

Senator Grassley's Letter

Thank you for taking the time to contact me regarding the funding of U.S. foreign assistance programs. As your senator, it is important to me that I hear from you.

I appreciate hearing of your support regarding the international affairs budget of the United States. U.S. foreign aid has become an integral aspect of our nation's foreign policy by promoting global peace, security, and development for countries in crisis. Most U.S. foreign aid goes to non-profit contractors working in low-income countries in order to foster economic and human development. It is generally not provided to governments. You can explore U.S. foreign spending by sector and country online at <https://www.foreignassistance.gov>.

I certainly understand increased humanitarian concerns arising around the globe in regions impacted by war. I have heard from Iowans concerned regarding Russia's unprovoked invasion in Ukraine, increased Middle East tensions with Iran and its proxies, conflict in African countries like Sudan, South Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I want to assure you that I support placing an emphasis on life-saving humanitarian aid, especially in conditions which these countries face.

It may interest you to know that on March 15, 2025, H.R.1968, the Full-Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2025 was signed into law and will continue funding the federal government operations through the end of FY25. H.R.1968 mostly funds the federal government at FY24 levels.

FY24 funding levels for the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs included \$29.3 billion for bilateral economic assistance and \$8.9 billion for international security assistance. The breakdown of bilateral economic assistance included \$10.03 billion for global health programs, \$4.8 billion for international disaster assistance, \$345.2 million for the democracy fund, and \$3.9 billion for migration and refugee assistance to name a few. The breakdown of international security assistance included \$1.4 billion for international narcotics control, \$870 million for nonproliferation, anti-terrorism, and demining programs, and \$410.5 for peacekeeping operations to name a few.

You can view more about FY24 funding levels at: <https://docs.house.gov/billsthisweek/20240318/Division%20F%20SFOPs.pdf>

I am unaware of any exceptions for FY25 funding levels that would change the above appropriation amounts. The bill text, section-by-section summary, and a response to misconceptions about the FY25 bill is available at: <https://appropriations.house.gov/news/press-releases/committee-releases-bill-keep-government-open-working-american-people>.

During consideration of the FY25 bill in the Senate in March, I voted against an amendment by Senator Paul that would have cut foreign aid by 83% because Congress had not received a request from the Administration to rescind these funds, much less had the opportunity to debate such a major change in spending and how it would affect U.S. foreign policy.

However, on May 28, 2025, President Trump submitted a rescission proposal for the Department of State, as well as the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the U.S. Institute of Peace (USIP), and other International Assistance Programs. Together, the package proposes to rescind \$9.4 billion in budget authority, of which, \$8.2 billion was for the Department of State, USAID, USIP, and International Assistance Programs. You can review this rescission proposal at: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Proposed-Rescissions-of-Budgetary-Resources.pdf>.

You may also be pleased to know that during consideration of H.R.4, the Rescissions Act of 2025, Senator Schmitt proposed, and I supported, Amendment 2853 which fully protects the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) by striking the proposed \$400 million rescission. This amendment was passed and agreed to in the Senate.

I also want to make clear that this bill preemptively insulates certain programs from the rescission including:

- Lifesaving HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, maternal and child health and nutrition within the Global Health account;
- The Countering PRC Influence Fund;
- The Feed the Future Innovation Labs and the Administration of U.S. Commodity-based food aid, and;
- Assistance to Egypt and Jordan amidst heightened uncertainty and regional conflict in the Middle East.

That said, on July 17, 2025, the Senate passed H.R.4. In the final version, there is only \$9 billion in budget authority rescinded.

You can rest assured, I will be sure to keep your thoughts in mind as the process continues for future appropriations.

Thank you again for contacting me. Please do not hesitate to reach out if I can be of any further help in the future. Keep in touch.

Sincerely,

Chuck Grassley, U.S. Senator

Senator Ernst's Letter

Thank you for contacting me regarding the Rescissions Act of 2025. I appreciate hearing from folks in Iowa on important policy matters such as this.

President Trump's first rescissions package, H.R. 4, the Rescissions Act of 2025, was signed into law on July 24, 2025. I supported this legislation, which rescinded \$9 billion that would have otherwise gone toward waste, fraud, and abuse. The final package eliminated all federal funding for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), which provides grants to NPR, PBS, and their affiliates. It also ended wasteful foreign assistance that was uncovered after years of oversight. Unfortunately, programs that had once been life-saving were transitioned by bureaucrats towards controversial ideological causes, under the guise of "reproductive health" and "family planning," but were unrelated to their core mission.

Here's a small sampling of what we found. Funds from USAID programs paid to send models and designers on junkets to fashion weeks in New York City, London, and Paris. The agency spent \$148,000 on a pickle maker, \$300,000 on a dog collar manufacturer, and \$2 million on a custom carpet manufacturer. \$20 million went to a workshop to bring Sesame Street to Iraq. \$2 million was spent on promoting tourism in Lebanon, while the State Department cautioned Americans against traveling there. \$67,000 was spent on feeding edible insects to children in Madagascar. Perhaps most disturbing of all was the USAID funding that was sent to China to fund the notorious Wuhan Institute of Virology to collect coronaviruses.

It's important to know that while the rescissions package defunded the waste, fraud, and abuse, it preserved life-saving foreign aid. Even after these cuts, ample funding remains for the State Department and USAID Global Health accounts that fully fund aid for PEPFAR, HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, Malaria, Maternal and Child Health and Nutrition (including polio), and commodity-based food aid.

I agree with you about the importance of U.S.-funded humanitarian assistance in alleviating the suffering of vulnerable populations worldwide. While I understand we may not see eye to eye on this matter, I remain dedicated to responsible foreign aid that genuinely saves lives and aligns with our national priorities. As the world's most generous donor of foreign assistance, the American people rightfully expect their taxpayer dollars to be spent responsibly and ethically abroad.

Thank you again for being in touch to express your support for this program. Please don't hesitate to contact my office with further information, as I always enjoy hearing from Iowans.

Sincerely,

Joni K. Ernst
United States Senator

Representative Miller-Meeks's Letter

Thank you for contacting me to express your support for foreign aid. Views from fellow Iowans help inform and guide me in Congress, so I greatly appreciate your insight and opinion.

Like you, I believe foreign aid programs can have a positive effect on addressing crises around the world, such as AIDS treatment and hunger. These programs can help the needy as well as bolster America's relationships around the world. However, I have been concerned about the misuse of appropriated funds, which is why I believe Congress should provide adequate oversight of our nation's foreign aid programs.

Oversight of foreign aid programs falls under the jurisdiction of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs. Although I am not a member of that committee, I will keep your thoughts and views in mind should legislation regarding foreign aid come before me for a vote on the House Floor.

Thank you again for contacting me. If there is anything I can do to be of assistance, or if you would like to receive my e-newsletter, please visit MillerMeeks.house.gov. You can also follow me on Facebook at [facebook.com/RepMMM](https://www.facebook.com/RepMMM) and on Twitter [@RepMMM](https://twitter.com/RepMMM). Again, I thank you for your opinion and look forward to serving you. Please do not hesitate to contact my office in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mariannette J. Miller Meeks". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mariannette Miller-Meeks, M.D.
Member of Congress

