

U.S. Foreign Assistance to Latin America and the Caribbean: FY2024 Appropriations

September 27, 2023

Congressional Research Service

<https://crsreports.congress.gov>

R47721



R47721

September 27, 2023

Peter J. Meyer
Specialist in Latin
American and Canadian
Affairs

U.S. Foreign Assistance to Latin America and the Caribbean: FY2024 Appropriations

The United States provides foreign assistance to Latin American and Caribbean countries to support development and other U.S. objectives. U.S. policymakers have emphasized different strategic interests in the region at different times, from combating Soviet influence during the Cold War to promoting democracy and open markets, as well as countering illicit narcotics, since the 1990s. Over the past decade, top U.S. funding priorities for foreign assistance in the region have included addressing the underlying drivers of migration from Central America, combating drug production and supporting peace accord implementation in Colombia, and strengthening security and the rule of law in Mexico. U.S. agencies also have dedicated resources to programs intended to combat HIV/AIDS and foster stability in Haiti, address security concerns in the Caribbean, and respond to the political and humanitarian crises in Venezuela and their impact on the broader region. Since 2020, U.S. policymakers have taken steps to adjust U.S. assistance efforts to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and its secondary socioeconomic effects in Latin America and the Caribbean.

FY2024 Budget Request

The Biden Administration requested nearly \$2.5 billion in foreign assistance for Latin America and the Caribbean in FY2024 under accounts managed by the State Department and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). That total is \$366.2 million (17.4%) above the amount allocated for the region in FY2022, including supplemental appropriations. The Administration's FY2024 budget request also included \$52.0 million for the Inter-American Foundation (IAF)—a small, independent U.S. government agency that supports grassroots development in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Stemming irregular migration remains a top Administration priority in the region. The Administration requested \$945.8 million to continue implementation of the U.S. Strategy for Addressing the Root Causes of Migration in Central America—\$240.9 million (34.2%) more than the FY2022 allocation for Central America. The Administration also requested \$51.4 million for a new Americas Partnership Opportunity Fund intended to support migration management throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. In August 2023, the Administration requested an additional \$782.0 million of emergency supplemental foreign assistance to respond to irregular migration in the region.

Among other regional priorities in FY2024, the Administration requested \$444.0 million for Colombia to support counternarcotics efforts, peace accord implementation, and the integration of Venezuelan migrants; \$291.5 million for Haiti to restore democratic institutions, improve security, and address health and economic challenges; \$111.4 million for Mexico to strengthen the rule of law and combat illicit drugs; and \$64.5 million for the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI).

Legislative Developments

As of September 26, 2023, Congress has not concluded action on FY2024 Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs (SFOPS) appropriations. The House Appropriations Committee reported its FY2024 SFOPS bill (H.R. 4665/H.Rept. 118-146) on July 17, 2023, and the Senate Appropriations Committee reported a separate SFOPS bill (S. 2438/S.Rept. 118-71) on July 20, 2023.

Congress may draw from those bills as it considers final FY2024 appropriations. Both measures would direct funding levels and/or restrictions for certain programs in Latin America and the Caribbean; other programs would be left for allocation by the Administration, subject to overall enacted appropriations levels. Both bills would provide more funding than the Administration requested for the CBSI. The measures diverge significantly on Colombia; S. 2438 would provide more assistance than the Administration requested, and H.R. 4665/H.Rept. 118-146 would defer consideration of funding for Colombia due to concerns about the Colombian government's policies.

In addition to determining aid levels and objectives for Latin America and the Caribbean in FY2024, Members of the 118th Congress could consider authorization legislation or use their various oversight mechanisms to help guide U.S. foreign assistance policy in the region.

Contents

Introduction	1
Trends in U.S. Assistance to Latin America and the Caribbean	2
Biden Administration’s FY2024 Foreign Assistance Budget Request	4
Major Foreign Assistance Categories and Accounts	5
Major Country and Regional Initiatives	7
Inter-American Foundation	11
Emergency Supplemental Request	11
Legislative Developments	12
Options for Congress	15

Figures

Figure 1. Map of Latin America and the Caribbean	1
Figure 2. U.S. Assistance to Latin America and the Caribbean: FY1946-FY2021	3

Tables

Table 1. State Department- and USAID-Managed Foreign Assistance to Latin America and the Caribbean by Account: FY2021 Actual-FY2024 Request	6
Table 2. State Department- and USAID-Managed Foreign Assistance to Latin America and the Caribbean by Country or Regional Program: FY2021 Actual-FY2024 Request	9
Table 3. Inter-American Foundation Appropriations: FY2021 Actual-FY2024 Request	11
Table 4. U.S. Foreign Assistance for Selected Countries and Initiatives: FY2024 Appropriations Legislation	13
Table A-1. State Department- and USAID-Managed Foreign Assistance to Latin America and the Caribbean: FY2022 Actual	17
Table A-2. State Department- and USAID-Managed Foreign Assistance to Latin America and the Caribbean: FY2024 Request	18

Appendixes

Appendix. U.S. Foreign Assistance to Latin America and the Caribbean by Account and by Country or Regional Program: FY2022 Actual and FY2024 Request	17
--	----

Contacts

Author Information	20
--------------------------	----

Introduction

Foreign assistance (also referred to as *foreign aid* in this report) is one of the tools the United States employs to advance U.S. interests and policy goals in Latin America and the Caribbean.¹ Current aid programs reflect the diverse needs of countries in the region, as well as the broad range of these countries' ties to the United States (see **Figure 1** for a map of Latin America and the Caribbean). Some countries receive U.S. assistance across many sectors to address political, socioeconomic, and security challenges. Others have made major strides in consolidating democratic governance and improving living conditions; these countries no longer receive traditional U.S. development assistance but typically receive some U.S. support to address shared security challenges, such as transnational crime. Congress authorizes and appropriates foreign assistance funds for Latin America and the Caribbean and conducts oversight of aid programs and the executive branch agencies that allocate, program, and administer them.

Figure 1. Map of Latin America and the Caribbean



Source: Map Resources, edited by the Congressional Research Service (CRS).

¹ For more information on foreign assistance, see CRS Report R40213, *Foreign Assistance: An Introduction to U.S. Programs and Policy*, by Emily M. McCabe and Nick M. Brown.

This report provides an overview of U.S. assistance to Latin America and the Caribbean. It assesses trends in aid to the region; analyzes the Biden Administration's FY2024 base and supplemental budget requests for aid administered by the State Department, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and the Inter-American Foundation (IAF); and examines congressional action on FY2024 Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs (SFOPS) appropriations. The **Appendix** provides detailed aid allocations by foreign assistance account and country or regional program for FY2022 and the FY2024 request (FY2023 allocations are not yet publicly available).

Report Notes

To compare the Biden Administration's FY2024 foreign assistance request with previous years' appropriations, most aid figures in this report refer only to bilateral assistance that is managed by the State Department or the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and is requested for individual countries or regional programs. The foreign assistance accounts examined in this report accounted for 60.3% of the total aid obligated by all U.S. agencies in Latin America and the Caribbean in FY2021 (the most recent year for which comprehensive data are available).

Several other sources of U.S. assistance to the region exist. Some countries in Latin America and the Caribbean receive U.S. assistance to address humanitarian needs through USAID- and State Department-managed foreign assistance accounts, such as Food for Peace Act Title II, International Disaster Assistance, and Migration and Refugee Assistance. Some countries also receive assistance from other U.S. agencies, such as the Department of Defense, Millennium Challenge Corporation, Peace Corps, and International Development Finance Corporation, or from multilateral organizations that the United States supports financially, such as the Organization of American States, Inter-American Development Bank, and Pan American Health Organization. This report examines some of these assistance sources briefly but otherwise excludes them from the analysis due to data inconsistencies.

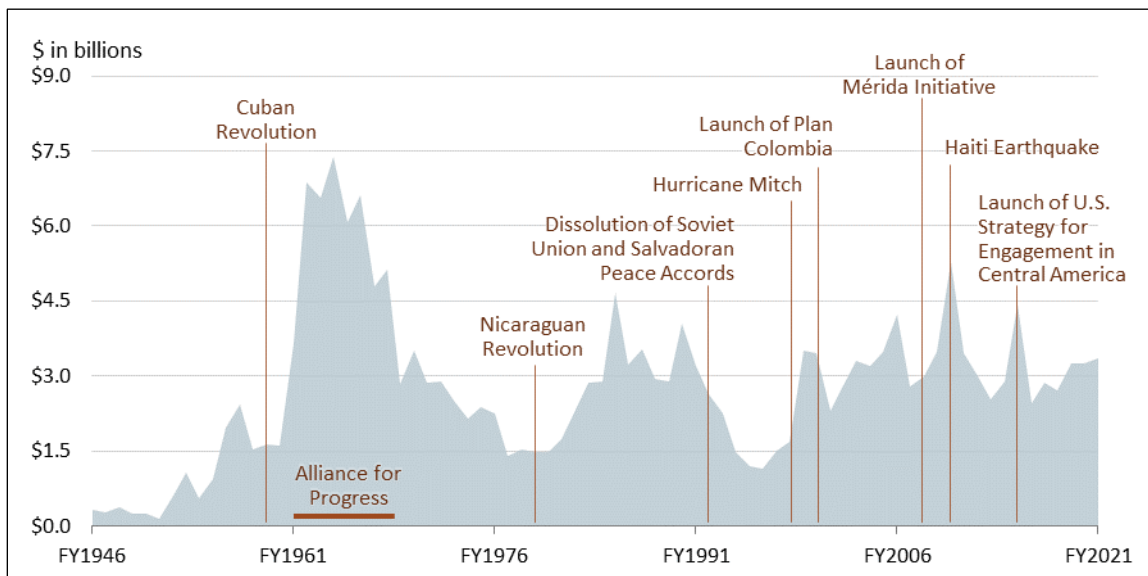
Source: ForeignAssistance.gov.

Trends in U.S. Assistance to Latin America and the Caribbean

The United States has long been a major contributor of foreign assistance to countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. Between FY1946 and FY2021, the United States provided \$100.4 billion (\$209.9 billion in constant 2021 dollars) of assistance to the region.² U.S. assistance spiked in the early 1960s, following the introduction of President John F. Kennedy's Alliance for Progress, an anti-poverty initiative that sought to counter Soviet and Cuban influence in Latin America and the Caribbean in the aftermath of Fidel Castro's 1959 seizure of power in Cuba. After a period of decline, U.S. assistance to the region increased again following the 1979 assumption of power by the leftist Sandinistas in Nicaragua. Throughout the 1980s, the United States provided considerable support to Central American governments battling leftist insurgencies to prevent potential Soviet allies from establishing political or military footholds in the region. U.S. aid flows declined in the mid-1990s, following the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the end of the Central American civil conflicts (see **Figure 2**).

² These totals include aid obligations from all U.S. government agencies to the 33 independent Latin American and Caribbean countries (identified in **Figure 1**) and regional programs. The Department of Defense has not yet reported its final assistance obligations for FY2020 or FY2021. U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and U.S. Department of State, at <https://foreignassistance.gov/>.

Figure 2. U.S. Assistance to Latin America and the Caribbean: FY1946-FY2021
(obligations in constant 2021 dollars)



Source: CRS Graphics, using data from ForeignAssistance.gov.

Notes: Includes aid obligations from all U.S. government agencies, adjusted for inflation. Comprehensive data for FY2022 and FY2023 are not yet available.

U.S. foreign assistance to Latin America and the Caribbean began to increase again in the late 1990s and remained on a generally upward trajectory through FY2010. The higher levels of assistance were partially due to increased spending on humanitarian and development assistance. In the aftermath of Hurricane Mitch in 1998, the United States provided extensive humanitarian and reconstruction assistance to several countries in Central America. The establishment of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief in 2003 and the Millennium Challenge Corporation in 2004 also provided many countries in the region with new sources of U.S. assistance.³ In addition, the United States provided significant assistance to Haiti in the aftermath of a massive earthquake in 2010.

Increased funding for counternarcotics and security programs also contributed to the rise in U.S. assistance. Beginning with President Bill Clinton and the 106th Congress in FY2000, successive Administrations and Congresses provided significant amounts of foreign aid to Colombia and its Andean neighbors to combat drug trafficking and end Colombia's long-running internal armed conflict. Spending received another boost in FY2008, when President George W. Bush joined with his Mexican counterpart, Felipe Calderón, to announce the Mérida Initiative, a package of U.S. counter-drug and anti-crime assistance for Mexico and Central America. In FY2010, Congress and the Obama Administration split the Central American portion of the Mérida Initiative into a separate Central American Regional Security Initiative (CARSI) and created a similar program for the countries of the Caribbean, known as the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI).

U.S. foreign assistance priorities in Latin America and the Caribbean have shifted over the past decade to respond to periods of development progress in the region as well as subsequent

³ For more information on the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief and the Millennium Challenge Corporation, see CRS In Focus IF10797, *PEPFAR Stewardship and Oversight Act: Expiring Authorities*, by Tiaji Salaam-Blyther; and CRS Report RL32427, *Millennium Challenge Corporation: Overview and Issues*, by Nick M. Brown.

setbacks. Between 2002 and 2019, the percentage of people living in poverty in Latin America decreased from 45.3% to 30.4%, largely due to stronger economic growth and the implementation of more effective social policies.⁴ Health and education indicators also improved significantly during that period. In 2019, the World Bank classified most Latin American and Caribbean countries as “upper middle income” and a few as “high income” economies.⁵ Some countries, such as Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, and Uruguay, began to provide assistance to others in the region based on their own development experiences. Although overall U.S. assistance levels for Latin America and the Caribbean remained fairly stable, the U.S. government concentrated those resources in fewer countries and sectors due to the changes in the region.

In the past few years, U.S. assistance efforts in Latin America and the Caribbean have expanded as many countries in the region have seen setbacks in long-term development and new challenges have emerged.⁶ Socioeconomic conditions began to stagnate in many Latin American and Caribbean countries around 2015 amid a decline in global commodity prices. These conditions deteriorated sharply in 2020 as the COVID-19 pandemic swept away more than a decade of development gains.⁷ Political conditions also have deteriorated as governments in Venezuela and Nicaragua have entrenched authoritarian rule, Haiti has been unable to reestablish an elected government since the 2021 assassination of President Jovenel Moïse, and widespread corruption and violence have eroded the quality of democracy elsewhere in the region. These challenges have contributed to political unrest and large-scale migration flows throughout Latin America and the Caribbean.⁸

Biden Administration’s FY2024 Foreign Assistance Budget Request⁹

For FY2024, the Biden Administration requested nearly \$2.5 billion of foreign assistance for Latin America and the Caribbean under accounts managed by the State Department and USAID. That total is \$366.2 million (17.4%) above the total amount allocated for the region in FY2022, including supplemental appropriations (see **Table 1**; FY2023 allocations are not yet publicly available). The Administration also requested \$52.0 million for the IAF, a small, independent U.S. government agency that supports grassroots development in the region (see “Inter-American Foundation”). In August 2023, the Administration requested an additional \$782.0 million of emergency supplemental foreign assistance for Latin America and the Caribbean intended to address irregular migration (see “Emergency Supplemental Request”).

⁴ U.N. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), *Social Panorama of Latin America and the Caribbean 2022*, November 24, 2022, p. 19.

⁵ World Bank, “The World by Income and Region,” at <https://datatopics.worldbank.org/world-development-indicators/the-world-by-income-and-region.html>.

⁶ For more information on recent challenges in the region, see CRS Insight IN12092, *Latin America and the Caribbean: Issues for the 118th Congress*, by Peter J. Meyer.

⁷ ECLAC, *Social Panorama of Latin America 2021*, January 2022.

⁸ See, for example, Moisés Naím, “Why Hard-Liners Are Gaining Steam in Latin America,” *Politico Magazine*, July 12, 2022; and Michael Stott, “Repression and Poverty Trigger Record Migration in the Americas,” *Financial Times*, September 11, 2022.

⁹ Unless otherwise noted, data and information in this section are drawn from U.S. Department of State, *Congressional Budget Justification, Foreign Operations, Appendix 2, Fiscal Year 2024*, April 2023; and U.S. Department of State, *Congressional Budget Justification, Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs, Supplementary Tables, Fiscal Year 2024*, April 2023.

Major Foreign Assistance Categories and Accounts¹⁰

The Administration's FY2024 foreign aid budget proposal requested \$970.7 million (39.3% of the total for Latin America and the Caribbean) through the **Development Assistance (DA)** account, which seeks to foster broad-based economic growth and social welfare in low- and middle-income countries. USAID typically uses DA funding for long-term projects in areas such as agriculture, democracy and governance, economic reform, education, and environmental protection. Compared with the FY2022 allocation, the Administration proposed a \$314.2 million (47.9%) increase in DA funding for the region, with the majority of the additional assistance allocated to activities intended to address root causes of migration from Central America and to restore democratic institutions and support development in Haiti. The request also included additional funding to advance environmental objectives, such as forest conservation in the Amazon Basin and climate change resilience in the Caribbean, as well as to support Venezuelan migrant integration throughout South America.

Another \$532.1 million (21.5%) of the Administration's request for the region would be provided through the **Economic Support Fund (ESF)** account, the primary purpose of which is to promote special U.S. political, economic, or security interests. In practice, ESF programs generally aim to promote political and economic stability and often are indistinguishable from programs funded through the DA account, though the State Department rather than USAID makes ESF policy and program decisions. Compared with the FY2022 allocation, the Administration sought a \$30.7 million (6.1%) increase in ESF assistance for the region. Among other changes, the Administration requested \$51.4 million for a new Americas Partnership Opportunity Fund intended to support migration management throughout the hemisphere and \$18.0 million to implement commitments made at the 2022 Summit of the Americas.¹¹

The Administration requested \$309.5 million (12.5% of the total) for the region through the **Global Health Programs (GHP)** account. This amount included \$190.0 million requested for the State Department subaccount, primarily to prevent and treat HIV/AIDS. It also included \$119.5 million requested for USAID to combat malaria; support maternal and child health, nutrition, and family planning programs; and advance global health security activities intended to prevent, detect, and respond to disease outbreaks. Compared with the FY2022 allocation for the region, the Administration proposed a \$1.3 million (0.7%) reduction in funding for the State Department-managed subaccount and a \$28.0 million (30.6%) increase in funding for the USAID-managed subaccount. The Administration requested the additional USAID-managed funds primarily to expand reproductive health programming in Haiti and Guatemala and to implement global health security programming throughout the hemisphere.

The remaining \$658.3 million (26.6%) of the Administration's FY2024 budget proposal for Latin America and the Caribbean was requested for security assistance programs, including the following:

- \$536.5 million requested through the **International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement (INCLE)** account for counternarcotics, civilian law enforcement efforts, and projects intended to strengthen judicial institutions. The Administration proposed a \$5.3 million (1.0%) reduction in INCLE funding for

¹⁰ For more information on the various foreign assistance accounts and the programs they fund, see CRS Report R40482, *Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations: A Guide to Component Accounts*, by Cory R. Gill and Emily M. McCabe.

¹¹ For information on summit commitments, see CRS Insight IN11934, *2022 Summit of the Americas*, by Peter J. Meyer.

- the region compared with the FY2022 allocation, with reductions in aid to Colombia, Mexico, and Peru largely offset by increases in aid for Central America and Haiti.
- \$32.1 million requested through the **Nonproliferation, Anti-terrorism, Demining, and Related Programs (NADR)** account to help countries in the region carry out humanitarian demining programs, strengthen conventional weapons stockpile management, develop strategic trade controls and border security measures, and enhance their counterterrorism capacities. The Administration's FY2024 NADR funding request for the region was the same as the FY2022 allocation.
 - \$16.2 million requested through the **International Military Education and Training (IMET)** account to train Latin American and Caribbean military and civilian security personnel. Compared with the FY2022 allocation, the Administration requested \$4.9 million (42.9%) more in IMET funding, spreading the additional aid among countries throughout the hemisphere.
 - \$73.5 million requested through the **Foreign Military Financing (FMF)** account to provide U.S. military equipment and services to partners in the region. Compared with the FY2022 allocation, the Administration proposed \$5.0 million (6.3%) less in FMF funding for the region, with less aid to Peru, Costa Rica, and Colombia partially offset by more funding for regional programs.

Table 1. State Department- and USAID-Managed Foreign Assistance to Latin America and the Caribbean by Account: FY2021 Actual-FY2024 Request

(millions of current U.S. dollars)

	FY2021 (actual)	FY2022 (actual)	FY2024 (request)	% Change: FY22-FY24
Development Assistance	490.6	656.5	970.7	+47.9%
Economic Support Fund	480.7 ^a	501.4 ^b	532.1	+6.1%
Global Health Programs (USAID)	55.5	91.5	119.5	+30.6%
Global Health Programs (State)	195.0	191.3	190.0	-0.7%
International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement	553.0	541.8	536.5	-1.0%
Nonproliferation, Anti-terrorism, Demining, and Related Programs	31.0	32.1	32.1	—
International Military Education and Training	13.8	11.3	16.2	+42.9%
Foreign Military Financing	76.9	78.5	73.5	-6.3%
<i>Total</i>	<i>1,896.5^a</i>	<i>2,104.4^b</i>	<i>2,470.7</i>	<i>+17.4%</i>

Sources: U.S. Department of State, *Congressional Budget Justification, Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs, Supplementary Tables, Fiscal Year 2023*, May 2022; and U.S. Department of State, *Congressional Budget Justification, Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs, Supplementary Tables, Fiscal Year 2024*, April 2023.

Notes: FY2023 allocations are not yet publicly available. Figures may not sum to totals due to rounding. USAID = U.S. Agency for International Development.

- a. Sum includes \$97.2 million of supplemental assistance appropriated in the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (P.L. 117-2).

- b. Sum includes \$64.0 million of supplemental assistance appropriated in the Additional Ukraine Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2022 (P.L. 117-128).

Major Country and Regional Initiatives

Although the Biden Administration requested an overall increase in State Department- and USAID-managed assistance for Latin America and the Caribbean in FY2024, some countries and regional programs would see larger increases than others and some would see cuts if Congress adopted the Administration's budget proposal (see **Table 2**). Some of the Administration's top funding priorities in the region are discussed below.

Caribbean Basin Security Initiative. Since FY2010, the CBSI has funded maritime and aerial security cooperation, law enforcement capacity-building, border and port security, justice sector reform, and crime prevention programs in the Caribbean.¹² The Administration requested \$64.5 million for the CBSI in FY2024, \$15.5 million (19.4%) less than the FY2022 allocation.

Central America. Addressing the underlying drivers of irregular migration from Central America to the United States has been a top U.S. policy priority in the region since an unexpected surge of unaccompanied children from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras arrived at the U.S. border in 2014. However, specific policy approaches have shifted from one Administration to another. The Biden Administration developed a U.S. Strategy for Addressing the Root Causes of Migration in Central America intended to support improved governance, security, and broad-based economic growth in the subregion.¹³ The Biden Administration also has allocated increased humanitarian assistance to Central America intended to stabilize populations with acute needs, in line with its Collaborative Migration Management Strategy (see text box, "U.S. Humanitarian Assistance to Central America," below).¹⁴

U.S. Humanitarian Assistance to Central America

Since 2020, a series of tropical storms and the COVID-19 pandemic have contributed to sharp increases in food insecurity and other humanitarian challenges in Central America. The Biden Administration has sought to address these challenges and stabilize populations in Central America as part of its broader Collaborative Migration Management Strategy. The U.S. Agency for International Development and the State Department allocated \$272.2 million of humanitarian assistance to support vulnerable populations in Central America and Mexico in FY2021 and \$289.0 million for such purposes in FY2022. FY2023 allocations are not yet available. These assistance funds, which U.S. agencies have allocated over the course of each fiscal year from global humanitarian accounts, are not included in the country or regional totals found in **Table 1**, **Table 2** or the **Appendix** of this report.

Sources: U.S. Agency for International Development, "El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras—Regional Response," fact sheets, at <https://www.usaid.gov/humanitarian-assistance/el-salvador/El-Salvador-Guatemala-Honduras-Regional-Response-Archive>.

For FY2024, the Administration requested \$945.8 million to continue implementation of the U.S. Strategy for Addressing the Root Causes of Migration in Central America—\$240.9 million

¹² For more information on the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative, see CRS In Focus IF10789, *Caribbean Basin Security Initiative*, by Karla I. Rios.

¹³ White House, *U.S. Strategy for Addressing the Root Causes of Migration in Central America*, July 2021, at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Root-Causes-Strategy.pdf>. For more information on U.S. policy toward Central America, see CRS In Focus IF11151, *Central American Migration: Root Causes and U.S. Policy*, by Peter J. Meyer.

¹⁴ White House, *Collaborative Migration Management Strategy*, July 2021, p. 7, at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Collaborative-Migration-Management-Strategy.pdf>.

(34.2%) more than the FY2022 allocation.¹⁵ The Central America request included \$124.8 million for El Salvador; \$164.5 million for Guatemala; \$136.5 million for Honduras; and a combined \$17.1 million for the other four countries of the isthmus. It also included \$341.3 million for CARSI and \$161.7 million for other State Department- and USAID-managed regional programs in Central America.

Colombia. Colombia has been among the top recipients of U.S. assistance worldwide since the FY2000 launch of Plan Colombia, a counternarcotics program. The focus of U.S. assistance efforts has evolved over time, responding to changes in Colombia's long-running internal conflict and Colombian government priorities.¹⁶ For FY2024, the Administration requested \$444.0 million for Colombia to support ongoing counternarcotics efforts, peace accord implementation, Venezuelan migrant integration, and forest conservation. The Administration requested \$46.3 million (9.4%) less than the FY2022 allocation for Colombia, including a \$29.0 million reduction in INCLE aid due, in part, to the Colombian government's shift away from coca eradication.

Haiti. The United States has provided Haiti significant aid intended to support the country's recovery from recurrent natural disasters and foster long-term stability, with a particular spike in assistance in the aftermath of a massive 2010 earthquake. Since the 2021 assassination of President Moïse, Haiti has been mired in interrelated political, security, and humanitarian crises.¹⁷ The Biden Administration's FY2024 request included \$291.5 million to help Haiti restore democratic institutions; improve security conditions; and address health, economic, and environmental challenges. Compared with the FY2022 allocation, the Administration proposed \$54.0 million (22.8%) more for Haiti. With the additional funds, U.S. agencies would seek to strengthen the police and combat gang influence, address the drivers of irregular migration and support returnees' reintegration, and support credible elections, among other activities.

Haiti and the Global Fragility Act

In April 2022, the Biden Administration designated Haiti as a priority country for the Global Fragility Act (P.L. 116-94, Division J, Title V), intended to stabilize conflict-affected areas. The Administration released a 10-year plan for Haiti, as mandated by the act, in March 2023. Haiti is eligible to receive assistance through three funds authorized by the act: the Prevention and Stabilization Fund (PSF), the Complex Crisis Fund, and the Multi-Donor Global Fragility Fund. Of the PSF funds appropriated in FY2021, the Administration allocated \$15.0 million to Haiti. These assistance funds are not included in the country or regional totals found in **Table 1** or **Table 2** of this report.

Note: For additional information, see CRS Report R47394, *Haiti: Recent Developments and U.S. Policy*.

Mexico. Mexico traditionally was not a major U.S. aid recipient due to its middle-income status, but it began receiving larger amounts of counternarcotics and anti-crime assistance through the Mérida Initiative in FY2008. Bilateral security cooperation efforts have shifted along with the priorities of U.S. and Mexican administrations and now are guided by the U.S.-Mexico Bicentennial Framework for Security, Public Health, and Safe Communities, launched in October 2021.¹⁸ For FY2024, the Biden Administration requested \$111.4 million to support Mexican

¹⁵ These figures are based on amounts allocated to, and requested for, Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, and State Department- and USAID-managed Central America regional programs. The Administration states that it requested \$978.8 million for Central America in FY2024; that sum includes nearly \$33.0 million of centrally managed funds.

¹⁶ For more information on U.S. policy toward Colombia, see CRS Insight IN12180, *Colombia: Issues for the 118th Congress* and CRS Report R47426, *U.S.-Colombia Security Relations: Future Prospects in Brief*, by June S. Beittel.

¹⁷ For more information on U.S. policy toward Haiti, see CRS Report R47394, *Haiti: Recent Developments and U.S. Policy*, by Clare Ribando Seelke and Karla I. Rios.

¹⁸ For more information on U.S. policy toward Mexico, see CRS Report R42917, *Mexico: Background and U.S.* (continued...)

efforts to strengthen the rule of law, combat transnational crime, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the energy and agriculture sectors. Compared with the FY2022 allocation, the Administration proposed \$15.7 million (12.4%) less in aid for Mexico, reflecting a proposed \$16.0 million cut in INCLE aid for the country.

Venezuela. The United States has provided democracy assistance to Venezuelan civil society for two decades and has increased such assistance over the past five years in response to the increasingly authoritarian rule of Nicolás Maduro. The United States also has provided humanitarian support for those who have fled the country's humanitarian crisis (see the text box, "U.S. Assistance to Respond to Venezuela's Humanitarian Crisis," below).¹⁹ The Biden Administration requested \$54.0 million for FY2024 to support democratic actors, human rights advocates, and other civil society organizations; strengthen small businesses; and reduce maternal and child mortality in Venezuela. Compared with the FY2022 allocation, the Administration proposed \$5.4 million (11.1%) more in assistance for Venezuela.

U.S. Assistance to Respond to Venezuela's Humanitarian Crisis

According to the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, an estimated 7.7 million Venezuelan migrants and refugees have fled the country's political and humanitarian crisis since 2015. Of these, approximately 6.5 million are residing in other Latin American and Caribbean countries. From FY2017 through the first nine months of FY2023, the U.S. Agency for International Development and the State Department committed nearly \$2.5 billion of humanitarian assistance—including \$140.4 million in FY2023—to help countries in the region respond to Venezuelan migrant and refugee flows, support host communities, and assist those who remain in Venezuela. Colombia, Peru, Ecuador, and Brazil have been among the top recipients. These assistance funds, which U.S. agencies have allocated over the course of each fiscal year from global humanitarian accounts, are not included in the country or regional totals found in **Table 1**, **Table 2**, or the **Appendix** of this report.

Sources: R4V Inter-Agency Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela, "Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela," September 5, 2023; and U.S. Agency for International Development, "Venezuela Regional Crisis—Complex Emergency," fact sheets, at <https://www.usaid.gov/humanitarian-assistance/venezuela/venezuela-regional-crisis-archive>.

**Table 2. State Department- and USAID-Managed Foreign Assistance to Latin America and the Caribbean by Country or Regional Program:
FY2021 Actual-FY2024 Request**
(thousands of current U.S. dollars)

	FY2021 (actual)^a	FY2022 (actual)^b	FY2024 (request)	% Change: FY22- FY24
Argentina	700	632	800	+26.6%
Bahamas	200	210	250	+19.0%
Belize	1,250	245	250	+2.0%
Bolivia	4,000	0	0	—
Brazil	27,950	29,781	42,000	+41.0%
Chile	455	434	650	+49.8%
Colombia	478,192	490,337	444,025	-9.4%

Relations, and CRS In Focus IF10578, *U.S.-Mexico Security Cooperation: From the Mérida Initiative to the Bicentennial Framework*, by Clare Ribando Seelke.

¹⁹ For more information on U.S. policy toward Venezuela, see CRS Report R44841, *Venezuela: Background and U.S. Relations*, coordinated by Clare Ribando Seelke.

	FY2021 (actual) ^a	FY2022 (actual) ^b	FY2024 (request)	% Change: FY22- FY24
Costa Rica	9,225	8,183	600	-92.7%
Cuba	20,000	20,000	20,000	—
Dominican Republic	35,155	46,460	46,545	+0.2%
Ecuador	28,750	45,554	48,600	+6.7%
El Salvador	80,790	98,652	124,800	+26.5%
Guatemala	103,849	137,442	164,502	+19.7%
Guyana	200	190	250	+31.6%
Haiti	204,377	237,428	291,455	+22.8%
Honduras	79,902	117,878	136,450	+15.8%
Jamaica	24,446	24,300	11,750	-51.6%
Mexico	158,910	127,107	111,400	-12.4%
Nicaragua	12,592	16,960	15,000	-11.6%
Panama	14,019	12,507	1,225	-90.2%
Paraguay	9,600	4,343	4,500	+3.6%
Peru	98,885	109,134	107,635	-1.4%
Suriname	200	162	250	+54.3%
Trinidad and Tobago	2,999	1,735	350	-79.8%
Uruguay	900	347	400	+15.3%
Venezuela	38,000	48,600	54,000	+11.1%
Barbados and Eastern Caribbean	7,700	24,621	24,000	-2.5%
USAID Caribbean Development	15,800	15,438	17,000	+10.1%
USAID Central America Regional	5,000	35,000	85,178	+143.4%
USAID South America Regional	15,000	27,000	55,400	+105.2%
USAID Latin America and Caribbean Regional	45,540	38,697	41,678	+7.7%
State Central America Regional	—	278,000	417,800	+50.3%
State Western Hemisphere Regional	366,909	102,044	201,910	+97.9%
[Caribbean Basin Security Initiative]	[74,800]	[80,000]	[64,500]	[-19.4%]
Total	1,896,495 ^a	2,104,421 ^b	2,470,653	+17.4%

Sources: U.S. Department of State, *Congressional Budget Justification, Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs, Supplementary Tables, Fiscal Year 2023*, May 2022; and U.S. Department of State, *Congressional Budget Justification, Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs, Supplementary Tables, Fiscal Year 2024*, April 2023.

Notes: FY2023 allocations are not yet publicly available. Figures may not sum to totals due to rounding. FY2021 and FY2022 totals each include \$5 million appropriated as voluntary contributions to the Organization of American States. U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and State Department regional programs fund region-wide initiatives, including the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative, as well as activities that cross borders or take place in non-presence countries. These regional programs provide the vast majority of U.S. assistance received by some Latin American and Caribbean countries. Prior to FY2022, activities funded through

the State Central America Regional program were funded under the State Western Hemisphere Regional program.

- a. FY2021 sums include some supplemental assistance appropriated in the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (P.L. 117-2).
- b. FY2022 sums include some supplemental assistance appropriated in the Additional Ukraine Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2022 (P.L. 117-128).

Inter-American Foundation

In addition to State Department- and USAID-managed assistance for the region, the Biden Administration requested \$52.0 million for the IAF for FY2024 (see **Table 3**). The IAF is an independent U.S. government agency established through the Foreign Assistance Act of 1969 (22 U.S.C. §290f) to provide grants and other targeted assistance for grassroots development efforts in Latin America and the Caribbean. Congress created the agency after conducting a comprehensive review of previous assistance activities in the region and determining that programs at the government-to-government level had not promoted significant social and civic change.²⁰ The IAF is active in 27 countries, including several countries where USAID no longer has field missions.²¹ The Administration's FY2024 request included funding for the IAF to continue supporting local efforts to address the root causes of Central American migration, integrate displaced Venezuelans and Nicaraguans into host communities, promote inclusive economic growth, reduce food insecurity, foster civic engagement, mitigate chronic violence, provide alternatives to the illicit drug trade, build resilience to natural disasters, and manage natural resources sustainably.

Table 3. Inter-American Foundation Appropriations: FY2021 Actual-FY2024 Request

(millions of current U.S. dollars)

FY2021 (actual)	FY2022 (actual)	FY2023 (enacted)	FY2024 (request)	% Change FY23-FY24
38.0	42.0	47.0	52.0	+10.6%

Sources: U.S. Department of State, *Congressional Budget Justification, Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs, Supplementary Tables, Fiscal Year 2023*, May 2022; and U.S. Department of State, *Congressional Budget Justification, Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs, Supplementary Tables, Fiscal Year 2024*, April 2023.

Emergency Supplemental Request²²

In addition to the foreign assistance requested for Latin America and the Caribbean discussed above, the White House sent an emergency supplemental funding request to Congress in August

²⁰ U.S. Congress, House Committee on Foreign Affairs, *Foreign Assistance Act of 1969, Report on H.R.14580 to Promote the Foreign Policy, Security, and General Welfare of the United States by Assisting Peoples of the World to Achieve Development Within a Framework of Democratic, Economic, Social, and Political Institutions, and for Other Purposes*, 91st Cong., 1st sess., November 6, 1969, H.Rept. 91-611 (Washington, DC: GPO, 1969), p. 57.

²¹ Inter-American Foundation (IAF), "Where We Work," at <https://www.iaf.gov/where-we-work/>.

²² Unless otherwise noted, data and information in this section are drawn from White House, Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget, "Letter Regarding Critical Funding Needs for FY 2024," August 10, 2023, pp. 56-58, at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Final-Supplemental-Funding-Request-Letter-and-Technical-Materials.pdf>.

2023 that included \$782.0 million of foreign assistance intended to address irregular migration in the region.²³

The Administration requested \$532.0 million of the supplemental funds for Latin America and the Caribbean through the **Migration and Refugee Assistance (MRA)** account, intended to address the humanitarian needs of vulnerable migrants, refugees, and internally displaced persons. The Administration's supplemental request adds to a base FY2024 budget proposal that included \$3.9 billion in global MRA funds, including an anticipated allocation of \$398.0 million of Overseas Assistance funding for the Western Hemisphere.²⁴ The State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration administers the MRA account, often channeling such assistance through international organizations, such as the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Organization for Migration, and the International Committee of the Red Cross.

According to the supplemental request, the funds would be used to help forcibly displaced migrants in Latin America and the Caribbean resettle in Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, and Ecuador, among other countries. Funds also would seek to support partner countries' migrant regularization and integration programs and strengthen their protection screening and migration management capacities. In an attempt to reduce irregular migration flows and undermine migrant smuggling groups, some supplemental MRA funding would be used to establish Safe Mobility Offices—centers to be located throughout the region to screen and vet potential candidates for refugee resettlement or other legal pathways to the United States, Canada, Spain, or other countries.²⁵

The Administration's FY2024 supplemental request also included \$250.0 million of **ESF** to address irregular migration within Latin America and the Caribbean. Of that total, \$150.0 million would support migrant integration efforts in the region; \$50.0 million would support foreign governments' repatriation operations for individuals deemed ineligible for humanitarian protection; and \$50 million "would be used to incentivize sustained cooperation from partner countries hosting Safe Mobility Offices."²⁶

Legislative Developments

Both houses of Congress have begun considering FY2024 SFOPS appropriations. The House Appropriations Committee reported its FY2024 SFOPS bill (H.R. 4665/H.Rept. 118-146) on July 17, 2023, and the Senate Appropriations Committee reported a separate SFOPS bill (S. 2438/S.Rept. 118-71) on July 20, 2023. Neither measure would specify comprehensive appropriations levels for every Latin American and Caribbean country, leaving some allocations to be determined by executive agencies in consultation with Congress. Nevertheless, the measures would include funding directives (see **Table 4**) and/or restrictions for some U.S. initiatives in the region. Both measures were reported before the Biden Administration sent its emergency supplemental funding request to Congress in August.

²³ The emergency supplemental request also included \$26.0 million under the State Department's Diplomatic Programs account to advance and oversee U.S. migration management initiatives throughout the region.

²⁴ U.S. Department of State, *Congressional Budget Justification, Foreign Operations, Appendix 2, Fiscal Year 2024*, April 2023, pp. 342-345.

²⁵ Initial Safe Mobility Offices are to be established in Colombia, Costa Rica, and Guatemala. For more information, see <https://movilidadsegura.org/en/>.

²⁶ White House, Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget, "Letter Regarding Critical Funding Needs for FY2024," August 10, 2023, pp. 58.

**Table 4. U.S. Foreign Assistance for Selected Countries and Initiatives:
FY2024 Appropriations Legislation**

(millions of current U.S. dollars)

	FY2022 (actual)^a	FY2023 (enacted)	FY2024 (request)	H.R. 4665 and H.Rept. 118- 146	S. 2438 and S.Rept. 118- 71
Caribbean Basin Security Initiative	80.0	82.0	64.5	97.5	82.0
Central America	704.9 ^b	NA	945.8 ^b	NA	NA
Colombia	490.3	487.4	444.0	NA	487.4
Haiti	237.4	NA	291.5	NA	NA
Inter-American Foundation	42.0	47.0	52.0	22.5	52.0
Mexico	127.1	NA	111.4	NA	NA
Venezuela	48.6	50.0	54.0	50.0	50.0

Sources: U.S. Department of State, *Congressional Budget Justification, Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs, Supplementary Tables, Fiscal Year 2024*, April 2023; P.L. 117-328; H.R. 4665; H.Rept. 118-146; S. 2438; and S.Rept. 118-71.

Notes: Final FY2023 allocations are not yet publicly available. NA indicates that comprehensive appropriation totals are not specified in the bill or report.

- FY2022 figures include supplemental assistance appropriated in the Additional Ukraine Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2022 (P.L. 117-128).
- These Central America figures are based on amounts allocated to, and requested for, Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, and State Department- and USAID-managed Central America regional programs. The Administration states that it allocated \$938.4 million to Central America in FY2022; that sum includes \$211.4 million of humanitarian assistance and \$22.1 million from centrally managed funds. The Administration states that it is requesting \$978.8 million for Central America in FY2024; that sum includes nearly \$33.0 million of centrally managed funds.

Caribbean Basin Security Initiative. Both H.R. 4665 and S. 2438 would provide more funding for the CBSI than the Administration requested. H.R. 4665 would provide “not less than” \$97.5 million for the CBSI and would direct that funding made available for the initiative above the FY2023 level “shall be prioritized for countries within the transit zones of illicit drug shipments toward the United States, that have increased interdiction of illicit drugs, and [that] are most directly impacted by the crisis in Haiti.” H.Rept. 118-146 would further direct that CBSI funds be used to provide equipment that Caribbean partners need to combat drug trafficking and transnational crime. In addition, the report would call on the Secretary of State to consider using the authority granted under Section 516 of the Foreign Assistance Act (22 U.S.C. §2321j) to transfer excess defense articles to meet such needs. S. 2438 would provide “not less than” \$82.0 million for the CBSI.

Central America. Neither measure would stipulate an overall assistance level for Central America. However, H.Rept. 118-146 would designate \$211.7 million of INCLE funds for the region, including \$37.5 million for Costa Rica, and \$15.0 million of DA for democracy programs in Nicaragua. The report also would allocate \$8.5 million of FMF to Costa Rica. H.R. 4665 would require the State Department to withhold 50% of assistance for the central governments of El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras (the *Northern Triangle* countries) until the Secretary certifies that those governments are cooperating with the United States to counter transnational

crime and repatriate migrants; taking steps to stem mass migration, combat financial crimes, and improve the rule of law; and improving business and investment conditions. The bill would provide more exceptions to the withholding requirement than legislation in prior years, including for security assistance to combat transnational crime and protect national borders.

S. 2438 would provide \$100.0 million for locally led development programs in the Northern Triangle; \$70.0 million to reduce violence against women and girls in Central America; \$61.5 million for anti-corruption entities and activities in Central America; and \$15.0 million for democracy programs in Nicaragua. The bill would prohibit FMF for the Northern Triangle countries would and require the State Department to withhold 60% of ESF and international security assistance (e.g., INCLE, NADR, IMET) to support the central governments of those countries until the Secretary of State certifies that those governments have met a series of conditions related to corruption, human rights, migration, and other congressional concerns. The bill's exceptions to the withholding requirement and reprogramming directives would be similar to those in other SFOPS measures enacted in recent years.

Colombia. The FY2024 SFOPS measures reported in the House and Senate diverge significantly on Colombia. H.R. 4665 would not designate a funding level for Colombia and would prohibit the use of any assistance for reparation payments or subsidies outlined in Colombia's 2016 peace accord or alternative development projects on properties where illegal substances are grown, produced, imported, or distributed. H.Rept. 118-146 asserts that the "Committee defers consideration of funding for Colombia," due to concerns about the current Colombian government, but "will continue to review events and policies as the appropriations process moves forward."

S. 2438 would provide \$487.4 million for Colombia—\$43.4 million more than the Administration requested for FY2024. The bill would designate "not less than" \$40.0 million of the total aid to support activities intended to improve rural security in municipalities with high levels of illicit activities, including coca production. Similar to prior SFOPS measures, S. 2438 would require the State Department to withhold 20% of INCLE aid to Colombia until the Secretary of State certifies that the Colombian government is implementing certain counternarcotics policies and to withhold 20% of FMF and 5% of INCLE to Colombia until the Secretary certifies that the Colombian government has met certain human rights conditions. Prior to obligating any funds, S.Rept. 118-71 would require the Secretary of State, in coordination with the USAID Administrator, to submit a report to the Appropriations Committees on the Colombian government's counternarcotics strategy and how U.S. assistance would support both implementation of that strategy and U.S. national interests.

Haiti. Although neither measure would specify a comprehensive appropriation level for Haiti, both measures include some funding directives. H.Rept. 118-146 would direct that "not less than" \$20.0 million of ESF be made available to establish maternal and neonatal care hospital units within 10 kilometers of the Haiti-Dominican Republic border. S.Rept. 118-71 would designate \$20.0 million to support rural medical care, \$8.5 million for reforestation efforts, and "not less than" \$5.0 million to help meet the sanitary, medical, and nutritional needs of Haitian prisoners. The report also recommends "not less than" the FY2023 allocation for law enforcement programs for Haiti.

Both bills would require the State Department to withhold aid to the Haitian government until certain conditions have been met. Prior to the release of funds, H.R. 4665 would require the Secretary to certify that Haiti has held credible elections and that it is in the national interest of the United States to provide assistance. S. 2438 would require the Secretary to certify that a new democratically elected government has taken office or a broadly representative transitional government is in place and that it is in the national interest of the United States to provide

assistance. Both bills would include exceptions to the withholding requirement for democracy and health programs, disaster relief and recovery, and anti-gang police and justice sector activities.

Inter-American Foundation. Whereas S. 2438 would fully fund the Administration's \$52.0 million request for the IAF, H.R. 4665 would provide \$22.5 million for the agency. H.Rept. 118-146 would encourage USAID to coordinate its local civil society investments with the IAF and would encourage the IAF to increase its focus on the Caribbean and Latin American countries where USAID has less of a presence.

Mexico. Neither S. 2438 nor H.R. 4665 would specify a comprehensive appropriation level for Mexico; however, both measures would place conditions on certain types of assistance. H.R. 4665 would require the State Department to withhold 15% of international security assistance (e.g., INCLE, NADR, IMET, FMF) for Mexico until the Secretary certifies that the Mexican government has taken steps to reduce the amount of fentanyl arriving at the United States-Mexico border and to dismantle transnational criminal organizations. The bill also would require the Secretary of State to report to selected congressional committees within 30 days of enactment—and prior to the initial obligation of ESF assistance—how such assistance would address the movement of fentanyl and other opioids from Mexico to the United States. H.Rept. 118-146 would direct the State Department and USAID to prioritize assistance activities in Mexico that strengthen the capacity of Mexican judicial and security institutions to combat crime, especially crime associated with fentanyl and other narcotics trafficking.

S. 2438 would prohibit the obligation of INCLE assistance for the Mexican government until the Secretary of State submits a report to the Committees on Appropriations assessing the extent to which during the past two years the Mexican government has supported joint counternarcotics operations, intelligence sharing with U.S. counterparts, efforts to degrade transnational criminal organizations in Mexico, and the extradition of criminals sought by the United States. S.Rept. 118-71 would require the Secretary to submit a second report to the Committees on Appropriations prior to the obligation of INCLE funds, assessing the extent to which the Mexican government is addressing certain human rights issues and the extent to which U.S. assistance has supported those objectives.

In addition to any assistance provided for Mexico, S. 2438 would provide “not less than” \$125.0 million for programs to counter the flow of fentanyl, fentanyl precursors, and other synthetic drugs and their precursor materials from the People's Republic of China to the United States, including through other countries and across the United States-Mexico border.

Venezuela. H.R. 4665 and S. 2438 each would designate \$50.0 million of ESF for democracy programs in Venezuela and would direct U.S. agencies to continue providing support to other Latin American and Caribbean countries hosting Venezuelan migrants and refugees. H.R. 4665 also would require the State Department to withhold 50% of funds for election-related activities until the Secretary of State certifies that such elections allow for participation from the Venezuelan diaspora and are open to credible international observation. Neither bill would specifically fund the Administration's \$4.0 million GHP request for Venezuela.

Options for Congress

The COVID-19 pandemic eroded more than a decade of development gains in Latin America and the Caribbean, and many countries have yet to fully recover. This deterioration in living conditions has contributed to increased political instability and irregular migration throughout the Western Hemisphere. The Biden Administration asserted in its National Security Strategy that

there is a “direct link between the region’s prosperity and security and that of our own.”²⁷ Congressional decisions regarding foreign assistance appropriations will help determine how the United States responds to challenges in Latin America and the Caribbean and the relative prioritization of U.S. objectives in the region. Congress also could help guide U.S. foreign assistance policy in the region by enacting authorization legislation or using its various oversight mechanisms.

Appropriations. Eyeing the start of the fiscal year on October 1, 2023, Members may conclude action on FY2024 SFOPS appropriations, pass a short-term continuing resolution to maintain FY2023—or alternative—funding levels until a long-term agreement can be reached, enact a long-term continuing resolution for the full fiscal year, or take no action. Such actions also could include consideration of the Administration’s emergency supplemental appropriations request. A final FY2024 SFOPS bill would allow Congress to alter foreign assistance funding priorities, directives, and reporting requirements for Latin America and the Caribbean to reflect changes in the region and in U.S. policy over the past year. It also would provide clarity to U.S. agencies on funding levels as they plan and implement activities. A continuing resolution would be less likely to modify funding levels or policy toward the region but could keep existing programs running in the absence of congressional agreement on potential changes.

Authorizations. In addition to appropriating assistance for Latin America and the Caribbean, Congress could shape longer-term U.S. foreign assistance policy toward the region with authorization legislation. Although Congress has not enacted a comprehensive foreign assistance authorization since 1985 (P.L. 99-83), it occasionally has authorized specific aid programs or initiatives or has passed legislation mandating government strategies or establishing sectoral priorities. In the 118th Congress, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee has reported the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative Authorization Act (S. 841), which would authorize \$82.0 million to be appropriated for the CBSI annually in FY2023 through FY2027 and would establish specific objectives, priorities, and reporting requirements for the initiative; a similar measure (H.R. 1802) has been introduced in the House. Another bill reported by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the United States Legal Gold and Mining Partnership Act (S. 797), would direct the Secretary of State to develop a multiyear strategy to combat illicit gold mining in the Western Hemisphere and would authorize \$10.0 million to be appropriated to the State Department to implement the strategy. Other measures introduced in the first session of the 118th Congress (e.g. H.R. 3194 and H.R. 3599) would authorize funding and/or certain foreign assistance activities in Central America.

Oversight. Beyond legislation, Congress could consider whether or not to exercise increased oversight of U.S. assistance programs in Latin America and the Caribbean and of the executive branch agencies that administer those programs. The 118th Congress has held hearings on the Biden Administration’s FY2024 SFOPS budget request for Latin America and the Caribbean as well as U.S. policy toward particular countries, such as Colombia and Haiti. If Congress chooses to pursue increased oversight of U.S. assistance policies, committees could hold additional hearings and Members could conduct factfinding missions to the region to assess major U.S. initiatives, such as the U.S. Strategy for Addressing the Root Causes of Migration in Central America; the CBSI; and the U.S.-Mexico Bicentennial Framework for Security, Public Health, and Safe Communities. Such efforts could examine the extent to which those initiatives are meeting their stated objectives and what changes, if any, could make them more effective.

²⁷ White House, *National Security Strategy*, October 2022, p. 40.

Appendix. U.S. Foreign Assistance to Latin America and the Caribbean by Account and by Country or Regional Program: FY2022 Actual and FY2024 Request

Table A-1. State Department- and USAID-Managed Foreign Assistance to Latin America and the Caribbean: FY2022 Actual

(millions of current U.S. dollars)

	DA	ESF	GHP- USAID	GHP- State	INCLE	NADR	IMET	FMF	Total
Argentina	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.6	—	0.6
Bahamas	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.2	—	0.2
Belize	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.2	—	0.2
Brazil	25.0	—	4.0	—	—	—	0.8	—	29.8
Chile	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.4	—	0.4
Colombia	80.0	147.0 ^a	9.0	2.9	189.0	21.0	1.5	40.0	490.3
Costa Rica	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.7	7.5	8.2
Cuba	—	20.0	—	—	—	—	—	—	20.0
Dominican Republic	21.7	3.0 ^a	—	21.3	—	—	0.5	—	46.5
Ecuador	27.0	—	—	—	13.3	—	0.3	5.0	45.6
El Salvador	84.0	—	4.0	10.3	—	—	0.4	—	98.7
Guatemala	85.5	20.0 ^a	19.0	12.6	—	—	0.4	—	137.4
Guyana	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.2	—	0.2
Haiti	59.0	20.5 ^a	24.5	103.1	30.3	—	0.1	—	237.4
Honduras	95.0	10.0 ^a	5.0	7.5	—	—	0.4	—	117.9
Jamaica	6.5	—	4.0	13.2	—	—	0.6	—	24.3
Mexico	4.0	56.8	—	—	64.0	1.2	1.2	—	127.1
Nicaragua	15.0	—	—	2.0	—	—	—	—	17.0
Panama	—	—	—	11.3	—	0.5	0.7	—	12.5
Paraguay	4.0	—	—	—	—	—	0.3	—	4.3
Peru	45.7	—	6.0	2.0	47.8	1.0	0.6	6.0	109.1
Suriname	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.2	—	0.2
Trinidad and Tobago	—	—	—	1.4	—	—	0.3	—	1.7
Uruguay	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.3	—	0.3
Venezuela	—	40.0	5.0	3.6	—	—	—	—	48.6
Barbados and Eastern Caribbean	14.3	10.0 ^a	—	—	—	—	0.4	—	24.6

	DA	ESF	GHP- USAID	GHP- State	INCLE	NADR	IMET	FMF	Total
USAID Caribbean Development ^b	8.9	6.5	—	—	—	—	—	—	15.4
USAID Central America ^b	33.0	2.0	—	—	—	—	—	—	35.0
USAID South America ^b	27.0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	27.0
USAID Latin America and Caribbean ^b	21.0	6.7	11.0	—	—	—	—	—	38.7
State Central America	—	111.0	—	—	155.0	2.0	—	10.0	278.0
State Western Hemisphere ^b	—	43.0	—	0.2	42.4	6.5	—	10.0	102.0
[Caribbean Basin Security Initiative] ^b	[—]	[35.0]	[—]	[—]	[35.0]	[—]	[—]	[10.0]	[80.0]
Total	656.5	501.4 ^a	91.5	191.3	541.8	32.1	11.3	78.5	2,104.4 ^a

Sources: U.S. Department of State, *Congressional Budget Justification, Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs, Supplementary Tables, Fiscal Year 2024*, April 2023; and “Explanatory Statement Submitted by Ms. DeLauro, Chair of the House Committee on Appropriations, Regarding the House Amendment to H.R. 2471, Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2022,” *Congressional Record*, vol. 168, no. 42—Book IV (March 9, 2022), p. H3007.

Notes: Figures may not sum to totals due to rounding. DA = Development Assistance; ESF = Economic Support Fund; FMF = Foreign Military Financing; GHP = Global Health Programs; IMET = International Military Education and Training; INCLE = International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement; NADR = Nonproliferation, Anti-terrorism, Demining, and Related Programs; State = U.S. Department of State; USAID = U.S. Agency for International Development.

- a. ESF figures for noted countries include a combined \$64.0 million of supplemental assistance appropriated in the Additional Ukraine Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2022 (P.L. 117-128). ESF total includes \$5.0 million appropriated as a voluntary contribution to the Organization of American States.
- b. USAID and State Department regional programs fund region-wide initiatives as well as activities that cross borders or take place in non-presence countries. These regional programs provide the majority of U.S. assistance received by some Latin American and Caribbean countries. The Caribbean Basin Security Initiative is funded through the State Western Hemisphere Regional program.

Table A-2. State Department- and USAID-Managed Foreign Assistance to Latin America and the Caribbean: FY2024 Request
(millions of current U.S. dollars)

	DA	ESF	GHP- USAID	GHP- State	INCLE	NADR	IMET	FMF	Total
Argentina	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.8	—	0.8
Bahamas	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.3	—	0.3
Belize	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.3	—	0.3
Brazil	35.0	—	6.0	—	—	—	1.0	—	42.0
Chile	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.7	—	0.7
Colombia	103.0	122.0	9.0	—	160.0	10.0	2.0	38.0	444.0

	DA	ESF	GHP- USAID	GHP- State	INCLE	NADR	IMET	FMF	Total
Costa Rica	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.6	—	0.6
Cuba	—	20.0	—	—	—	—	—	—	20.0
Dominican Republic	21.9	—	4.0	20.0	—	—	0.7	—	46.5
Ecuador	27.0	—	—	—	15.0	1.0	0.6	5.0	48.6
El Salvador	119.0	—	5.0	—	—	—	0.8	—	124.8
Guatemala	138.7	—	25.0	—	—	—	0.8	—	164.5
Guyana	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.3	—	0.3
Haiti	113.2	—	33.0	100.0	45.0	—	0.3	—	291.5
Honduras	129.7	—	6.0	—	—	—	0.8	—	136.5
Jamaica	6.0	—	5.0	—	—	—	0.8	—	11.8
Mexico	—	60.7	—	—	48.0	1.0	1.7	—	111.4
Nicaragua	15.0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	15.0
Panama	—	—	—	—	—	0.5	0.7	—	1.2
Paraguay	4.0	—	—	—	—	—	0.5	—	4.5
Peru	55.0	—	8.5	—	41.3	2.0	0.8	—	107.6
Suriname	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.3	—	0.3
Trinidad and Tobago	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.4	—	0.4
Uruguay	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.4	—	0.4
Venezuela	—	50.0	4.0	—	—	—	—	—	54.0
Barbados and Eastern Caribbean	20.5	—	2.5	—	—	—	1.0	—	24.0
USAID Caribbean Development ^a	17.0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	17.0
USAID Central America ^a	85.2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	85.2
USAID South America ^a	55.4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	55.4
USAID Latin America and Caribbean ^a	25.2	5.0	11.5	—	—	—	—	—	41.7
State Central America ^a	—	167.5	—	43.6	191.2	5.0	—	10.5	417.8
State Western Hemisphere ^a	—	106.9	—	26.4	36.0	12.6	—	20.0	201.9
[Caribbean Basin Security Initiative] ^a	[—]	[28.0]	[—]	[—]	[29.0]	[—]	[—]	[7.5]	[64.5]
Total	90.7	532.1	119.5	190.0	536.5	32.1	16.2	73.5	2,470.7

Source: U.S. Department of State, *Congressional Budget Justification, Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs, Supplementary Tables, Fiscal Year 2024*, April 2023.

Notes: Figures may not sum to totals due to rounding. DA = Development Assistance; ESF = Economic Support Fund; GHP = Global Health Programs; FMF = Foreign Military Financing; IMET = International Military Education and Training; INCLE = International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement; NADR = Nonproliferation, Anti-

terrorism, Demining, and Related Programs; State = U.S. Department of State; USAID = U.S. Agency for International Development.

- a. USAID and State Department regional programs fund region-wide initiatives as well as activities that cross borders or take place in non-presence countries. These regional programs provide the majority of U.S. assistance received by some Latin American and Caribbean countries. The Caribbean Basin Security Initiative is funded through the State Western Hemisphere Regional program.

Author Information

Peter J. Meyer
Specialist in Latin American and Canadian Affairs

Disclaimer

This document was prepared by the Congressional Research Service (CRS). CRS serves as nonpartisan shared staff to congressional committees and Members of Congress. It operates solely at the behest of and under the direction of Congress. Information in a CRS Report should not be relied upon for purposes other than public understanding of information that has been provided by CRS to Members of Congress in connection with CRS's institutional role. CRS Reports, as a work of the United States Government, are not subject to copyright protection in the United States. Any CRS Report may be reproduced and distributed in its entirety without permission from CRS. However, as a CRS Report may include copyrighted images or material from a third party, you may need to obtain the permission of the copyright holder if you wish to copy or otherwise use copyrighted material.