

# **U.S. Foreign Assistance to Latin America and the Caribbean: FY2025 Appropriations**

Updated January 14, 2025

**Congressional Research Service**

<https://crsreports.congress.gov>

R48266



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January 14, 2025

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# U.S. Foreign Assistance to Latin America and the Caribbean: FY2025 Appropriations

The United States provides foreign assistance to Latin American and Caribbean countries to support development and other U.S. objectives. The emphasis of U.S. policy in the region has shifted over time, 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 prioritized programs intended to counter HIV/AIDS and instability 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.

## FY2025 Budget Request

For FY2025, the Biden Administration requested \$2.2 billion in foreign assistance for Latin America and the Caribbean under accounts managed by the State Department and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). That total is \$161.9 million (7.9%) above the estimated amount allocated for the region for FY2023 (the most recent fiscal year for which such data are available). The Administration's FY2025 budget request also included \$52.0 million for the Inter-American Foundation (IAF)—an independent U.S. government agency that supports grassroots development in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Similar to prior years, the Administration's budget proposal for the region prioritized funding for regional initiatives in Central America and the Caribbean and bilateral assistance for Colombia, Haiti, Mexico, and Venezuela. The Administration requested at least \$632.6 million to continue implementation of the U.S. Strategy for Addressing the Root Causes of Migration in Central America; \$413.3 million for Colombia, primarily to support counternarcotics efforts, peace accord implementation, and the integration of Venezuelan migrants; \$356.7 million for Haiti to restore democratic institutions, improve security, and address basic human needs; \$109.7 million for Mexico, mainly to combat illicit drugs and strengthen the rule of law; \$81.0 million for the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI); and \$53.8 million for Venezuela, mostly to support democratic actors and civil society organizations. These priorities account for nearly 75% of the total foreign assistance funding that the Administration requested for Latin America and the Caribbean for FY2025.

## Legislative Developments

As of January 14, 2025, Congress has not concluded action on FY2025 Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs (SFOPS) appropriations. The House Appropriations Committee reported its FY2025 SFOPS bill (H.R. 8771/H.Rept. 118-554) on June 14, 2024, and the House passed the bill on June 28, 2024. The Senate Appropriations Committee reported a separate SFOPS bill (S. 4797/S.Rept. 118-200) on July 25, 2024. The 118<sup>th</sup> Congress did not take further action on either bill. It passed two continuing resolutions (P.L. 118-83 and P.L. 118-158) that fund foreign aid programs in the region at the same rate, and under the same conditions and authority, as FY2024 (P.L. 118-47, Division F) from October 1, 2024, until March 14, 2025.

Congress may draw from H.R. 8771 and S. 4797 as it considers final FY2025 appropriations. Both measures would direct funding levels and/or impose conditions or restrictions for certain programs in Latin America and the Caribbean. For example, both measures would appropriate less funding than the Administration requested for Colombia and more funding than the Administration requested for the CBSI. Other programs would be left for allocation by the Administration, subject to overall enacted appropriations levels and consultations with Congress.

In addition to determining aid levels and objectives for Latin America and the Caribbean in FY2025, Congress could consider authorization legislation or use its oversight authority to help guide U.S. foreign assistance policy in the region.

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## 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.<sup>1</sup> Current aid programs reflect the diverse challenges faced by 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 that have made strides in consolidating democratic governance and improving living conditions no longer receive traditional U.S. development assistance but may receive some U.S. support to address shared security challenges, such as transnational crime. Congress authorizes and appropriates foreign assistance funds 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).

<sup>1</sup> 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 FY2025 budget request 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 FY2025 Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs (SFOPS) appropriations. The **Appendix** provides detailed aid allocations by foreign assistance account and by country or regional program for FY2023 and the FY2025 request. FY2024 allocations are not yet publicly available.

### Report Notes

To compare the Biden Administration’s FY2025 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 report also examines assistance managed by the Inter-American Foundation. The foreign assistance accounts examined in this report accounted for about 54% of the total aid obligated by all U.S. agencies in Latin America and the Caribbean in FY2022 (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 Grants, 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 U.S. International Development Finance Corporation. These other U.S. assistance sources are included in the comprehensive obligation data examined in the “Trends in U.S. Assistance to Latin America and the Caribbean” section of this report. This report otherwise excludes these other U.S. assistance sources from the analysis (with the exception of the “Migration and Refugee Assistance” text box) due to data inconsistencies.

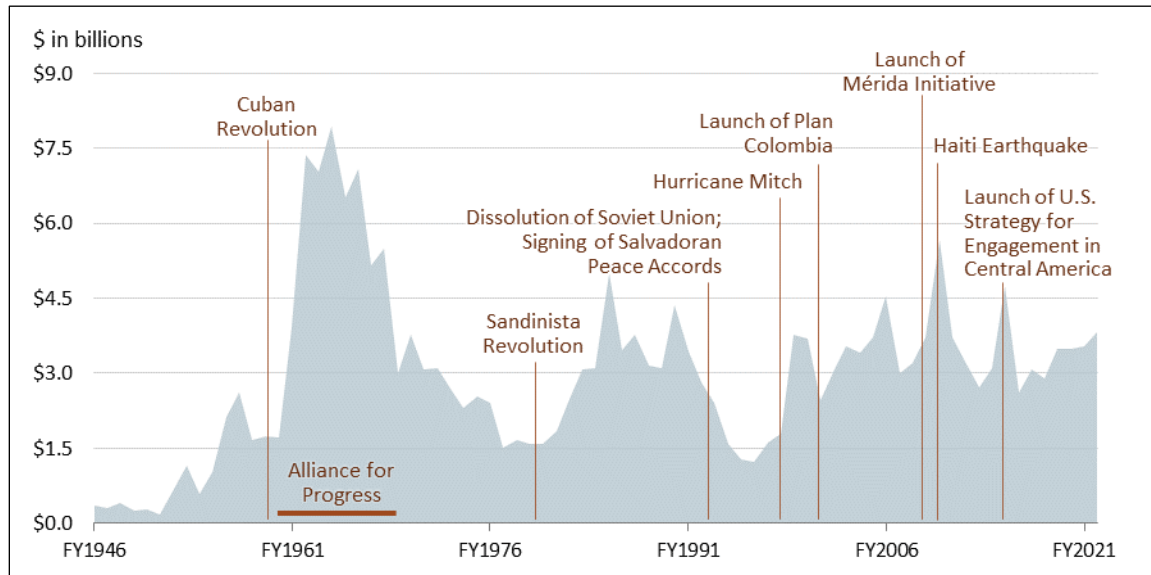
**Source:** ForeignAssistance.gov.

## 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 FY2022, the United States provided \$104.0 billion (\$228.3 billion in constant 2022 dollars) of assistance to the region.<sup>2</sup> 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**).

<sup>2</sup> 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 U.S. Department of Defense has reported partial data for FY2020-FY2022. The U.S. Departments of Homeland Security and Transportation also have reported partial data for FY2022. U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and U.S. Department of State, <https://foreignassistance.gov/>.

**Figure 2. U.S. Assistance to Latin America and the Caribbean: FY1946-FY2022**  
(obligations in constant 2022 U.S. dollars)



**Source:** CRS graphic, using data from ForeignAssistance.gov.

**Notes:** Includes aid obligations from all U.S. government agencies, adjusted for inflation. Comprehensive data for FY2023 and FY2024 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. These 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.<sup>3</sup> In addition, U.S. assistance to Haiti spiked 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 106<sup>th</sup> 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 America Regional Security Initiative (CARSI) and created a similar program for the countries of the Caribbean, known as the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI).

<sup>3</sup> The Millennium Challenge Corporation is a U.S. government entity that provides economic assistance to developing countries on a competitive basis. For more information on the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief and the Millennium Challenge Corporation, see CRS In Focus IF12463, *PEPFAR Extension Act of 2018: Extended Authorities*, by Catherine L. Able-Thomas and Tiaji Salaam-Blyther; and CRS Report RL32427, *Millennium Challenge Corporation: Overview and Issues*, by Nick M. Brown.



U.S. foreign assistance priorities in Latin America and the Caribbean have shifted over the past 15 years to respond to development advances in the region as well as subsequent setbacks. During the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, many Latin American and Caribbean countries experienced a period of strong economic growth and devoted increased resources to social welfare programs. By 2014, the percentage of people living in poverty in Latin America had fallen to 27.7% (down from 44.1% at the start of the century), and the World Bank classified most Latin American and Caribbean countries as “upper middle income” and a few as “high income” economies.<sup>4</sup> 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. These changes in the region, combined with U.S. budget constraints in the aftermath of the 2008-2009 recession, led the U.S. government to slightly reduce assistance to Latin America and the Caribbean and concentrate those resources in fewer countries and sectors.

U.S. assistance efforts in Latin America and the Caribbean have gradually expanded over the past decade, as many countries in the region have experienced setbacks in long-term development and new challenges have emerged.<sup>5</sup> 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 Coronavirus Disease 2019 pandemic swept away more than a decade of development gains.<sup>6</sup> 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 large-scale migration flows throughout Latin America and the Caribbean and challenges at the U.S. Southwest border.<sup>7</sup>

## FY2025 Foreign Assistance Budget Request and Legislative Developments<sup>8</sup>

For FY2025, the Biden Administration requested \$2.2 billion of foreign assistance for Latin America and the Caribbean under accounts managed by the State Department and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). That total is \$161.9 million (7.9%) above the estimated amount allocated for the region for FY2023 (the most recent fiscal year for which such data are available; see **Table 1**). The Administration also requested \$52.0 million for the IAF, an

<sup>4</sup> UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), “CEPALSTAT,” statistical database, [https://statistics.cepal.org/portal/cepalstat/dashboard.html?indicator\\_id=3328&area\\_id=930&lang=en](https://statistics.cepal.org/portal/cepalstat/dashboard.html?indicator_id=3328&area_id=930&lang=en); World Bank, “The World by Income and Region,” <https://datatopics.worldbank.org/world-development-indicators/the-world-by-income-and-region.html>.

<sup>5</sup> 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.

<sup>6</sup> ECLAC, *Social Panorama of Latin America 2021*, January 2022.

<sup>7</sup> See, for example, Michael Stott, “Repression and Poverty Trigger Record Migration in the Americas,” *Financial Times*, September 11, 2022; and Camilo Montoya-Galvez, “Historic Venezuelan Refugee Crisis Tests U.S. Border Policies,” CBS News, September 26, 2023.

<sup>8</sup> Unless otherwise noted, data and other information in this section are drawn from U.S. Department of State, *Congressional Budget Justification, Foreign Operations, Appendix 2, Fiscal Year 2025*, April 2024; and U.S. Department of State, *Congressional Budget Justification, Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs, Supplementary Tables, Fiscal Year 2025*, April 2024. For information on the Administration’s global FY2025 request and legislative developments, see CRS Report R48231, *Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs: FY2025 Budget and Appropriations*, by Emily M. McCabe and Cory R. Gill.

independent U.S. government agency that supports grassroots development in the region (see “Inter-American Foundation”).

As of January 14, 2025, Congress has not concluded action on FY2025 SFOPS appropriations. The House Appropriations Committee reported its FY2025 SFOPS bill (H.R. 8771/H.Rept. 118-554) on June 14, 2024, and the House passed the bill on June 28, 2024. The Senate Appropriations Committee reported a separate SFOPS bill (S. 4797/S.Rept. 118-200) on July 25, 2024. The 118<sup>th</sup> Congress did not take further action on either bill. It passed two continuing resolutions (P.L. 118-83 and P.L. 118-158) that fund foreign aid programs in the region at the same rate, and under the same conditions and authority, as FY2024 (P.L. 118-47, Division F) from October 1, 2024, until March 14, 2025.<sup>9</sup>

Congress may draw from H.R. 8771 and S. 4797 as it considers final FY2025 appropriations. Neither measure would specify comprehensive appropriations levels for every Latin American and Caribbean country or for the region as a whole, leaving some allocations to be determined by executive agencies, subject to overall enacted appropriations levels and consultations with Congress. Nevertheless, both measures include various funding directives, restrictions, and conditions related to countries and initiatives in the region (see “Major Regional and Country Initiatives”).

Both measures also would set broad priorities for U.S. assistance policy in Latin America and the Caribbean. H.R. 8771 would direct U.S. agencies to prioritize funding for countries and programs that are

- countering fentanyl and other narcotics trafficking;
- respecting norms of democracy, constitutional order, and human rights;
- cooperating in the countering of regional and global authoritarian threats; and
- demonstrating commitment and progress in offsetting large-scale migration and human trafficking from or through the Western Hemisphere.<sup>10</sup>

Similarly, S. 4797 would direct U.S. agencies to prioritize programs in the region that

- address the violence, economic insecurity, inequality, corruption, and other factors that contribute to irregular migration;
- protect the rights of Indigenous people and support civil society and other independent institutions;
- advance democracy, constitutional order, and human rights; and
- counter fentanyl and other narcotics trafficking.<sup>11</sup>

## **Major Foreign Assistance Accounts**

Similar to its prior year proposals, the Biden Administration requested the majority (68.2%) of FY2025 funding for Latin America and the Caribbean through foreign assistance accounts that fund economic and other development assistance programs: Development Assistance (DA), Economic Support Fund (ESF), and Global Health Programs (GHP). The Administration requested the remainder (31.8%) of the funding for the region through foreign assistance accounts

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<sup>9</sup> For more information on FY2024 appropriations for Latin America and the Caribbean, see CRS Report R47721, *U.S. Foreign Assistance to Latin America and the Caribbean: FY2024 Appropriations*, by Peter J. Meyer.

<sup>10</sup> H.R. 8771 §7045(a)(1).

<sup>11</sup> S. 4797 §7045(a)(1).

that fund military and civilian security assistance programs: Foreign Military Financing (FMF); International Military Education and Training (IMET); International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement (INCLE); and Nonproliferation, Anti-terrorism, Demining, and Related programs (NADR).

**Table 1. State Department- and USAID-Managed Foreign Assistance to Latin America and the Caribbean by Account: FY2022-FY2025 Request**

(millions of current U.S. dollars)

Foreign Assistance Account	FY2022 (actual)	FY2023 (est. actual)	FY2025 (request)	% Change (FY23-FY25)
Development Assistance	656.5	663.7	672.5	+1.3%
Economic Support Fund	501.4 <sup>a</sup>	472.5	523.5 <sup>b</sup>	+10.8%
Global Health Programs (USAID)	91.5	115.5	119.0	+3.0%
Global Health Programs (State)	191.3	198.8	190.0	-4.4%
International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement	541.8	470.2	584.9	+24.4%
Nonproliferation, Anti-terrorism, Demining, and Related Programs	32.1	41.1	30.1	-26.8%
International Military Education and Training	11.3	12.5	16.2	+29.5%
Foreign Military Financing	78.5	69.0	69.0	—
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,104.4<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>2,043.3</b>	<b>2,205.2<sup>b</sup></b>	<b>+7.9%</b>

**Sources:** U.S. Department of State, *Congressional Budget Justification, Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs, Supplementary Tables, Fiscal Year 2025*, April 2024; 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:** FY2024 allocations are not yet publicly available.

- a. Sum includes \$64.0 million of supplemental assistance appropriated in the Additional Ukraine Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2022 (P.L. 117-128).
- b. Sum does not include \$100.0 million the Administration requested as part of its global budget proposal for a contribution to Brazil's Amazon Fund.

## Development Assistance

The Administration requested \$672.5 million (30.5% of the total) for Latin America and the Caribbean through the DA account, which seeks to foster broad-based economic growth and social welfare in low- and middle-income countries.<sup>12</sup> USAID has used DA funding for long-term projects in areas such as agriculture, democracy and governance, economic reform, education, and environmental protection. Compared with the FY2023 estimated allocation, the FY2025 budget proposal would increase DA funding for the region by \$8.8 million (1.3%). Although the overall DA funding level for the region would remain fairly stable, the Administration proposed a \$47.2 million decrease in DA for Honduras, in part to bring assistance for Honduras back in line with prior years after a congressionally directed increase for FY2023. That reduction for Honduras would be offset by increases for other countries and USAID's South America Regional

<sup>12</sup> The World Bank classifies 23 of the 33 independent Latin American and Caribbean countries as "lower middle income" or "upper middle income" economies and 9 countries as "high income" economies. Venezuela is unclassified due to a lack of data.

program, primarily to promote the integration of the nearly 6.2 million Venezuelans estimated to reside in other South American countries as of June 2024.<sup>13</sup>

**House Legislation.** H.R. 8771/H.Rept. 118-554 would not designate a comprehensive DA total for Latin America and the Caribbean but would appropriate 33.8% less funding for DA globally than the Administration requested.

**Senate Legislation.** S. 4797/S.Rept. 118-200 would not designate a comprehensive DA total for Latin America and the Caribbean but would appropriate 8.4% less funding for DA globally than the Administration requested.

## **Economic Support Fund**

The Administration requested \$523.5 million (23.7% of the total) for the region through the ESF account, which provides economic assistance, in part to promote special U.S. political, economic, or security interests. In practice, ESF programs aim to promote political and economic stability and may be indistinguishable from programs funded through the DA account. Compared with the FY2023 estimated allocation, the FY2025 budget proposal would increase ESF assistance for the region by \$51.0 million (10.8%). Among other changes, the proposal would increase ESF funding for several USAID and State Department regional programs, primarily to support migration management throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. In addition to the regional ESF aid, the Administration has requested \$100.0 million in global ESF as a contribution to Brazil's Amazon Fund, which finances conservation and sustainable economic development activities in the Amazon forest.

**House Legislation.** H.R. 8771/H.Rept. 118-554 would not designate a comprehensive ESF total for Latin America and the Caribbean but would appropriate 16.6% less funding for ESF globally than the Administration requested.

**Senate Legislation.** S. 4797/S.Rept. 118-200 would not designate a comprehensive ESF total for Latin America and the Caribbean but would appropriate 0.7% less funding for ESF globally than the Administration requested.

## **Global Health Programs**

The Administration requested \$309.0 million (14.0% of the total) for Latin America and the Caribbean through the GHP account. This sum includes \$190.0 million requested for the State Department, primarily to prevent and treat HIV/AIDS. It also includes \$119.0 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 infectious disease outbreaks. Compared with the FY2023 estimated allocation for the region, the FY2025 budget proposal would reduce State Department-managed GHP aid by \$8.8 million (4.4%) and increase USAID-managed GHP aid by \$3.5 million (3.0%).

**House Legislation.** H.R. 8771/H.Rept. 118-554 would not designate a comprehensive GHP total for Latin America and the Caribbean but would appropriate 3.3% less funding for State Department-managed GHP and 9.2% less funding for USAID-managed GHP globally than the Administration requested.

**Senate Legislation.** S. 4797/S.Rept. 118-200 would not designate a comprehensive GHP total for Latin America and the Caribbean but would appropriate 0.2% more funding for State

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<sup>13</sup> R4V Inter-Agency Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela, "Venezuelan Refugees & Migrants in the Region," June 3, 2024.

Department-managed GHP and 4.0% less funding for USAID-managed GHP globally than the Administration requested.

### **International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement**

The Administration requested \$584.9 million (26.5% of the total) for the region through the INCLE account for counternarcotics programs, civilian law enforcement efforts, and projects intended to strengthen judicial institutions. Compared with the FY2023 estimated allocation, the FY2025 budget proposal would increase INCLE funding for Latin America and the Caribbean by \$114.7 million (24.4%). Under the proposal, slight reductions in aid to Colombia and Peru would be offset by a significant increase for Haiti intended to strengthen the capacity of the Haitian national police, combat gang influence, and support the UN-authorized, Kenyan-led Multinational Security Support mission.

**House Legislation.** H.R. 8771/H.Rept. 118-554 would not designate a comprehensive INCLE total for Latin America and the Caribbean but would appropriate 31.9% more funding for INCLE globally than the Administration requested.

**Senate Legislation.** S. 4797/S.Rept. 118-200 would not designate a comprehensive INCLE total for Latin America and the Caribbean but would appropriate 10.6% less funding for INCLE globally than the Administration requested.

### **Nonproliferation, Anti-terrorism, Demining, and Related Programs**

The Administration requested \$30.1 million (1.4% of the total) for Latin America and the Caribbean through the 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. Compared with the FY2023 estimated allocation, the FY2025 budget proposal would reduce NADR funding for the region by \$11.0 million (26.8%), largely due to the Colombian government gradually assuming responsibility for demining efforts formerly funded by U.S. assistance.

**House Legislation.** H.R. 8771/H.Rept. 118-554 would not designate a comprehensive NADR total for Latin America and the Caribbean but would fully fund the Administration's global NADR request.

**Senate Legislation.** S. 4797/S.Rept. 118-200 would not designate a comprehensive NADR total for Latin America and the Caribbean but would appropriate 4.0% less funding for NADR globally than the Administration requested.

### **International Military Education and Training**

The Administration requested \$16.2 million (0.7% of the total) for the region through the IMET account to train Latin American and Caribbean military and civilian security personnel. Compared with the FY2023 estimated allocation, the FY2025 budget proposal would increase IMET funding for the region by \$3.7 million (29.5%), spreading the additional resources among countries throughout the region.

**House Legislation.** H.R. 8771/H.Rept. 118-554 would not designate a comprehensive IMET total for Latin America and the Caribbean but would appropriate the same amount of funding for IMET globally as the Administration requested.



**Senate Legislation.** S. 4797/S.Rept. 118-200 would not designate a comprehensive IMET total for Latin America and the Caribbean but would fully fund the Administration's global IMET request.

### **Foreign Military Financing**

The Administration requested \$69.0 million (3.1% of the total) for Latin America and the Caribbean through the FMF account to provide U.S. military equipment and services to Colombia and other partners in the region. The Administration requested the same amount of FMF funding for the region in FY2025 as was allocated to the region in FY2023.

**House Legislation.** H.R. 8771/H.Rept. 118-554 would not designate a comprehensive FMF total for Latin America and the Caribbean but would appropriate 12.2% more funding for FMF globally than the Administration requested.

**Senate Legislation.** S. 4797/S.Rept. 118-200 would not designate a comprehensive FMF total for Latin America and the Caribbean but would appropriate 1.3% more funding for FMF globally than the Administration requested.

### **Migration and Refugee Assistance**

The State Department and the U.S. Agency for International Development have provided additional foreign assistance to Latin America and the Caribbean appropriated through global humanitarian accounts. The State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) administers the Migration and Refugee Assistance (MRA) and Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance (ERMA) accounts intended to address the humanitarian needs of vulnerable migrants, refugees, and internally displaced persons. PRM has channeled such assistance through international organizations, such as the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

For FY2025, the Biden Administration requested \$475.0 million of MRA for Overseas Assistance in the Western Hemisphere. In FY2023, total MRA obligations for the region, which may have included appropriations from multiple fiscal years, totaled \$543.9 million. PRM's top funding priority in the hemisphere has been supporting the basic needs and economic and social integration of the nearly 6.6 million Venezuelan migrants and refugees estimated to reside in other Latin American and Caribbean countries. These efforts have been intended, in part, to prevent migrants from abandoning their initial destinations and engaging in secondary migration toward the U.S. Southwest border. PRM also has used MRA to assist vulnerable populations in Central America and Mexico and to support governments' efforts to address forced displacement and screen and manage migrant flows. In addition to those activities, the FY2025 request would support the Administration's Safe Mobility Initiative, which has sought to reduce irregular migration by establishing offices in the region where potential migrants are screened and vetted for refugee resettlement or other legal pathways to the United States, Canada, Spain, or other countries. To date, Safe Mobility Offices (SMOs) have been established in Colombia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, and Ecuador for migrants of certain nationalities.

**House Legislation.** H.R. 8771/H.Rept. 118-554 would not designate a comprehensive MRA total for the Western Hemisphere but would appropriate nearly 49.0% less funding for MRA globally than the Administration requested. The bill would stipulate that none of the funds appropriated may be made available for SMOs "unless expressly authorized by a subsequent Act of Congress." The House rejected a proposed amendment to the bill (H.Amdt. 1046) that would have prohibited funding for IOM activities in the Western Hemisphere. However, H.Rept. 118-554 would direct the Secretary of State to submit a report to the Appropriations Committees detailing the "locations and functions of all IOM operations" in the Western Hemisphere. H.Rept. 118-554 also would direct the Secretary of State to submit a report to the Appropriations Committees "assessing the needs of host communities for Venezuelan migrants and refugees and whether such needs are being adequately addressed in supporting such migrants and refugees."

**Senate Legislation.** S. 4797/S.Rept. 118-200 would not designate a comprehensive MRA total for the Western Hemisphere but would appropriate 5.3% more funding for MRA globally than the Administration requested. The bill would stipulate that funds appropriated by the act "shall be made available to support the efforts of governments in Latin America and the Caribbean to resettle migrants, including through policy reforms, capacity building and technical assistance, and enhanced community integration and economic development." S.Rept. 118-200 would direct the Secretary of State to submit a report to the Appropriations Committees on the Central

American Minors in-country refugee processing program that would include data on arrivals, processing times, access to services, challenges, and costs.

**Sources:** R4V Inter-Agency Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela, “Venezuelan Refugees & Migrants in the Region,” June 3, 2024; UNHCR and IOM, “Movilidad Segura,” <https://movilidadsegura.org/en/>; H.R. 8771 §7045(f)(2)(B); H.Rept. 118-554, pp. 58-59; S. 4797 §7045(d)(1); and S.Rept. 118-200, p. 46. Also see CRS In Focus IFI2538, *U.S. Efforts to Manage Western Hemisphere Migration Flows*, by Clare Ribando Seelke and Peter J. Meyer.

**Note:** IOM defines *irregular migration* as a “movement of persons that takes place outside the laws, regulations, or international agreements governing the entry into or exit from the State of origin, transit or destination.” See IOM, “Key Migration Terms,” <https://www.iom.int/key-migration-terms>.

## Major Regional and Country Initiatives

Although the Biden Administration proposed an overall increase in State Department- and USAID-managed assistance for Latin America and the Caribbean for FY2025 compared with the FY2023 estimated allocation, proposed changes varied considerably by country or regional program (see **Table A-1**). Similar to other budget proposals over the past decade, the Administration’s request for the region prioritized funding for regional initiatives in Central America and the Caribbean and bilateral assistance for Colombia, Haiti, Mexico, and Venezuela. These priorities account for nearly 75% of the total foreign assistance funding that the Administration requested for Latin America and the Caribbean for FY2025.

The House-passed and Senate-reported FY2025 SFOPS measures do not specify comprehensive appropriations levels for each of those regional and bilateral initiatives. Nevertheless, both SFOPS measures include various funding directives (see **Table 2**), restrictions, and/or conditions related to those initiatives, as discussed below.

**Table 2. U.S. Foreign Assistance for Selected Countries and Initiatives:  
FY2025 Request and Appropriations Legislation**

(millions of current U.S. dollars)

	<b>FY2023 (est. actual)</b>	<b>FY2024 (enacted)</b>	<b>FY2025 (request)</b>	<b>H.R. 8771 and H.Rept. 118-554</b>	<b>S. 4797 and S.Rept. 118-200</b>
Caribbean Basin Security Initiative	82.0	88.0	81.0	97.5	88.0
Central America	670.8 <sup>a</sup>	NA	632.6 <sup>a</sup>	NA	NA
Colombia	453.1	377.5 <sup>b</sup>	413.3	208.5 <sup>b</sup>	380.0
Haiti	230.9	NA	356.7	NA	NA
Mexico	104.6	NA	109.7	NA	NA
Venezuela	57.4	50.0 <sup>b</sup>	53.8	50.0 <sup>b</sup>	50.0 <sup>b</sup>

**Sources:** U.S. Department of State, *Congressional Budget Justification, Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs, Supplementary Tables, Fiscal Year 2025*, April 2024; P.L. 118-47 and explanatory statement; H.R. 8771/H.Rept. 118-554; and S. 4797/S.Rept. 118-200.

**Notes:** Final FY2024 allocations are not yet publicly available. NA indicates that appropriation totals are not specified in the bill or report. The Caribbean Basin Security Initiative has been funded through the State Department’s Western Hemisphere Regional program.

- a. 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 U.S. Agency for International Development-managed Central America regional programs.
- b. Totals may not be comprehensive because the legislation/explanatory statement and bills/reports do not specify funding levels for some foreign assistance accounts.

## Caribbean Basin Security Initiative<sup>14</sup>

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. For FY2025, the Biden Administration requested \$81.0 million for CBSI activities to be implemented both bilaterally and in collaboration with regional organizations such as the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the Regional Security System.<sup>15</sup> That total would be \$1.0 million (1.2%) less than the FY2023 estimated allocation and \$7 million (8.0%) less than the FY2024 enacted appropriation level for the CBSI. Similar to prior years, funding for the CBSI would be provided through the State Department’s Western Hemisphere Regional program.

**House Legislation.** H.R. 8771 would designate “not less than” \$97.5 million for the CBSI, which is \$16.5 million (20.3%) more than the Administration’s FY2025 request for the initiative and \$9.5 million (10.8%) more than the FY2024 enacted level. The bill would direct that funding made available for the initiative above the FY2024 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 are most directly impacted by the crisis in Haiti.”<sup>16</sup> H.Rept. 118-554 would further direct that CBSI funds be used to provide and maintain 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.<sup>17</sup>

**Senate Legislation.** S. 4797 would designate “not less than” \$88.0 million for the CBSI, which is \$7 million (8.6%) more than the Administration’s FY2025 request for the initiative and the same amount as the FY2024 enacted level.<sup>18</sup> S.Rept. 118-200 would express support for efforts to transfer or acquire equipment for Caribbean partner countries that need additional resources to combat drug trafficking and transnational crime.<sup>19</sup>

## Central America<sup>20</sup>

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 (the *Northern Triangle* countries) arrived at the U.S. border in 2014. However, specific policy approaches have shifted

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<sup>14</sup> For more information on the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative, see CRS In Focus IF10789, *Caribbean Basin Security Initiative*, by Karla I. Rios.

<sup>15</sup> The Caribbean Community, or CARICOM, is an intergovernmental organization of Caribbean countries focused on economic and functional integration. The Regional Security System is a collective security arrangement among seven Eastern Caribbean countries and Guyana.

<sup>16</sup> H.R. 8771 §7045(k).

<sup>17</sup> H.Rept. 118-554, pp. 121-122.

<sup>18</sup> S. 4797 §7045(h).

<sup>19</sup> S.Rept. 118-200, p. 95.

<sup>20</sup> For more information on U.S. policy in Central America, see CRS In Focus IF11151, *Central American Migration: Root Causes and U.S. Policy*, by Peter J. Meyer.



from one Administration to another. The Biden Administration proposed allocating \$4 billion over four years to implement a new 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.<sup>21</sup>

For FY2025, the Administration requested \$632.6 million to continue implementation of the strategy—\$38.2 million (5.7%) less than the FY2023 estimated allocation.<sup>22</sup> The Central America request included \$87.7 million for El Salvador, \$115.8 million for Guatemala, \$86.3 million for Honduras, and a combined \$17.1 million for the other four countries of the isthmus. The Central America request also included \$232.5 million for CARSI and \$93.3 million for other State Department- and USAID-managed regional programs in Central America.

**House Legislation.** The House-passed SFOPS measure would not designate a comprehensive funding total for Central America but would designate funding levels for certain activities and countries. H.R. 8771 would stipulate that funds “shall be made available for assistance for countries in Central America ... and shall be allocated to address the unique circumstances of each country in support of United States security interests in the region.”<sup>23</sup> The bill would provide “not less than” \$15.0 million in DA for democracy programs in Nicaragua.<sup>24</sup> H.Rept. 118-554 also would designate \$220.0 million in INCLE for CARSI, including \$40.0 million for Costa Rica; \$8.5 million in FMF for Costa Rica; and \$2.0 million in FMF for Panama.<sup>25</sup>

Similar to SFOPS legislation enacted each year since FY2016, H.R. 8771 would impose conditions on some aid to the Northern Triangle countries. The bill would require the State Department to withhold 60% of assistance for the central governments of the Northern Triangle countries until the Secretary of State certifies that those governments are cooperating with the United States to counter transnational crime; facilitating the return, repatriation, and reintegration of migrants who do not qualify for asylum in the United States; taking steps to stem mass migration; improving strategies to combat financial crimes and corruption; improving the rule of law; and improving business and investment conditions. The bill would provide more exceptions to the withholding requirement than SFOPS legislation enacted in prior years, including for security assistance to combat transnational crime and protect national borders.<sup>26</sup>

**Senate Legislation.** The Senate-reported FY2025 SFOPS measure would not designate a comprehensive funding total for Central America but would stipulate funding levels for certain priorities. S. 4797 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; and \$61.5 million for anti-corruption entities and activities in Central America.<sup>27</sup> S.Rept. 118-200

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<sup>21</sup> White House, “Fact Sheet: President Biden Sends Immigration Bill to Congress as Part of His Commitment to Modernize Our Immigration System,” January 20, 2021; and White House, *U.S. Strategy for Addressing the Root Causes of Migration in Central America*, July 2021, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Root-Causes-Strategy.pdf>.

<sup>22</sup> 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 so-called *Root Causes Strategy* is available at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Root-Causes-Strategy.pdf>.

<sup>23</sup> H.R. 8771 §7045(b)(1).

<sup>24</sup> H.R. 8771 §7045(i).

<sup>25</sup> H.Rept. 118-554, pp. 63 and 68.

<sup>26</sup> H.R. 8771 §7045(b)(2).

<sup>27</sup> S. 4797 §7045(b)(1).

also would designate \$81.9 million in DA for El Salvador, \$90.0 million in DA for Guatemala, and \$79.5 million in DA for Honduras.<sup>28</sup> Some of these funding directives may overlap.

S. 4797 would impose nearly the same conditions on aid to the Northern Triangle as those enacted in the FY2024 SFOPS legislation. The bill would prohibit FMF for the Northern Triangle countries, except for programs that support humanitarian assistance and disaster response. The bill also would require the State Department to withhold 60% of ESF and international security assistance (i.e., INCLE, NADR, IMET, FMF) to support the central governments of those countries, with certain exceptions, 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. A new provision would require the Secretary of State to consult with human rights groups and civil society organizations in the United States and in the Northern Triangle at least 30 days prior to making a certification.<sup>29</sup>

## Colombia

Colombia has been among the top recipients of U.S. assistance worldwide for more than two decades due to the U.S.-Colombia security partnership. 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. For FY2025, the Administration requested \$413.3 million for Colombia to support ongoing counternarcotics efforts, continued implementation of the Colombian government's 2016 peace accord with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC, by its Spanish acronym), integration of Venezuelan migrants and refugees, and environmental programs. Compared with the FY2023 estimated allocation, the FY2025 budget proposal would reduce aid to Colombia by \$39.8 million (8.8%), due, in part, to the Colombian government's shift away from coca eradication under the administration of President Gustavo Petro (2022-present).

**House Legislation.** H.Rept. 118-554 would designate \$208.5 million for Colombia, which is \$204.8 million (49.6%) less than the Administration's FY2025 request and \$244.6 million (54.0%) less than the FY2023 estimated level. That total may not be comprehensive, however, as the report does not designate specific funding levels for Colombia under the GHP, NADR, or IMET accounts, through which Colombia received \$34.6 million in aid for FY2023. The report states that the Appropriations Committee is "deeply concerned about the detrimental policies and relationships" of President Petro's administration, "which are at odds with American security and economic interests," and therefore would reduce DA, ESF, and INCLE funding for Colombia by 50% compared with the FY2024 enacted appropriation.<sup>30</sup>

H.R. 8771 would impose several restrictions and conditions on aid for Colombia that are similar to those enacted in annual SFOPS legislation since FY2017. H.R. 8771 would prohibit the use of any assistance for reparation payments, agrarian cash subsidies, or compensation to demobilized combatants outlined in Colombia's 2016 peace accord or for alternative development projects on properties where illegal substances are grown, produced, imported, or distributed. Prior to the obligation of any funds for Colombia, the bill would require the Secretary of State to submit a report to the House Appropriations and Foreign Affairs Committees and the Senate Appropriations and Foreign Relations Committees on the status of U.S.-Colombian relations, including an analysis of the extent to which the Colombian government is aligned with the United States on various issues. The bill also would require the State Department to withhold 30% of the

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<sup>28</sup> S.Rept. 118-200, p. 41.

<sup>29</sup> S. 4797 §7045(b)(2).

<sup>30</sup> H.Rept. 118-554, pp. 115-116.

INCLE assistance made available for Colombia until the Secretary of State certifies that the Colombian government has reduced overall coca cultivation, production, and trafficking and has continued to cooperate with the United States on joint counternarcotics strategies and extraditions in the previous 12 months.<sup>31</sup>

**Senate Legislation.** S. 4797 would provide “not less than” \$380.0 million for Colombia, which is \$33.3 million (8.1%) less than the Administration’s FY2025 request and \$73.1 million (16.1%) less than the FY2023 estimated level. The bill would stipulate that of the appropriated INCLE assistance, “not less than” \$40 million shall be made available for rural security in municipalities affected by high levels of coca production or other illicit activities.<sup>32</sup> S.Rept. 118-200 would designate \$15 million in DA for biodiversity programs in Colombia, \$25 million in ESF for Afro-Colombian and Indigenous communities, and \$15 million in ESF for human rights programming.<sup>33</sup>

Like H.R. 8771, S. 4797 would impose some restrictions and conditions on assistance for Colombia. The bill would prohibit the use of any assistance for reparation payments to conflict victims or compensation to demobilized combatants. The bill also would require the State Department to withhold 20% of INCLE aid for Colombia until the Secretary of State certifies that the Colombian government is implementing certain counternarcotics policies and to withhold 20% of FMF for Colombia until the Secretary certifies that the Colombian government has met certain human rights conditions.<sup>34</sup>

## **Haiti<sup>35</sup>**

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. For FY2025, the Administration requested \$356.7 million for Haiti, which is \$125.8 million (54.5%) more than the estimated amount allocated to the country in FY2023. Most of the additional funding would aim to strengthen the Haitian National Police and support the UN-authorized, Kenyan-led Multinational Security Support mission. The request for Haiti also included funding for long-standing health programs as well as activities in various other sectors, including agriculture, education, environment, and governance.

**House Legislation.** H.R. 8771 would not specify a comprehensive funding level for Haiti but would stipulate that funds “shall be made available for assistance for Haiti to support the basic needs of the Haitian people.”<sup>36</sup> H.Rept. 118-554 would designate \$20.0 million in ESF to assemble maternal and neonatal care hospital units within 10 kilometers of the border with the Dominican Republic “with the intention of treating pregnant Haitian women in need of delivery services who migrate toward the Dominican Republic.”<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> H.R. 8771 §7045(c).

<sup>32</sup> S. 4797 §7045(c)(1).

<sup>33</sup> S.Rept. 118-200, pp. 41 and 44.

<sup>34</sup> S. 4797 §7045(c)(2).

<sup>35</sup> For more information on U.S. policy toward Haiti, see CRS Report R47394, *Haiti: Recent Developments and U.S. Policy*, by Karla I. Rios and Clare Ribando Seelke; and CRS Insight IN12331, *Haiti in Crisis: What Role for a Multinational Security Support Mission?*, by Karla I. Rios.

<sup>36</sup> H.R. 8771 §7045(g)(1).

<sup>37</sup> H.Rept. 118-554, p. 118.

H.R. 8771 would require the State Department to withhold any aid made available to support the central government of Haiti until the Secretary of State certifies by January 1, 2025, that elections have been scheduled or held in Haiti and that it is in the United States' national interest to provide such assistance. That withholding requirement would not apply to aid intended to support democracy programs; strengthen the police and justice administration; provide disaster relief and recovery; or support education, public health, food security, or other basic human needs.<sup>38</sup>

**Senate Legislation.** S. 4797 would not specify a comprehensive funding level for Haiti but would stipulate that funds shall be made available for assistance for Haiti to support democracy programs; livelihood programs and private sector investment; police, anti-gang, and justice programs; disaster relief and recovery; and programs to meet Haitians' basic needs, including education, public health, and food security. The bill also would allow for funds to be made available to support the Multinational Security Support Mission in Haiti and for the Haitian government to purchase defense articles and services for the coast guard under the Arms Export Control Act (22 U.S.C. §§2751 et seq.).<sup>39</sup> S.Rept. 118-200 would designate \$8.5 million for reforestation in Haiti and \$5.0 million to meet the basic needs of Haitian prisoners.<sup>40</sup>

S. 4797 would impose some restrictions on assistance for Haiti. The bill would prohibit the use of any assistance to support the armed forces of Haiti.<sup>41</sup> It also would prohibit the use of funds from the Prevention and Stabilization Fund, established by the Global Fragility Act of 2019 (Title V of Division J of P.L. 116-94), to provide assistance for Haiti.<sup>42</sup>

## Mexico<sup>43</sup>

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 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.<sup>44</sup> For FY2025, the Biden Administration requested \$109.7 million for Mexico to combat fentanyl trafficking and other transnational crime, strengthen the rule of law, improve border and migration management, and advance environmental objectives. Compared with the FY2023 estimated allocation, aid to Mexico would increase by \$5.1 million (4.9%) for FY2025, largely due to a proposed increase in INCLE aid.

**House Legislation.** H.R. 8771 would not specify a comprehensive funding level for Mexico. However, the bill would stipulate that “not less than” \$175.0 million of the funds appropriated for ESF and INCLE globally “shall be made available for programs to counter the flow of fentanyl,

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<sup>38</sup> H.R. 8771 §7045(g)(2)-(g)(3).

<sup>39</sup> S. 4797 §7045(e)(2).

<sup>40</sup> S.Rept. 118-200, pp. 41 and 98.

<sup>41</sup> S. 4797 §7045(e)(3)(B).

<sup>42</sup> S. 4797 §7066.

<sup>43</sup> For more information on U.S. policy toward Mexico, see CRS In Focus IF12765, *Mexico: Key Issues for the Sheinbaum Administration and U.S.-Mexican Relations*, by Clare Ribando Seelke and M. Angeles Villarreal; and CRS In Focus IF10578, *U.S.-Mexico Security Cooperation: From the Mérida Initiative to the Bicentennial Framework*, by Clare Ribando Seelke.

<sup>44</sup> White House, “Fact Sheet: U.S.-Mexico High-Level Security Dialogue,” October 8, 2021, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/10/08/fact-sheet-u-s-mexico-high-level-security-dialogue/>.

“fentanyl precursors, and other synthetic drugs into the United States,” including in Mexico.<sup>45</sup> H.Rept. 118-554 would direct the State Department and USAID to prioritize assistance to strengthen the capacity of Mexican judicial and security institutions to combat narcotics trafficking and other crime. It also would designate “not less than” the amount of ESF allocated in FY2024 for activities to strengthen Mexico’s ability to investigate serious human rights violations, including disappearances.<sup>46</sup>

H.R. 8771 would impose some conditions on assistance for Mexico. The bill would stipulate that “none of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available” by the act may be made available for assistance for Mexico until the Secretary of State certifies that “the United States and Mexico have entered into an agreement to balance the deficit of water deliveries to the United States by Mexico” in accordance with a 1944 water utilization treaty. That provision includes an exception for assistance to counter the flow of fentanyl and other synthetic drugs into the United States. The bill also would require the State Department to withhold 30% of international security assistance (i.e., INCLE, NADR, IMET, FMF) made available for Mexico until the Secretary of State certifies that the Mexican government has taken steps in the previous 12 months to reduce the amount of fentanyl arriving at the United States-Mexico border, dismantle transnational criminal organizations, support joint counternarcotics operations and intelligence sharing with the United States, respect U.S. extradition requests, and increase federal- and state-level counternarcotics engagement.<sup>47</sup>

**Senate Legislation.** S. 4797 would not specify a comprehensive funding level for Mexico. Similar to the House SFOPS measure, however, the bill would stipulate that “not less than” \$170.0 million of the funds appropriated for ESF and INCLE globally “shall be made available for programs to counter the flow of fentanyl, fentanyl precursors, and other synthetic drugs into the United States,” including in Mexico.<sup>48</sup>

S. 4797 would impose conditions on some assistance for Mexico similar to those included in the House SFOPS bill. S. 4797 would require the State Department to withhold 15% of international security assistance (i.e., INCLE, NADR, IMET, FMF) for Mexico until the Secretary of State certifies that the Mexican government has taken steps to reduce the amount of fentanyl arriving at the United States-Mexico border, dismantle transnational criminal organizations, support joint counternarcotics operations and intelligence sharing with the United States, and respect U.S. extradition requests.<sup>49</sup>

## Venezuela<sup>50</sup>

The United States has provided democracy assistance to Venezuelan civil society for more than two decades and has increased such assistance over the past seven years in response to the increasingly authoritarian rule of President Nicolás Maduro (2013-present). For FY2025, the Biden Administration requested \$50.0 million in democracy assistance for Venezuela to support democratic actors’ efforts to organize and exercise their freedoms; strengthen human rights organizations’ capacities to report on conditions in Venezuela; and enhance independent news

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<sup>45</sup> H.R. 8771 §7036.

<sup>46</sup> H.Rept. 118-554, pp. 119-120.

<sup>47</sup> H.R. 8771 §7045(h).

<sup>48</sup> S. 4797 §7036.

<sup>49</sup> S. 4797 §7045(f).

<sup>50</sup> For more information on U.S. policy toward Venezuela, see CRS Insight IN12354, *Venezuela’s 2024 Presidential Election*, by Leticia Chacon and Clare Ribando Seelke; and CRS In Focus IF10230, *Venezuela: Political Crisis and U.S. Policy*, by Clare Ribando Seelke.



reporting. The Administration also requested \$3.8 million in GHP for maternal and child health activities in Venezuela. Compared with the FY2023 estimated allocation, the Administration's FY2025 request proposed the same amount of democracy assistance and a \$3.6 million (49.0%) reduction in GHP for Venezuela.

**House Legislation.** H.R. 8771 would meet the Administration's request of \$50 million for democracy programs but would not stipulate a funding level for health programs in Venezuela. The bill would require the State Department to withhold an amount equal to 50% of the amount made available to support elections programming in FY2024 until the Secretary of State certifies that Venezuela's 2024 elections allowed for members of the Venezuelan diaspora to vote, permitted credible international observation, and permitted the participation of opposition candidates selected through credible democratic processes.<sup>51</sup> H.Rept. 118-554 would direct the State Department and USAID to focus greater attention and resources on addressing violence, abuse, and exploitation suffered by Venezuelan women and children.<sup>52</sup>

**Senate Legislation.** Like the House SFOPS bill, S. 4797 would meet the Administration's request of \$50 million for democracy programs but would not stipulate a funding level for health programs in Venezuela.<sup>53</sup> The bill would not place any conditions on that assistance.

## 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 FY2025 (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.<sup>54</sup> The IAF is currently active in 27 Latin American and Caribbean countries.<sup>55</sup> The Administration's FY2025 request included funding for the IAF to continue supporting local efforts to address the drivers of irregular migration, integrate displaced Venezuelans and Nicaraguans into host communities, promote inclusive economic growth, reduce food insecurity, foster civic engagement, prevent and mitigate violence, provide alternatives to the illicit drug trade and organized crime, build resilience to natural disasters, and manage natural resources sustainably.

**House Legislation.** H.R. 8771 would appropriate \$22.5 million for the IAF, which is \$29.5 million (56.7%) less than the Administration requested and \$24.5 million (52.1%) less than the FY2024 enacted level for the agency. H.Rept. 118-554 encourages the IAF to strategically leverage its resources in countries where USAID has less presence and identifies the Caribbean as a potential region for increased IAF programming. The report also expresses support for an economic exchange program between Indigenous IAF grantees and Native American tribes.

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<sup>51</sup> H.R. 8771 §7045(l).

<sup>52</sup> H.Rept. 118-554, p. 124.

<sup>53</sup> S. 4797 §7045(i). The bill states that \$50 million "should be made available for democracy programs for Venezuela."

<sup>54</sup> 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*, 91<sup>st</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess., November 6, 1969, H.Rept. 91-611 (Washington, DC: GPO, 1969), p. 57.

<sup>55</sup> Inter-American Foundation (IAF), "Where We Work," <https://www.iaf.gov/where-we-work/>.

**Senate Legislation.** S. 4797 would fully fund the Administration’s \$52.0 million request for the IAF.

**Table 3. Inter-American Foundation Appropriations: FY2021 Actual-FY2025**

(millions of current U.S. dollars)

<b>FY2021 (actual)</b>	<b>FY2022 (actual)</b>	<b>FY2023 (enacted)</b>	<b>FY2024 (enacted)</b>	<b>FY2025 (request)</b>	<b>H.R. 8771</b>	<b>S. 4797</b>
38.0	42.0	47.0	47.0	52.0	22.5	52.0

**Sources:** U.S. Department of State, *Congressional Budget Justification, Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs, Supplementary Tables, Fiscal Year 2023*, May 2022; U.S. Department of State, *Congressional Budget Justification, Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs, Supplementary Tables, Fiscal Year 2024*, April 2023; U.S. Department of State, *Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs, Supplementary Tables, Fiscal Year 2025*, April 2024; P.L. 118-47; H.R. 8771; and S. 4797.

## Options for Congress

Congressional decisions regarding foreign assistance appropriations may help determine how the United States responds to challenges in Latin America and the Caribbean and may influence how the United States prioritizes objectives in the region. Congress also could help guide U.S. foreign assistance policy in the region through consideration of authorization legislation and/or through its oversight efforts.

**Appropriations.** Eyeing the expiration of P.L. 118-158 on March 14, 2025, Members may conclude action on FY2025 SFOPS appropriations, pass another short-term continuing resolution to maintain FY2024—or alternative—funding levels until a long-term agreement can be reached, enact a long-term continuing resolution for the remainder of the fiscal year, or take no action. A final FY2025 SFOPS bill could 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. It also could provide clarity to U.S. agencies on funding levels as they plan and implement activities. Continuing resolutions 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 potentially shape longer-term U.S. foreign assistance policy toward the region through consideration of 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 118<sup>th</sup> Congress, for example, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee reported the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative Authorization Act (S. 841), which would have authorized \$82.0 million to be appropriated for the CBSI annually in FY2023 through FY2027 and would have established specific objectives, priorities, and reporting requirements for the initiative; a similar measure (H.R. 1802) was introduced in the House. Other measures introduced in the 118<sup>th</sup> Congress (e.g., H.R. 3194, H.R. 3599) would have authorized funding and/or certain foreign assistance activities in Central America.

**Oversight.** Congress could consider how best to evaluate and conduct oversight of U.S. assistance programs in Latin America and the Caribbean and of the executive branch agencies that administer those programs. In its second session, the 118<sup>th</sup> Congress held hearings on the Biden Administration’s FY2025 SFOPS budget request for Latin America and the Caribbean as well as U.S. efforts to address various challenges in the region, including transnational crime and

strategic competition with China and Russia. Congress could build upon, or shift the focus of, its oversight efforts in committee hearings and Members' factfinding missions to the region. The numerous reports that Congress required executive branch agencies to submit to certain congressional committees pursuant to FY2024 SFOPS legislation (P.L. 118-47, Division F) could inform such oversight efforts. These included reports on how U.S. assistance for Mexico seeks to addresses fentanyl trafficking, the extent to which the Colombian government's policies align with U.S. national interests, options to counter destabilization in Haiti, and U.S. efforts to strengthen resilience to natural disasters in Central America and the Caribbean.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> P.L. 118-47 §§7036(d)(2) and 7045(c)(1); provisions of the accompanying explanatory statement, available on pp. 1157 and 1194 of H. Comm. Print 55-008; and H.Rept. 118-146, pp. 116, 119, and 123. P.L. 118-47 §7019(e) directed federal agencies to comply with the reporting requirements of H.Rept. 118-146, S.Rept. 118-71, and the accompanying explanatory statement, unless otherwise directed by the explanatory statement.



## Appendix. U.S. Foreign Assistance to Latin America and the Caribbean: Supplementary Tables

**Table A-1. State Department- and USAID-Managed Foreign Assistance to Latin America and the Caribbean by Country or Regional Program: FY2021 Actual-FY2025 Request**  
(thousands of current U.S. dollars)

Country or Regional Program	FY2021 (actual)	FY2022 (actual)	FY2023 (est. actual)	FY2025 (request)	% Change: FY2023-FY2025
Argentina	700	632	650	800	+23.1%
Bahamas	200	210	200	300	+50.0%
Belize	1,250	245	250	250	—
Bolivia	4,000 <sup>a</sup>	0	0	0	—
Brazil	27,950 <sup>a</sup>	29,781	39,198	36,500 <sup>b</sup>	-6.9%
Chile	455	434	357	650	+82.1%
Colombia	478,192 <sup>a</sup>	490,337 <sup>c</sup>	453,096	413,275	-8.8%
Costa Rica	9,225 <sup>a</sup>	8,183	12,725	600	-95.3%
Cuba	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	—
Dominican Republic	35,155 <sup>a</sup>	46,460 <sup>c</sup>	44,613	42,750	-4.2%
Ecuador	28,750 <sup>a</sup>	45,554	49,000	49,200	+0.4%
El Salvador	80,790 <sup>a</sup>	98,652	87,096	87,700	+0.7%
Guatemala	103,849 <sup>a</sup>	137,442 <sup>c</sup>	121,370	115,800	-4.6%
Guyana	200	190	200	250	+25.0%
Haiti	204,377 <sup>a</sup>	237,428 <sup>c</sup>	230,905	356,655	+54.5%
Honduras	79,902 <sup>a</sup>	117,878 <sup>c</sup>	141,774	86,300	-39.1%
Jamaica	24,446 <sup>a</sup>	24,300	22,524	9,750	-56.7%
Mexico	158,910	127,107	104,575	109,700	+4.9%
Nicaragua	12,592 <sup>a</sup>	16,960	17,209	15,000	-12.8%
Panama	14,019 <sup>a</sup>	12,507	13,747	1,225	-91.1%
Paraguay	9,600 <sup>a</sup>	4,343	3,900	4,500	+15.4%
Peru	98,885 <sup>a</sup>	109,134	100,379	94,800	-5.6%
Suriname	200	162	200	250	+25.0%
Trinidad and Tobago	2,999 <sup>a</sup>	1,735	1,607	350	-78.2%
Uruguay	900 <sup>a</sup>	347	350	400	+14.3%
Venezuela	38,000	48,600	57,350	53,750	-6.3%
Barbados and Eastern Caribbean	7,700	24,621 <sup>c</sup>	22,220	22,500	+1.3%
USAID Caribbean Development	15,800 <sup>a</sup>	15,438	13,000	13,000	—

Country or Regional Program	FY2021 (actual)	FY2022 (actual)	FY2023 (est. actual)	FY2025 (request)	% Change: FY2023-FY2025
USAID Central America Regional	5,000	35,000	29,950	29,950	—
USAID South America Regional	15,000	27,000	26,000	87,664	+237.2%
USAID Latin America and Caribbean Regional	45,540	38,697	56,850	81,350	+43.1%
State Central America Regional	—	278,000	246,700	295,800	+19.9%
State Western Hemisphere Regional	366,909	102,044	120,305	169,160	+40.6%
[Caribbean Basin Security Initiative] <sup>d</sup>	[74,800]	[80,000]	[82,000]	[81,000]	[-1.2%]
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,896,495<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>2,104,421<sup>c</sup></b>	<b>2,043,300</b>	<b>2,205,179<sup>b</sup></b>	<b>+7.9%</b>

**Sources:** U.S. Department of State, *Congressional Budget Justification, Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs, Supplementary Tables, Fiscal Year 2023*, May 2022; U.S. Department of State, *Congressional Budget Justification, Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs, Supplementary Tables, Fiscal Year 2024*, April 2023; and U.S. Department of State, *Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs, Supplementary Tables, Fiscal Year 2025*, April 2024.

**Notes:** Figures may not sum to totals due to rounding. FY2021, FY2022, and FY2023 totals 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 and 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 Department's Central America Regional program were funded under the State Department's Western Hemisphere Regional program.

- a. FY2021 sums include supplemental assistance appropriated in the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (P.L. 117-2).
- b. Sum does not include \$100.0 million the Administration requested as part of its global budget proposal for a contribution to Brazil's Amazon Fund.
- c. FY2022 sums include supplemental assistance appropriated in the Additional Ukraine Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2022 (P.L. 117-128).
- d. The Caribbean Basin Security Initiative is funded through the State Department's Western Hemisphere Regional program.

**Table A-2. State Department- and USAID-Managed Foreign Assistance to Latin America and the Caribbean by Account and by Country or Regional Program: FY2023 Estimate**

(millions of current U.S. dollars)

Country or Regional Program	DA	ESF	GHP-USAID	GHP-State	INCLE	NADR	IMET	FMF	Total
Argentina	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.7	—	0.7
Bahamas	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.2	—	0.2
Belize	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.3	—	0.3
Brazil	29.0	—	7.0	2.4	—	—	0.8	—	39.2

Country or Regional Program	DA	ESF	GHP- USAID	GHP- State	INCLE	NADR	IMET	FMF	Total
Chile	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.4	—	0.4
Colombia	86.0	144.0	8.8	3.0	150.0	21.0	1.9	38.5	453.1
Costa Rica	—	4.5	—	—	—	—	0.7	7.5	12.7
Cuba	—	20.0	—	—	—	—	—	—	20.0
Dominican Republic	18.1	—	4.0	22.0	—	—	0.5	—	44.6
Ecuador	27.6	—	—	—	15.0	1.0	0.4	5.0	49.0
El Salvador	71.2	—	5.0	10.6	—	—	0.3	—	87.1
Guatemala	80.9	—	25.0	15.2	—	—	0.3	—	121.4
Guyana	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.2	—	0.2
Haiti	46.4	7.0	30.0	102.5	45.0	—	—	—	230.9
Honduras	126.7	—	6.0	8.7	—	—	0.4	—	141.8
Jamaica	2.0	2.0	5.0	12.9	—	—	0.6	—	22.5
Mexico	—	54.0	—	—	48.0	1.0	1.6	—	104.6
Nicaragua	15.0	—	—	2.2	—	—	—	—	17.2
Panama	—	—	—	12.5	—	0.5	0.7	—	13.7
Paraguay	3.5	—	—	—	—	—	0.4	—	3.9
Peru	45.0	—	7.0	1.4	41.3	2.0	0.7	3.0	100.4
Suriname	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.2	—	0.2
Trinidad and Tobago	—	—	—	1.3	—	—	0.3	—	1.6
Uruguay	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.4	—	0.4
Venezuela	—	50.0	3.8	3.6	—	—	—	—	57.4
Barbados and Eastern Caribbean	9.5	9.5	2.5	—	—	—	0.7	—	22.2
USAID Caribbean Development <sup>a</sup>	13.0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	13.0
USAID Central America Regional <sup>a</sup>	24.5	4.5	—	—	—	—	—	—	30.0
USAID South America Regional <sup>a</sup>	26.0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	26.0
USAID Latin America and Caribbean Regional <sup>a</sup>	38.4	7.0	11.5	—	—	—	—	—	56.9
State Central America Regional <sup>a</sup>	—	107.2	—	—	129.5	5.0	—	5.0	246.7
State Western Hemisphere Regional <sup>a</sup>	—	57.8	—	0.5	41.4	10.6	—	10.0	120.3
[Caribbean Basin Security Initiative] <sup>b</sup>	[—]	[37.0]	[—]	[—]	[35.0]	[—]	[—]	[10.0]	[82.0]

Country or Regional Program	DA	ESF	GHP-USAID	GHP-State	INCLE	NADR	IMET	FMF	Total
<b>Total</b>	<b>663.7</b>	<b>472.5<sup>c</sup></b>	<b>115.5</b>	<b>198.8</b>	<b>470.2</b>	<b>41.1</b>	<b>12.5</b>	<b>69.0</b>	<b>2,043.3<sup>c</sup></b>

**Sources:** U.S. Department of State, *Congressional Budget Justification, Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs, Supplementary Tables, Fiscal Year 2025*, April 2024, and “Explanatory Statement Submitted by Mr. Leahy, Chair of the Senate Committee on Appropriations, Regarding H.R. 2617, Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023,” *Congressional Record*, vol. 168, no. 198, Book II (December 20, 2022), p. S9299.

**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.

- USAID and State Department regional programs fund region-wide initiatives and 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 Department’s Western Hemisphere Regional program.
- Total includes \$5.0 million appropriated as a voluntary contribution to the Organization of American States.

**Table A-3. State Department- and USAID-Managed Foreign Assistance to Latin America and the Caribbean: FY2025 Request**

(millions of current U.S. dollars)

Country or Regional Program	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	29.0	—	6.5	—	—	—	1.0	—	36.5
Chile	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.7	—	0.7
Colombia	90.5	128.5	8.8	—	135.0	10.0	2.0	38.5	413.3
Costa Rica	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.6	—	0.6
Cuba	—	20.0	—	—	—	—	—	—	20.0
Dominican Republic	18.1	—	4.0	20.0	—	—	0.7	—	42.8
Ecuador	27.6	—	—	—	15.0	1.0	0.6	5.0	49.2
El Salvador	81.9	—	5.0	—	—	—	0.8	—	87.7
Guatemala	90.0	—	25.0	—	—	—	0.8	—	115.8
Guyana	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.3	—	0.3
Haiti	46.4	7.0	34.0	100.0	169.0	—	0.3	—	356.7
Honduras	79.5	—	6.0	—	—	—	0.8	—	86.3
Jamaica	4.0	—	5.0	—	—	—	0.8	—	9.8
Mexico	—	54.0	—	—	53.0	1.0	1.7	—	109.7
Nicaragua	15.0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	15.0
Panama	—	—	—	—	—	0.5	0.7	—	1.2

Country or Regional Program	DA	ESF	GHP-USAID	GHP-State	INCLE	NADR	IMET	FMF	Total
Paraguay	4.0	—	—	—	—	—	0.5	—	4.5
Peru	48.0	—	7.0	—	37.0	2.0	0.8	—	94.8
Suriname	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.3	—	0.3
Trinidad and Tobago	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.4	—	0.4
Uruguay	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.4	—	0.4
Venezuela	—	50.0	3.8	—	—	—	—	—	53.8
Barbados and Eastern Caribbean	9.5	9.5	2.5	—	—	—	1.0	—	22.5
USAID Caribbean Development <sup>a</sup>	13.0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	13.0
USAID Central America Regional <sup>a</sup>	24.5	4.5	—	—	—	—	—	—	29.5
USAID South America Regional <sup>a</sup>	52.7	35.0	—	—	—	—	—	—	87.7
USAID Latin America and Caribbean Regional <sup>a</sup>	37.9	32.0	11.5	—	—	—	—	—	81.4
State Central America Regional <sup>a</sup>	—	105.2	—	43.6	129.5	5.0	—	12.5	295.8
State Western Hemisphere Regional <sup>a</sup>	—	72.8	—	26.4	46.4	10.6	—	13.0	169.2
[Caribbean Basin Security Initiative] <sup>b</sup>	[—]	[37.0]	[—]	[—]	[35.0]	[—]	[—]	[9.0]	[81.0]
<b>Total</b>	<b>672.5</b>	<b>523.5</b>	<b>119.0</b>	<b>190.0</b>	<b>584.9</b>	<b>30.1</b>	<b>16.2</b>	<b>69.0</b>	<b>2,205.2</b>

**Source:** U.S. Department of State, *Congressional Budget Justification, Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs, Supplementary Tables, Fiscal Year 2025*, April 2024.

**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.

- USAID and State Department regional programs fund region-wide initiatives and 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 Department's Western Hemisphere Regional program.

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