the relevant quarter.

Rationale: The Administration did not meet even half of its FY18 Presidential Determination, which was already set at a historically low 45,000. In FY19, the Administration is not on track to meet the new-record-low Presidential Determination of 30,000. If the pace of arrivals remains constant, the United States will only resettle around 20,000 refugees in FY19. Congress needs to exercise oversight and ensure that the Administration is carrying out The Refugee Act of 1980 in good faith.

Table: FY2020 Funding Needs for Refugees and Displaced Persons in Certain Department of State Accounts

Refugees and Displaced Persons Accounts	FY19 Enacted	FY20 President's Request	FY20 RCUSA Recommended
Migration and Refugee Assistance	\$3,432,000,000 ²	\$365,062,000 ³	\$3,604,000,000
International Disaster Assistance	\$4,385,312,000 ⁴	<i>Proposed to combine into a new account within USAID⁵</i>	\$4,500,000,000
Emergency Migration and Refugee Assistance	\$1,000,000	\$0	\$1,000,000 ⁶

XI. Investigations of Civilian Casualties

Subcommittee: Defense

Report Language Request:

The military should ensure it allocates adequate funding to ensure all combatant commands have the ability to conduct thorough investigations of civilian casualties and potential violations of the laws of war resulting from their actions, and to respond appropriately and comprehensively to help affected communities, including through official acknowledgement of harm, payments and other forms of assistance to affected civilians, and by holding any perpetrators of war crimes accountable.

² Includes \$1,404,124,000 in Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funding.

³ Proposes to bifurcate MRA funding and move overseas funding portion into a new bureau in USAID while maintaining this funding for the USRAP. This includes drastic funding cuts for all impacted accounts. RCUSA opposes this proposal.

⁴ Includes \$584,278,000 in Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funding.

⁵ Proposes to eliminate funding for IDA account in favor of the new International Humanitarian Assistance (IHA) account, which will support the activities of USAID's new Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (which merges the Offices of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) and Food for Peace and the overseas MRA funding). This includes drastic funding cuts for all impacted accounts. RCUSA opposes this proposal.

⁶ Because the ERMA fund is reportedly already topped out at \$100 million, RCUSA seeks \$1 million to support this account and encourages appropriators to direct the State Department to utilize ERMA funds for emerging and urgent crises and report to Congress regularly on how these funds have been used.

XII. Middle East

Issue: US Arms Sales to Saudi Arabia and UAE

Request: US Arms Sales to Saudi Arabia and UAE and their conduct in Yemen Conflict
AIUSA recommends that all weapons sales and military assistance to the Saudi- UAE led coalition and its members, mainly the kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates, be suspended immediately due to that coalition's conduct in Yemen and the war crimes being committed.

Rationale: In May 2017 President Trump announced the conclusion of a \$110 billion arms deal with Saudi Arabia. It is clear and well documented that the Trump administration sells substantial amounts of weapons to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, many of which are deployed in the Saudi-led coalition's war in Yemen. That war, waged with little concern for civilian lives and international law, has to date caused at least 10,000 civilian casualties. 130 children are dying every day from malnutrition or cholera.

Amnesty International has documented how U.S. munitions sold to the coalition were used against civilians, often to devastating effect. In one case, a U.S.-manufactured Raytheon Paveway laser-guided bomb killed 16 civilians and injured 17 more. Media reports indicated that a bomb supplied by the U.S. was responsible for killing 40 children in August 2018. Concurrently, Amnesty International and others have documented that the Saudi-led coalition and their Yemeni allies have run a network of secret prisons in Southern Yemen where Yemenis are disappeared, tortured and sometimes killed.

Recommendations:

Pass the Saudi Arabia Accountability and Yemen Act of 2019, which suspends the supply of weapons, munitions and related military equipment to Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and other parties to the conflict in Yemen.

XIII. Sub-Saharan Africa

Country: Cameroon

For the last 35 years under the leadership of President Paul Biya, the country's military has enjoyed absolute impunity as it has committed egregious human rights violations. These abuses worsened as the country began to be targeted by the armed group Boko Haram in 2013. Security forces arbitrarily detained persons suspected of being supporters or members of Boko Haram. They committed extrajudicial executions, torture, and destroyed villages and farmlands with impunity. The security forces have implemented similarly brutal tactics in response to escalating unrest in the Anglophone regions of the country. Much more must be done to prevent more Cameroonians from joining armed separatist's groups. Pressure for reform and respect for human rights in Cameroon must be raised with the same level of importance by the highest levels of U.S. Government.

Recommendations for Congress:

Suspend security assistance to the Cameroonian military until Congress has received confirmation that the Cameroonian government has acted to hold all individuals implicated in acts of torture and other serious human rights violation accountable.

Country: Ethiopia

In 2019 Ethiopia will have to make good on the promises of reform ushered in by the appointment Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali at the beginning of April 2018. While the government has released over 10,000 political prisoners, much of the legislation that resulted in their incarceration remains in place. A number of banned opposition groups have returned to the country and have held events, but sweeping repressive legislation is still the law and could be enforced at any given moment. At the same time impunity for human rights violations by the security forces before and during the last two states of emergency remains in place and will increasingly shape a difficult, transition period of negotiation between the country's stakeholders. Ethnically based violence is on the rise and the government is under increasing criticism both failing to protect people while also still targeting youth activists in mass arrests.

Recommendations for Congress:

Increase funding for capacity building programs to rebuild and strengthen the rule of law within the Ethiopian Judiciary.

Country: Nigeria

The Nigerian security forces have been linked to serious human rights violations in their counterinsurgency campaign against the armed group Boko Haram. Violations have included extrajudicial executions, torture, arbitrary arrest and detention, and rape, and have contributed to a culture of impunity and increasing levels of violence in states in the country's north east and middle belt regions. Security forces have also destroyed homes and livelihoods contributing to an internally displaced population (IDPs) of nearly two million people. The Nigerian Government's failure to hold anyone accountable for the abuses, in some cases denying outright the allegations and in other cases justifying the activities of the military or launching investigations whose findings are never released. The increasing levels of violence is driving a rise in the number of IDPs could also further destabilize the country.

Recommendations for Congress:

Freeze planned military transfers to the Nigerian military until such a time that Congress is convinced that credible and transparent steps have been taken by the Nigerian government toward rebuilding professional, accountable security services in Nigeria. Increase or maintain 2018 levels of humanitarian support to Nigeria for persons displaced as result of the Bok Haram insurgency and the Farmer- Herder conflict in the Middle Belt regions of Nigeria.

XIV. Unaccompanied Children

Subcommittee: Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Report Language Request:

The Committee recommends appropriation of \$1,800,000,000 to serve “unaccompanied alien children” (UAC).

The Committee directs ORR to terminate its May 2018 Memorandum of Agreement with ICE and CBP on information sharing relating to unaccompanied children, potential sponsors, and their household members. In order to ensure safe and stable placements for children, the Committee directs ORR to prioritize funding for increased screening of sponsor placements prior to release (home studies) and social services following release (post-release services). ORR should arrange for such services to be provided by NGOs with experience and expertise in working with these children.

The Committee directs ORR to comply with its legally mandated duties as outlined in Section 426 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002, Section 235 of the William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2008, and the 1997 *Flores* settlement agreement. The Committee further directs ORR to prioritize funding for expanded use of community-based residential care placements (including foster care and small group homes) and small-scale shelters. ORR should arrange for such services to be provided by NGOs with experience and expertise in working with these children.

The Committee directs the Secretary of Health and Human Services, in collaboration with the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), to submit to Congress and make publicly available a quarterly report that includes the number of children separated from their family by DHS at the border and who have been referred to ORR care. For each case, this report shall include information on the familial relationship of the separated individuals, the reason for separation, including specific grounds for separation, and the sector where separation occurred.

Rationale: Increased violence, coupled with a lack of government protection, remain the primary factors forcing children to flee Central America. In FY 2018, ORR received over 49,000 unaccompanied children referred to its care. RCUSA’s request of \$1.8 billion reflects the funding needs of ORR’s UAC program. In FY18, in addition to its enacted appropriation, the UAC line received an LHHS internal transfer of [\\$266 million](#), [\\$180 million](#) from a discretionary public health fund, and the use of an additional [\\$17 million](#) that had been transferred in FY17 but used in FY18. In FY19, ORR’s UAC program used \$385 million in transfers from refugee services and elsewhere in the LHHS budget, in addition to its enacted appropriation. Currently, there are significant gaps in adequate home study and post-release service provision. Many UAC have experienced trauma and prolonged family separation and yet, ORR provides for home studies to assess the safety and appropriateness of sponsors for only seven percent of children released from its care and provides post-release services for only 20 percent of children released to families. Inadequate funding for these critical services has resulted in children being released to situations of abuse, abandonment, neglect, and trafficking. Proper funding for home studies and post-release services is the best way to prevent, predict, and mitigate such situations and better protect children. Thus, we recommend that the Committee directs ORR to prioritize these family reunification services for an increased number of UAC who are released from ORR’s care. Home studies and post-release services for UAC help ensure safe family reunifications; mitigate the risk for family breakdown; facilitate children’s integration into their communities; and assist with UAC’s

ability to comply with their immigration court proceedings, including better attendance at immigration court proceedings. With these policy goals in mind, ORR should develop a spectrum of individualized service options for children released from its custody, including short-term intensive services, case management, and longer-term post-release services.

For those who remain in ORR custody, we recommend that the Committee directs ORR to place UAC in community-based care, NGO child welfare shelters, and other child-friendly settings that reflect the best interest and needs of such children, including therapeutic placements and foster homes for young children and pregnant and parenting teens. ORR should ensure sufficient bed space in such settings rather than placing children in large-scale institutional facilities.

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