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6 MARKUP OF VARIOUS MEASURES

7 Thursday, July 28, 2022

8 House of Representatives,

9 Committee on Foreign Affairs,

10 Washington, D.C.

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14 The committee met, pursuant to call, at 1:48 p.m., in Room
15 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Gregory Meeks [chairman
16 of the committee] presiding.

17 Chairman Meeks. The Committee on Foreign Affairs will come
18 to order. And without objection, the chair is authorized to
19 declare a recess of the committee at any point. Pursuant to Rule
20 4, the chair may postpone further proceedings on approving any
21 measure or matter or adopting an amendment.

22 Without objection, all members will have five days to submit
23 statements or extraneous materials of today's business. To
24 insert statements into the record, please have your staff email
25 the previously circulated address or contact full committee staff.

26 As a reminder to members joining remotely, please keep your video
27 function on at all times, even when not recognized by the chair.

28 Members are responsible for muting and unmuting themselves.
29 Consistent with House rules, staff will only mute members as
30 appropriate when they are not under recognition to eliminate
31 background noise.

32 As members were notified yesterday, we intend to consider
33 eight measures and their amendments en bloc and will then move
34 to consider six measures and their amendments separately. Any
35 roll calls will be postponed until the end of the markup.

36 Pursuant to notice for purposes of markup, I will now call
37 up the measures and their amendments that were previously
38 circulated to members' offices which without objection will be
39 considered en bloc and each measure is considered as read and
40 the amendments to each are considered as read and are agreed to.

41 And without objection, after remarks, the committee will
42 vote to order the measures favorably reported en bloc as amended,
43 if amended. And any amendment or amendments to each measure shall
44 be reported as a single amendment in the nature of a substitute.

45 The measures in the en bloc package are H.R. 8520, Countering
46 Untrusted Telecommunications Act; H.R. 8503, Securing Global
47 Telecommunications Act; H.R. 8259, Arms Exports Delivery
48 Solutions Act; H.Res. 558, Urging the European Union to designate
49 Hizballah in its entirety as a terrorist organization, with Meijer
50 Amendment in the Nature of a Substitute No. 11; H.R. 6265, CAPTAGON
51 Act; H.Res. 744, Condemning the Government of Iran's
52 state-sponsored persecution of its Baha'i minority and its
53 continued violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights
54 and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,
55 with a Deutch Amendment in the Nature of a Substitute No. 67;
56 H.Res. 1259, Condemning the assassination of former Japanese Prime
57 Minister Shinzo Abe and honoring his life and legacy, with a Cabot
58 Amendment in the Nature of a Substitute No. 60; and H.R. 8453,
59 Upholding the Dayton Peace Agreement Through Sanctions Act.

60 And I now recognize myself to speak on the en bloc package.

61 I support all of the measures included within this en block
62 package. As we navigate through historic times, the American
63 people look to Congress and this committee in particular to
64 strengthen our nation's position on the world's stage.

65 And I'm proud of the work our committee has accomplished
66 in response to our nation's foreign policy challenges. And I
67 am proud this en bloc continues this great work. First, this
68 en bloc includes two measures by my friend, Ted Deutch, Chairman
69 of the Middle East Subcommittee, H.Res. 558 and H.Res. 744. And
70 when Ted departs this committee, we will miss his tireless advocacy
71 in defense of the United States and our allies around the globe.
72 He's been a true champion.

73 And despite all we know about Hizballah, a cutthroat
74 terrorist organization that serves as an Iranian proxy and violent
75 militia, our friends and partners in the European Union only
76 include Hizballah's military wing and not its political wing on
77 its list of sanctioned terrorist organizations. And with the
78 adoption of H.Res. 558, let's hope Europe hears the voice of this
79 Congress loudly and clearly and finally takes the necessary steps
80 to designate Hizballah as a whole. It is long overdue.

81 I also support H.Res. 744. The resolution before us today
82 calls on the Iranian government to release all Baha'i prisoners
83 in its campaign of state-sponsored persecution and reverse
84 discriminatory policies against the Baha'i community. The
85 persecution of a peaceful minority on the basis of their religion
86 is a failure in morality, and I'm pleased it is included in this
87 en bloc.

88 This markup also includes two important measures:

89 Representative Manning's Securing Global Telecommunications Act
90 and Representative Wild's Countering Untrusted
91 Telecommunications Act that combats the PRC's tech corrosion and
92 promote American telecom leadership at a moment when information
93 and communications technology is emerging as a pivotal front in
94 great power competition. China has successfully positioned on
95 of its national champions, Huawei, to become the 5G equipment
96 market leader.

97 These threats are real. Just this weekend, new reports
98 indicated that Huawei equipment near military bases here in the
99 United States could capture and disrupt important military
100 communications, including messages related to nuclear
101 deployments. We cannot let this grave risk go unaddressed, either
102 here at home or overseas.

103 The two bills include crucial provisions that will provide
104 the most comprehensive transparency of the issue ever requested
105 by United States Congress. It authorizes and codifies the
106 International Digital, Economic, and Telecommunications Advisory
107 Committee, the IDET, and require a comprehensive global strategy
108 to promote American telecom leadership. So I want to thank
109 Representative Wild and Representative Manning for their
110 leadership on these bills and urge all of my colleagues to support
111 both of their important bills.

112 I also support H.R. 8259, legislation that will help meet

113 the defense needs of our allies and partners. Through additional
114 reporting, this bill will allow Congress to better understand
115 any delays in arms transfers to the Indo-Pacific region. This
116 legislation will also send a strong message to our Indo-Pacific
117 friends and competitors that Congress is committed to regional
118 peace and security and supported credible deterrence and strong
119 defense partnerships.

120 H.R. 6265, the CAPTAGON Act, addresses an important issue
121 which continues to fuel the Assad regime's coffers and campaign
122 of brutality. The Assad regime has colluded with criminal
123 networks and militias, including those smuggling arms, drugs,
124 antiquities, oil, and other contraband as well the narcotic
125 stimulate drug Captagon which is trafficked to, within, and around
126 Syria and become a cash source for the Assad regime to enrich
127 itself and prolong its heinous violence against Syrians. This
128 bill will require the federal government to develop an interagency
129 strategy to disrupt and dismantle narcotics trafficking and
130 affiliated networks linked to Syria's Assad regime.

131 I would like to thank Representatives Ann Wagner and Susan
132 Wild on their work to protect the Dayton Accords through H.R.
133 8453 during a sensitive time in Bosnia. The Dayton Accords and
134 the peace that they protect us under threat from cynical actors
135 in the region, this bill strengthens tools to hold these actors
136 accountable and sends an important signal from the committee that

137 we are watching and we care about ensuring a democratic future
138 for all people in Bosnia and Herzegovina. I urge my colleagues
139 to support this legislation.

140 And finally, I strongly support H.Res. 1259. And I want
141 to thank Rep. Steve Chabot for introducing this important
142 resolution. I was shocked and saddened to hear about the
143 assassination of former Prime Minister Abe earlier this while
144 he was engaging in the democratic act of campaigning that every
145 member on this dais has engaged in.

146 This heinous act of political violence has no place in today's
147 world, essentially in a vibrant and peaceful democracy like
148 Japan's. Former Prime Minister Abe was a driver of global peace
149 and security and a stalwart friend of the United States of
150 American. Japan is stronger today and the world a safer place
151 because of his statesmanship, vision, and service. And I offer
152 my deepest condolences and prayers to members of the Abe family
153 and the Japanese people. I'm confident in part due to Prime
154 Minister Abe's leadership that Japan's best days are ahead of
155 them.

156 I strongly support all the measures that we're considering
157 today in the en bloc. And I urge all members to join me in doing
158 the same. Before we continue, I'd now like to recognize my friend
159 and ranking member, Mr. McCaul of Texas, for his remarks.

160 Mr. McCaul. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm supportive of

161 all the measures we'll be considering here today. Today, we'll
162 be considering to bipartisan bills. I offered the PEACE through
163 Music Diplomacy Act and the U.S.-Africa Economic Engagement Act.

164 I've long believed that music is a powerful tool for peace.

165 This bill recognizes a unique and important role musicians play
166 in promoting peace globally and authorizes the State Department's
167 exchange programs to bring young musical artists together. With
168 the power of the private sector behind them, these programs can
169 be even more effective in building peace and supporting U.S.
170 foreign policy goals. I also want to thank my good friend from
171 Florida, Mr. Deutch, for cosponsoring this bill.

172 Onto the U.S.-Africa Economic Engagement Act I introduced,
173 this bill represents a key opportunity to strengthen commercial
174 ties and increase U.S. trade investment. Africa is home to some
175 of the fastest growing economies in the world. And the
176 continent's rapidly growing middle class is forecast to triple
177 by 2030.

178 However, the Peoples Republic of China is rapidly expanding
179 strategic economic investments on the continent through predatory
180 lending and debt trap diplomacy such as their Belt and Road
181 Initiative. The CCP has already surpassed the U.S. as Africa's
182 largest trading partner. And when I met partners and allies
183 around the world, I ask why they are entering into dangerous
184 agreements with the CCP.

185 They tell me it is because we are just not there. The U.S.
186 government needs to show up on the field and compete. We must
187 provide an alternative to PRC financing and aggressively advocate
188 for U.S. companies looking to invest in and trade with partners
189 in Africa.

190 Since the Trump Administration launched the Prosper Africa
191 Act in June of 2019, the U.S. government has helped to close over
192 800 deals across 45 African countries for an estimated value of
193 50 billion in exports and investments. This means jobs created
194 both in the United States and across Africa. This legislation
195 would build on my bill, the Championing American Business Through
196 Diplomacy Act, which was signed into law and focuses on promoting
197 American businesses abroad.

198 The bill before us today will better coordinate the various
199 tools of the U.S. government like the Development Finance
200 Corporation, Millennium Challenge Corporation, USAID, and
201 Department of Commerce to speak with one voice and better support
202 U.S. companies looking to invest in Africa. I also want to thank
203 my colleague, Representative Young Kim, for introducing the Arms
204 Export Delivery Solution Act which I am a cosponsor of. The
205 bipartisan bill requires a joint State and Defense Department
206 report on the status of certain delayed arms, sales to Taiwan,
207 the Republic of Korea, Japan, Australia, and New Zealand.

208 This needed report must also include information on actions

209 being taken to expedite deliveries of defense articles and interim
210 solutions in the event of shipment delays. This cannot wait.
211 We must act now. The clock is ticking, especially for Taiwan
212 as the CCP's military capabilities continue to grow.

213 And lastly, I'm a proud cosponsor of Representative French
214 Hill's bipartisan CAPTAGON Act and Representative Chabot's
215 resolution condemning the assassination of former Japanese Prime
216 Minister Abe in honoring his life and legacy. And I also support
217 Representative Wagner's bill, upholding the Dayton Peace
218 Agreement Through Sanctions Act. I also want to thank Chairman
219 Meeks for considering these measures today and for being a
220 bipartisan team playing on this committee which we have such a
221 rich history of doing so. With that, I yield back.

222 Chairman Meeks. Thank you, Mr. McCaul. Any other members
223 seeking recognition? Representative Mr. Deutch of Florida, chair
224 of the Subcommittee on the Middle East, North Africa, and Global
225 Counterterrorism, recognized for five minutes.

226 Mr. Deutch. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thanks to you
227 and the ranking member for holding this important markup. We
228 have 14 measures before this committee today I'm proud to support,
229 including the 8 being considered in the en bloc.

230 I want to highlight two provisions that I've been honored
231 to champion throughout my time in Congress but only after taking
232 a moment to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your kind words about

233 me earlier in the markup. This committee's work is always
234 important. The voice of the House of Representatives in Foreign
235 Affairs, the oversight we do with the State Department always
236 matters.

237 But at a time when Russia's invasion of Ukraine puts at the
238 very center of our work the importance of maintaining and defending
239 democracy on our planet, there is no one better suited to be
240 helming, chairing this committee at this moment than Chairman
241 Meeks. I am grateful for the inclusion of my resolution, H.Res.
242 558, that applauds the continued cooperation between U.S. and
243 European Union to combat Hizballah's terrorist activities and
244 urges the EU to designate the entirety of Hizballah as a terrorist
245 organization. I'm proud to lead this resolution with my good
246 friends Gus Bilirakis, Kathy Manning, and Peter Meijer along with
247 a host of other bipartisan colleagues.

248 It is a fact that Hizballah is a terrorist organization with
249 support from the Iranian regime that it has carried out multiple
250 deadly global terror attacks, continues to spread violence and
251 terror throughout the region, including fighting alongside odious
252 Assad regime in the conflict of Syria, undermining Lebanon
253 stability, threatening Israel and its citizens with drones,
254 missiles, and threats of invasion. Hassan Nasrallah, the
255 Secretary General of Hizballah, made his organization's violent
256 intentions and willingness to target civilian centers crystal

257 clear. Just this week when he said, all land and sea targets
258 of Israel are within the range of Hizballah missiles, yet when
259 the EU partially designated Hizballah in 2013, it made a false
260 distinction between the so-called military political wings of
261 the organization and chose to designate the military wing of
262 Hizballah rather than the entirety of the organization.

263 However, there are no different branches of Hizballah. It
264 is, one, a terrorist organization. You don't have to take my
265 word for this or the words of Germany, Israel, Guatemala,
266 Argentina, U.K., or many other countries who have designated all
267 of Hizballah a terrorist organization.

268 One of Hizballah's representatives in the Lebanese
269 parliament explicitly said, quote, "the military wing of Hizballah
270 is inseparable from its political wing" close quote. The U.S.
271 makes no distinction between the organization's branches and
272 includes Hizballah in its entirety on the FTO, the Foreign
273 Terrorist Organization list. This resolution simply urges our
274 EU partners to do the same. And I hope that we will pass it
275 unanimously here today.

276 Also please see the inclusion of my resolution, H.Res. 744
277 which condemns Iran's state-sponsored persecution of its Baha'i
278 population and urges the President and Secretary of State to impose
279 sanctions on officials and individuals responsible for these
280 serious human rights abuses. I am so grateful to Chairman Meeks,

281 Ranking Member McCaul, and Ranking Member Wilson for joining me
282 in leading this resolution along with the many other bipartisan
283 cosponsors that have allowed this resolution to pass successfully
284 for years, as far back as 1982, and shows the depth of the depravity
285 of the Iranian regime that there is still an urgent need to continue
286 addressing the Iranian government's persecution of members of
287 the Baha'i faith in Iran in 2022.

288 Just this morning, I met with Ambassador Rashad Hussain,
289 the State Department's Ambassador at Large for International
290 Religious Freedom. And we discussed the depth of brutality of
291 Iran's persecution of religious minorities especially at Baha'i.

292 One particular excerpt that struck me from the State Department's
293 2021 report on international religious freedom in Iran described
294 an instance where Iranian authorities denied Baha'i's permission
295 to bury their dead in available plots in a Tehran cemetery
296 designated for Baha'i which forced them to bury their dead in
297 a mass grave site.

298 This instance is one of countless examples of harassment,
299 violence, dehumanization, and persecution of Baha'i faith at the
300 hands of the Iranian regime as part of the government's broader
301 strategy to deny religious freedom to minorities. This
302 resolution successfully passed the House last Congress. I urge
303 all of my colleagues to support it.

304 I want to thank Mr. Chabot and Meeks for introducing a

305 resolution condemning the assassination of Japan's former Prime
306 Minister Shinzo Abe. Prime Minister Abe was a great friend of
307 the U.S. and the American people and his death is a terrible loss
308 for everyone in Japan and indeed around the world. Again, Mr.
309 Chairman, to you and the ranking member, thank you both for the
310 way that you run this committee in the bipartisan manner that
311 you do, recognizing that America's face to the world is the
312 strongest when we stand together, and I yield back.

313 Chairman Meeks. The gentleman yields back. I now recognize
314 Representative Ann Wagner of Missouri who's the vice ranking
315 member of the full committee for five minutes.

316 Mrs. Wagner. Chairman Meeks and Ranking Member McCaul, I'd
317 like to thank you both for working with me to include my bipartisan
318 bill, H.R. 8453, the Upholding the Dayton Peace Agreement Through
319 Sanctions Act. And it's being marked up today in this en bloc
320 markup. And I want to say that I support all of the bills in
321 the en bloc. But I'm most grateful that you have included my
322 particular piece of legislation.

323 Bosnia and Herzegovina are headed into important general
324 elections this October. And time is running out to send a very
325 strong, deterrent message to bad actors intent on destabilizing
326 the country. Today, deepening divisions in Bosnia fueled by the
327 reckless secession threats of politicians like Milorad Dodik,
328 the Serb member of Bosnia's tripartite presidency, pose a grave

329 threat to Balkan stability.

330 The October elections could be a very critical flashpoint.

331 The foundations of Bosnia's stability, its democratic
332 institutions, its ethnic power sharing arrangements, even the
333 Office of the High Representative, the independent body tasked
334 with implementing the Dayton Accords are at risk. It worries
335 me tremendously to see nationalist parties with the support of
336 the ruthless Putin regime working to roll back the progress that
337 Bosnia has made.

338 We have a very strong Bosnian community in my hometown of
339 St. Louis. Many of my constituents fled to our city during the
340 1992 to 1995 Bosnian war in which more than 100,000 lost their
341 lives. A majority of those killed were Muslim majority Bosniaks.

342 My Bosnian constituents want to see their homeland prosper
343 as a unified sovereign and multiethnic state. I cannot imagine
344 the heartache they must feel when Dodik denies the horrifying
345 genocide committed by Serb troops against Bosniak Muslims at
346 Srebrenica or when he threatens to lead the dissolution of Bosnia.

347 These actions are offensive to those who lost loved ones in the
348 Bosnia War and are profoundly dangerous to Bosnia's future.

349 It is imperative that the United States wield its economic
350 toolkit to protect Bosnian sovereignty and territorial integrity
351 as the country navigates all of these challenges. H.R. 8453
352 codifies the mandate and mandates key sanction authorities to

353 address the political crisis and corruption in Bosnia. Ahead
354 of the country's October general election, this bill sends a
355 critical signal to local officials engaging in destabilizing and
356 anti-democratic behavior and to Russia for its destructive
357 influence that the United States will hold them accountable.

358 I urge my colleagues to join me in advancing the Upholding
359 the Dayton Peace Agreement Through Sanctions Act to demonstrate
360 the United States unequivocal commitment to peace and stability
361 in Bosnia. I appreciate the chairman and the ranking member's
362 swift attention to this urgently needed bill. I'd also like to
363 thank Representative Wild for working with me on this legislation.

364 I have the privilege to co-lead the congresswomen's
365 Countering Untrusted Telecommunications Act which will improve
366 our understanding of the pervasiveness of Chinese and Russian
367 telecommunications equipment in sensitive overseas posts and
368 position the United States and allies to eliminate security risks.

369 I urge support for this legislation as well. I am grateful for
370 this markup, and I yield back the remainder of my time, Mr.
371 Chairman.

372 Chairman Meeks. The gentlelady yields back the remainder
373 of her time. I'll now recognize Representative William Keating
374 of Massachusetts who's the chair of the Subcommittee on Europe,
375 Energy, the Environment, and Cyber for five minutes.

376 Mr. Keating. Well, I want to thank you, Chair Meeks and

377 Ranking Member McCaul, for holding this markup. The bills on
378 this markup come from all regions and themes. But they're
379 representative of the many global problems that we're facing today
380 and that this committee is working to address.

381 I want to state outright that I support both this en bloc
382 package and each of the individual bills we're considering today.

383 This includes H.R. 8520, Representative Wild's bill on countering
384 untrusted telecommunications which is a common sense measure
385 that'll provide Congress with an understanding of the widespread
386 nature of malign actors and the telecommunications industry and
387 ensure that the U.S. and the diplomatic posts are prepared to
388 counter these threats.

389 I also want to strongly endorse Chair Deutch's measure, H.R.
390 558, calling for the European Union to designate Hizballah as
391 a terrorist organization. Hizballah is a dangerous organization
392 that has committed terrorist actions throughout the globe. Years
393 ago, I was the sponsor designating Hizballah as a terrorist
394 organization. And now I strongly encourage our European allies
395 to make the same designation to prevent Hizballah from continuing
396 their global terror activities.

397 Also included en bloc is H.R. 8453, Upholding the Dayton
398 Peace Agreement Through Sanctions Act. The Balkans are a region
399 of vital importance to Europe. And I believe it's essential that
400 we continue to support developing democratic institutions in the

401 region.

402 With that being said, I also support a bill that will bolster
403 democratic institutions ahead of the upcoming October elections
404 in Bosnia and Herzegovina. While the rest of the measures I'll
405 speak about are outside the en bloc package, I'm hopeful they're
406 be reported through committee first as H.R. 922, condemning the
407 use of hunger as a weapon of war and recognizing the effect of
408 conflict on global food security and famine. I wholeheartedly
409 support in cosponsoring this measure and will continue to use
410 my chairmanship on the Subcommittee on Europe to bring attention
411 to this global food crisis created by Russia's illegal war in
412 Ukraine.

413 I fully support and I'm cosponsoring both H.R. 7240, a
414 Reauthorization of the READ Act and H.R. 4134, the Keeping Girls
415 in School Act. Our children are our future. And these vital
416 pieces of legislation will ensure children and especially young
417 women and girls are empowered through education.

418 I'm also cosponsoring H.R. 8463, the Millennium Challenge
419 Corporation Eligibility Expansion Act. Just yesterday, I had
420 the honor of hosting along with Ms. Alice Albright from the
421 Millennium Challenge Corporation, President Osmani, and Prime
422 Minister Kurti of Kosovo in our full committee hearing room right
423 here signing the Millennium Challenge Compact. This compact will
424 expand energy capabilities and increase the number of trained

425 energy technicians in Kosovo with specific focus on increasing
426 the number of the women in the field. This legislation could
427 expand MCC's ability to support similar projects across Europe
428 and Southeast Europe. And I hope the committee will report this
429 legislation favorably.

430 Finally, I want to speak in support of H.R. 6455, the
431 U.S.-Africa Economic Engagement Act. A few weeks ago, I held
432 a joint hearing with Chair Bass of the Africa Subcommittee on
433 the Russian influence in Africa. This hearing made it very clear
434 that without U.S. investment in the continent, Russia and China
435 will continue to exert malign influence across the continent,
436 ultimately undermining the interest of Africans as well as our
437 own.

438 For this reason, I'm in support and a cosponsor of those
439 legislation which promotes, facilitates, and increases trade and
440 investment between U.S. and Africa in an effort to ensure long-term
441 stability and prosperity across the continent. Thank you again,
442 Chair Meeks and Ranking Member McCaul, for holding this markup.

443 And I yield back the balance of my time.

444 Chairman Meeks. The gentleman yields back the balance of
445 his time. I now recognize Representative Steve Chabot of Ohio
446 who is the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific,
447 Central Asia, and Nonproliferation for five minutes.

448 Mr. Chabot. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I want to

449 voice my support for several measures that we have before us today.

450 First as ranking member, as you said, of the Asian Pacific
451 Subcommittee, I'd like to discuss H.Res. 1259, legislation that
452 I introduced with you, Mr. Chairman, and also with Ranking Member
453 McCaul and Chairman Bera to condemn the assassination of former
454 Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and most importantly honor
455 his life and his legacy.

456 And I want to thank the many members of this committee on
457 both sides of the aisle who have joined us as cosponsors. Prime
458 Minister Abe was a towering figure in post-war Japanese history.

459 As Japan's longest serving prime minister, he worked tirelessly
460 to strengthen his country, to establish it as a force for good,
461 and strengthen the collective security in the Indo-Pacific.

462 In fact, he coined the term, Indo-Pacific, and was a major
463 champion of the Quad, both of which helped bring India in as a
464 key stakeholder in the broader region. He was also a firm believer
465 in the U.S.-Japan alliance. At a time of rising tensions with
466 China brought on by the ambitions of the CCP, Chinese Communist
467 Party, the U.S.-Japan bilateral relationship stands as the
468 cornerstone of peace and security in Indo-Pacific region.

469 We owe Prime Minister Abe a debt of gratitude for
470 strengthening our alliance through multiple U.S. administrations.

471 His senseless and shocking assassination was a blow to us all.

472 My heart and I think the hearts of all of us go out to his family

473 and to all the people of Japan.

474 I had the opportunity to have lunch in Tokyo with Prime
475 Minister Abe a number of years ago. This was before he became
476 prime minister, just myself and him, one staff member, and a
477 translator. We met for about an hour and a half.

478 We talked about a lot of things, improving the Japanese-South
479 Korean relationship, the modernization of the Japanese military,
480 and the importance of them taking that very important step, the
481 Quad before there was a Quad. We talked about the importance
482 of that. He couldn't have been more thoughtful, more gracious,
483 more accommodating. And the food was good too. I just want to
484 say this was a tremendous towering figure, and he's going to be
485 missed by us and by all of the force of good in this world.

486 I next like to turn to Ms. Kim's Arms Exports Delivery
487 Solutions Act. As a co-chair of the Congressional Taiwan Caucus,
488 I believe this solution is absolutely critical. Taiwan is still
489 waiting for weapons that it's bought and paid for but which we
490 just can't seem to produce on a reasonable timeline.

491 This legislation draws needed attention to those delays and
492 insists that we fix them. Last week, CIA Director Burns said
493 that a PRC invasion of Taiwan is, and I quote, "less the question
494 of whether the Chinese leadership might choose some years down
495 the road to use force to control Taiwan but how and when they
496 would do it," unquote. The lights are flashing red. Taiwan

497 cannot defend itself with missiles that are on backorder.

498 Lastly, I'd like to voice my support for two resolutions
499 which I cosponsored and were introduced by my good friend, Mr.
500 Deutch, H.Res. 558, which urges the European Union to designate
501 the Baha'i -- excuse me, Hizballah in its entirety as a
502 terrorist organization, including its political wing. That's
503 critical. The European Union needs to recognize that Hizballah
504 exists for the purpose of destroying Israel and that there's no
505 distinction between its various entities which merely serve as
506 so many masks for its true purpose.

507 And finally, I'd like to voice my support for H.Res. 744
508 which condemns the Iranian regimes persecution of the Baha'is.

509 Since the Iranian Revolution, Iran has executed at least 200
510 Baha'is. It's dismissed 10,000 of them from their jobs, and
511 committed a wide variety of other abuses. The Baha'i faith is
512 not a danger to Iran.

513 In fact, it espouses the values of peace and unity and
514 cooperation and education and interfaith harmony and an end to
515 prejudice. Indeed the Baha'i community in my hometown Cincinnati
516 has brought these values to our city as I've learned through
517 interactions with Baha'i representatives over the years in my
518 district. Iran's persecution of this peaceful minority is
519 reprehensible and must come to an end.

520 So Mr. Chairman, I'd urge my colleagues to support these

521 measures, and I yield back.

522 Chairman Meeks. The gentleman yields back. I now recognize
523 Representative Gerry Connolly of Virginia who is the president
524 of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly for five minutes.

525 Mr. Connolly. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for
526 bringing us together for this markup. I certainly support all
527 of the bills en bloc. And I particularly want to thank our
528 colleagues for a number initiatives, including Keeping Girls in
529 School Act. Our friend Lois Frankel of Florida brought that to
530 us. And I just think today is an important step.

531 I would like to address H.R. 6498, Promoting Peace,
532 Education, and Cultural Exchange to Music Diplomacy Act if I may,
533 Mr. Chairman. Last week I had an amendment on the floor that
534 would have made it a little easier to promote art in embassies
535 abroad as a diplomatic tool, both local art, indigenous art, and
536 American art. And it went down.

537 It went down in part because it was characterized as a big
538 giveaway and why would we be spending money on art. And my friend,
539 the ranking member, who normally have a good working relationship
540 with was quoted as saying in National Review, "I hate to break
541 it to Representative Connolly, but weapons win wars, not 400,000
542 dollar cloud sculptures," unquote. That same gentleman says
543 today, I've longed believed that music is a powerful tool that
544 can be used to reach across cultures and promote peace around

545 the world.

546 So apparently music is okay, but art is not. And I just
547 want to say I support the bill. It'd be inconsistent of me not
548 to. But I will say I don't understand having two different
549 standards. Music is the source of diplomacy to avoid war, promote
550 peace. That's a sound principle.

551 But our nemesis, that's not. And I just want to register
552 my concern that the same logic that led to outside groups lobbying
553 against a simple amendment on art in the embassies could be used
554 again on this when and if we bring this bill to the floor because
555 the same logic could pertain. So I just wanted to register that
556 concern and my sorrow at the nature of the debate that we had
557 and be heard on that issue. And I think thank you and yield back.

558 Mr. Deutch. [Presiding.] I thank Mr. Connolly and recognize
559 my friend, Mr. Wilson, of South Carolina, the ranking member of
560 the Subcommittee on Middle East, North Africa, and Global
561 Counterterrorism for five minutes.

562 Mr. Wilson. Thank you, Chairman Ted Deutch. And indeed,
563 I want to thank Chairman Greg Meeks and Ranking Member Mike McCaul
564 for bringing these important bipartisan measures before us today.

565 And I am grateful to join with President Gerry Connolly to support
566 House Resolution 558 which takes the important step of urging
567 European Union allies to fully designate Hizballah as a terrorist
568 organization.

569 Going back over 40 years, Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps
570 deployed its Quds Force to Lebanon what we now know today as
571 Hizballah with thousands of rockets to attack Israel. Now
572 Tehran's capacity to export terrorism through its proxies around
573 the globe, even as close as Latin American, has expanded greatly
574 in resources. Hizballah's terrorist arm and political operatives
575 symbiotically with political help in secure gains in the
576 deployment and receive legitimacy.

577 This is a threat to democracy that cannot be ignored. And
578 I appreciate Chairman Ted Deutch's leadership in encouraging the
579 European Union to fully address the existential threat which is
580 part of the conflict between democracy's rule of law being opposed
581 by authoritarian's rule of gun.

582 I also support House Resolution 6265, and I appreciate that
583 the Congressman French Hill's leadership on the CAPTAGON Act.
584 Backed by war criminals Putin and Raisi, Bashar Assad is running
585 a narco-state in addition to this campaign of terror against the
586 people of Syria. Sadly, the Biden Administration in pursuit of
587 a flawed nuclear deal with terrorist state Iran has prevented
588 strategies to address this multi-billion dollar trafficking ring
589 and instead has implicitly green lit normalization with war
590 criminal Assad.

591 Assad and his cronies have profited and lined the pockets
592 of their war machine with illicit funding from the Captagon trade.

593 This is dangerous and addictive drug has proliferated in the
594 region and poses a threat to U.S. national security. I'm grateful
595 to have been a cosponsor of this legislation.

596 And finally, House Resolution 774, the mass murderer Ebrahim
597 Raisi's theocratic regime in Tehran has increased in its ongoing
598 persecution of brutality against a minority, Baha'i faith, and
599 dissonance deems a threat. Practicing members have been round
600 up and executed with drummed up charges leveled against them with
601 no due process. Baha'i families have been ordered to bury their
602 dead in mass graves.

603 Victims of human rights violations by this criminal regime
604 deserve a voice as it is not the people of Iran who perpetuate
605 this senseless violence but the draconian regime. Democracies
606 must stand firm and in support of human rights and dignity around
607 the world. I was grateful to co-lead this resolution with my
608 friend and colleague, Chairman Ted Deutch, who we wish well in
609 future endeavors as he successfully completes this congressional
610 services. I yield back.

611 Mr. Deutch. I thank my friend, Mr. Wilson, and yield five
612 minutes to Ms. Titus of Nevada.

613 Ms. Titus. Well, thank you very much. And I want to thank
614 the chairman and the ranking member for holding this markup and
615 bringing these important pieces of legislation up for discussion
616 today. I'm glad to be cosponsoring several of the bills that

617 we're considering, and I want to thank my colleagues for the
618 opportunity to work with them collaboratively to move these
619 forward.

620 I want to talk about several of the bills that are up. Some
621 are in the en bloc and some are coming up later. But I'll put
622 it all in one short speech so you won't have to call on me again.

623 As we heard last week from the World Food Programme's Director
624 David Beasley and we also talked about it in yesterday's
625 informative hearing the actions of Putin and others around the
626 world are undoubtedly causing a global food crisis. So I would
627 urge my colleagues to advance H.Res. 922 which condemns the use
628 of hunger as a weapon. And I thank Ms. Jacobs for her leadership
629 on this issue. I'd also like to highlight H.R. 7240, the
630 Reinforcing Education Accountability Development, or READ Act
631 that's lead -- reauthorization led by Africa Subcommittee
632 Chairwoman Bass and Ranking Member Smith, as well as H.R. 4134,
633 Keeping Girls in School Act led by Ms. Frankel, which I'm cosponsor
634 of.

635 As the world continues to try and recover from the pandemic
636 now more than ever, it's crucial that the United States is doing
637 all that it can to support education efforts around the world.

638 We must do all we can to ensure that this doesn't irrevocably
639 influence education development because they've been living in
640 COVID times which have been difficult enough. And don't want

641 development to be stymied because that will have a long-term impact
642 on the growth of the global economic. This is essentially true
643 for young women who time and time again have shown that even with
644 less resources that can achieve more and do more to support their
645 communities when they just have the opportunity learn.

646 I'd also like to mention H.R. 8463, the Millennium Challenge
647 Corporation Eligibility Expansion Act. And I appreciate the
648 IDOC, or I-D-O-C, Subcommittee Chairman Castro's leadership on
649 this. We've got to find inventive ways to support our development
650 efforts. So I hope this legislation will open the door for even
651 greater engagement by our committee, especially in regard to the
652 DFC and providing them flexibility to work with and support more
653 partners.

654 Finally, I want to acknowledge and commend you, Mr. Deutch,
655 for your years of service on this committee. You will certainly
656 be missed by me personally and all your colleagues, professionally
657 and politically. Your efforts to support religious freedom are
658 second to none.

659 I want to thank you for allowing me to join you on H.Res.
660 744, Condemning the state of Iran's state-sponsored persecution
661 of the Baha'i minority and continuing to support the Universal
662 Declaration of Human Rights. Unfortunately across the country,
663 we see rights of religious populations are discriminated against.

664 And we long advocated in this committee for religious freedom,

665 and I know we'll continue to do so.

666 I just hope this will lead to more discussions regarding
667 other minority rights before the end of Congress. We can engage
668 again on trying to support other marginalized groups like the
669 LGTBQI+ community. So I am strongly in support of these measures.

670 I will vote for them, and I encourage my colleagues to do so.

671 I thank them for their hard work in bringing this forward, and
672 I yield back.

673 Mr. Deutch. Thank you, Ms. Titus, a good colleague and a
674 good friend. And I yield five minutes to Representative Barr
675 of Kentucky.

676 Mr. Barr. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I move to strike
677 the last word.

678 Mr. Deutch. The gentleman is recognized.

679 Mr. Barr. Thank you. I join in support of Representative
680 Kim's bill, H.R. 8259, the Arms Exports Delivery Solutions Act.

681 I commend my good friend, the gentlelady from the California,
682 for her leadership on this and advocacy for Taiwan.

683 This important piece of legislation would require a joint
684 Department of State and Department of Defense report on the status
685 of certain delayed arms sales to Taiwan, the Republic of Korea,
686 Japan, Australia, and New Zealand. This is a comprehensive bill
687 that relates to a number of allied countries who have purchased
688 arms. But we still receive reports that these arms have been

689 delayed.

690 This is particularly troubling with respect to Taiwan given
691 the deterrence imperatives relative to the CCP. Particularly
692 important about this legislation is that it requires the inclusion
693 of actions to expedite deliveries of defense articles and interim
694 solutions in the event of shipment delays in support of Taiwan's
695 self-defense. The Taiwanese Minister of Defense last year stated
696 that the People's Republic of China would be capable of mounting
697 a full scale invasion of Taiwan by 2025.

698 However the current time table for deliveries to Taiwan are
699 falling behind this deadline. We must not let Taiwan become
700 another Ukraine by delaying support to this critical partner in
701 the Indo-Pacific. I was proud to cosponsor this legislation as
702 an amendment in the recent FY23 NDAA and was pleased it was included
703 in a bipartisan fashion in the House bill.

704 Every day, we are seeing the People's Republic of China make
705 more and more incursions into Taiwan's air space. We are even
706 seeing China try and tell the Speaker of the U.S. House of
707 Representatives that she is not allowed to travel to Taiwan.
708 We must respond to this aggression by showing the world that we
709 support Taiwan's self-defense, not just through speeches and
710 congressional visits but through the delivery of critically
711 important arms sales that Taiwan is requesting.

712 This bill will shed light on what we need to do fix the delays

713 in arms sales and shore up Taiwan's self-defense. This is
714 critical for Taiwan's deterrence capabilities. I urge my
715 colleagues to support this measure in the en bloc. I once again
716 thank Representative Kim for her initiative and leadership on
717 this, and I yield back.

718 Mr. Deutch. Thank you, Mr. Barr. Representative Wild,
719 you're recognized for five minutes.

720 Ms. Wild. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I rise in support of
721 my bill, the Countering Untrusted Telecommunications Act. And
722 let me begin by thanking Chairman Meeks for his leadership and
723 for serving as an original cosponsor of this legislation. And
724 thank you to my colleague across the aisle, Representative Ann
725 Wagner, for her commitment to bipartisanship and for co-leading
726 this legislation with me.

727 Reporting has shown how the Chinese regime uses its major
728 telecommunications companies, Huawei and ZTE, as a vehicle for
729 major human rights violations, particularly against the Uyghur
730 people, as well as to target U.S. interests and national security
731 along with our allies' interest and national security. A
732 Washington Post article from December 2021 uncovered that Huawei
733 presentations focused on showing how its technologies can help
734 government authorities identify individuals by voice, monitor
735 political individuals of interest, manage ideological reeducation
736 and labor schedules for prisoners, and help retailers track

737 shoppers using facial recognition.

738 In response to this threat, the purpose of this bill is clear,
739 to obtain reports on the vulnerabilities in our own overseas
740 embassies as well as within the networks of our collective defense
741 allies, to direct the State Department to identify strategic
742 telecoms infrastructure projects to strengthen our national
743 security, and to amend the Securities and Exchange Act to require
744 companies to report on whether they have contracted to use telecoms
745 equipment or services that run counter to our security interests.

746 This legislation provides us with a crucial opportunity to stand
747 firm against the atrocious human rights record and mass
748 surveillance apparatus of the Chinese regime. I urge my
749 colleagues to join me in passing the bill by a resounding
750 bipartisan margin.

751 And I will also take this opportunity to briefly express
752 my support for the legislation introduced by my colleague from
753 Missouri, Representative Wagner, the Upholding the Dayton Peace
754 Agreement Through Sanctions Act. Throughout the 1990s, we saw
755 the devastating toll of ethnic conflict in the Balkans. We cannot
756 go back to that time. And we know that Vladimir Putin has been
757 actively working for years to support Serbian separatism and stoke
758 ethnic division in order to dismantle the region's fragile
759 framework for peace and advance his interests in the region.

760 The Dayton Accords are not perfect. But the answer is not

761 to stand by and watch as the agreement is dismantled. The answer
762 is to preserve the accords and build on the progress made.

763 I'm proud that this legislation addresses a key concern that
764 I've raised in this committee. It calls on the Bosnian government
765 to implement the rulings of the European Court of Human Rights
766 which would put an end to the ethnic and religious requirements
767 on holding high ranking political office that have unacceptably
768 disenfranchised far too many members of the population. I urge
769 my colleagues to join me in passing this bill so that we can send
770 a clear signal in support of peace, democracy, and stability in
771 the region. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

772 Mr. Deutch. Thank you, Ms. Wild. Representative Kim,
773 you're recognized for five minutes.

774 Ms. Kim of California. Thank you, Chairman. And I would
775 like to speak on my bill, H.R. 8259. And I want to thank other
776 Representatives who have already spoken in support of this bill
777 as well.

778 The People's Republic of China is becoming increasingly
779 aggressive in Taiwan Strait. And it continues sending dozens
780 of war planes into Taiwan's air defense identification zone and
781 demands that the United States and its defense relationship with
782 Taiwan. The PRC has even threatening a response to Speaker
783 Pelosi's potential Taiwan visit, and I do sincerely hope that
784 she does not bend to their threats.

785 Xi Jinping has paid close attention to our response to
786 Russian's annexation of Crimea and is paying attention to our
787 response to Russia's invasion in Ukraine. Taiwan has purchased
788 billions of dollars' worth of military and defense systems that
789 have yet to be delivered, including Patriot missile system
790 upgrades, F-16 fighter jets, Stinger missiles, and other critical,
791 critical weapons to Taiwan's security. The Arms Export Delivery
792 Solutions Act requires Secretaries of State and Defense to provide
793 Congress with their report.

794 That contains a list of approved transfer of defense articles
795 to Taiwan and other allies in Japan, South Korea, Australia, and
796 New Zealand, the estimated start and end dates of delivery for
797 those approved and incomplete transfer items, and any changes
798 in delivery dates with explanation as to why such delays are there
799 and options for expediting the deliveries and authorities and
800 powers Congress can use to expedite those deliveries. And also,
801 we want a description of ongoing interagency efforts to support
802 operational capabilities of delivered systems and a separate
803 description of action items the State Department is taking to
804 expedite deliveries, especially to Taiwan.

805 I want to thank Ranking Member McCaul for leading this
806 important legislation with me as well as Acting Subcommittee
807 Ranking Member Steven Chabot and Representative Brian Mast. And
808 I want to thank Chairman Meeks for bringing this very important

809 piece of legislation up for committee consideration. And I urge
810 all my colleagues to support this legislation. Thank you, and
811 I yield back.

812 Mr. Deutch. Thank you, Representative Kim. And with that,
813 the committee will stand in recess for just a bit.

814 [Recess.]

815 Chairman Meeks. I now recognize Representative Manning from
816 the State of California for five minutes. North Caroline. What
817 did I say? I said California, figured --

818 Ms. Manning. I am happy to be from the State of North
819 Carolina.

820 Thank you so much, Chairman Meeks and Ranking Member McCaul,
821 for the committee's excellent work on these important measures.

822 I am proud to support the measures en bloc, which includes my
823 bill H.R. 8503, the Securing Global Telecommunications Act,
824 bipartisan legislation I was proud to introduce with my friend
825 and colleague Representative Young Kim of California.

826 Mr. Chairman, every day we use and rely on products connected
827 to telecom networks which rely on a nearly invisible set of
828 internationally agreed-upon standards. These products work.
829 And we are able to enjoy them when we can trust that the
830 infrastructure and standards that underpin them are safe and
831 secure, and are not controlled by malign, authoritarian actors.

832 Our adversaries and strategic competitors would prefer to

833 dictate our telecommunications infrastructure and technology
834 standards. They want to install Chinese 5G towers and telecom
835 equipment wherever they can. The intent is to gain influence
836 over international standard-setting bodies to provide their own
837 companies, like Huawei and ZTE, an unfair advantage to shut out
838 competitors and to further their countries' geopolitical agendas.

839 China then abuses this technology to steal data, conduct
840 surveillance, invade our privacy, and undermine a free and open
841 internet. In short, China and Russia are determined to game the
842 system to influence the next generation of critical strategic
843 technologies like 5G and AI. And if we are not vigilant, they
844 may get their wish.

845 This act will build on the committee's past work, including
846 Ranking Member McCaul's bill, the Promoting United States
847 International Leadership in 5G Act, to further enhance U.S.
848 efforts to promote secure telecommunications infrastructure
849 around the world.

850 This bill would require the State Department to develop a
851 comprehensive strategy to promote trusted vendors in several
852 categories of critical telecom infrastructure.

853 It would require the Administration to report to Congress
854 on Chinese and Russian efforts to advance their interests at the
855 International Telecommunications Union.

856 And it would encourage multilateral collaboration to promote

857 secure telecom providers, and authorize and codify the existing
858 International Digital Economic and Telecommunications Advisory
859 Committee, and give our American companies a seat at the table.

860 This bill addresses a significant gap in an area of vital
861 strategic importance. I want to thank my Republican colleague
862 Congresswoman Young Kim, as well as Chairman Meeks, for supporting
863 my focus on this important bipartisan priority.

864 I also want to urge support for Congressman Ted Deutch's
865 legislation, including a resolution I was proud to help introduce,
866 H.Res. 558, which urges the European Union to designate Hezbollah,
867 in its entirety, as a terrorist organization.

868 Mr. Chairman, the Iranian-backed terrorist group Hezbollah
869 is responsible for thousands of civilian deaths, not just in the
870 Middle East but around the globe. Until 9/11, Hezbollah had
871 killed more Americans than any other terrorist group.

872 Today, it maintains an arsenal of 150,000 rockets aimed at
873 Israel.

874 I am glad the Administration is committed to imposing
875 sanctions on this terrorist network. We would like to see our
876 partners in the EU take a stronger stand against this common threat
877 by designating the organization, as a whole, as a terrorist threat.

878 And I am grateful to Chairman Deutch for his steadfast leadership
879 on this important issue.

880 In closing, I urge support for the measure en bloc containing

881 these important bipartisan bills. And I thank the chairman and
882 the ranking member for their leadership.

883 I yield back.

884 Chairman Meeks. The gentlelady yields back.

885 I now recognize Representative Brad Schneider of Illinois
886 for five minutes.

887 Mr. Schneider. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

888 Hezbollah is not just a threat to our ally Israel and regional
889 security, they are also a threat to United States national
890 security.

891 H.Res. 558 would urge the European Union to designate
892 Hezbollah, and in its entirety, as a terrorist organization.
893 The EU designated Hezbollah's military wing as a terrorist
894 organization all the way back in 2013. And there has been notable
895 progress since then in countering Hezbollah activity. But more
896 needs to be done.

897 This resolution urges the EU to take practical and tangible
898 steps to reduce the terrorist threat posed to the United States,
899 to Europe, to Israel, and our other allies in the Middle East
900 by Hezbollah.

901 For example, increasing Class 4 intelligence sharing,
902 freezing Hezbollah assets, prohibiting Hezbollah fundraising
903 activities, and issuing arrest warrants for Hezbollah members
904 and supporters in Europe would not only send a strong message,

905 but would have a concrete impact, inhibiting the ability of
906 Hezbollah to operate with impunity.

907 There is no distinction between the military and political
908 wings of Hezbollah. And to try to make that distinction is
909 pointless. They are part and parcel of the same entity, and that
910 is a terrorist organization that threatens the United States and
911 our allies, and contributes to instability and violence throughout
912 the Middle East.

913 I urge my colleagues to support the measure and I -- I urge
914 my colleagues to support the measure.

915 I also, Mr. Chairman, want to speak in support of H.Res.
916 744, condemning the Government of Iran's persecution of Baha'i
917 minority. On top of the growing threat to the region, Iran has
918 a long history of blatant human rights violations. For years,
919 the Baha'i community, the largest non-Muslim religious minority
920 in Iran, has been subject to particularly severe religious freedom
921 violations.

922 There are more than 300,000 Baha'i community members in Iran
923 who have been condemned as heretics by their Government. Since
924 1979, Iranian authorities have killed or executed more than 200
925 Baha'i leaders, and more than 10,000 -- 10,000 -- have been
926 dismissed from government and university jobs. More than 850
927 have been arbitrarily arrested.

928 It is the duty of the House of Representatives to condemn

929 Iran's state-sponsored persecution of its Baha'i minority and
930 its continued violation of the International Covenants on Human
931 Rights.

932 I urge my colleagues to also support this measure.

933 I support all the measures in this en bloc amendments. And
934 I urge my colleagues to support all of them as well.

935 I yield back.

936 Chairman Meeks. The gentleman yields back.

937 Are there any further, any other members seeking recognition?

938 Any further members seeking recognition?

939 Hearing no further requests of recognition, the committee
940 will proceed to consider the noticed items en bloc. Pursuant
941 to the previous order, the question occurs on the measures en
942 bloc, as amended, if amended. And we are going to take a vote
943 by voice.

944 All members, please unmute your microphones.

945 All those in favor, say aye.

946 All those opposed, no.

947 In the opinion of the chair, the ayes have it. And the
948 measures considered en bloc are agreed to.

949 And without objection, the motion to reconsider is laid upon
950 the table. Pursuant to the previous order of the committee, each
951 measure is ordered favorably reported, as amended, if amended.

952 And each amendment or amendments to each bill shall be reported

953 as a single amendment in the nature of a substitute.

954 Without objection, staff is authorized to make any technical
955 and conforming changes necessary.

956 So, now let's move on to the six measures being considered
957 separately.

958 They are:

959 H.Res. 922, condemning the use of hunger as a weapon of war
960 and recognizing the effect of conflict on global food security
961 and famine, with the Jacobs amendment in the nature of a
962 substitute, Number 112.

963 [The Resolution H.Res. 922 follows:]

964

965 *****COMMITTEE INSERT*****

966 Chairman Meeks. H.R. 6498, PEACE through Music Diplomacy
967 Act, with a McCaul amendment in the nature of a substitute, Number
968 59.

969 [The Resolution H.Res. 6498 follows:]

970

971 *****COMMITTEE INSERT*****

972 Chairman Meeks. H.R. 7240, Reinforcing Education
973 Accountability in Development Act.

974 [The Bill H.R. 7240 follows:]

975

976 *****COMMITTEE INSERT*****

977 Chairman Meeks. H.R. 4134, Keeping Girls in School Act,
978 with a Houlahan amendment in the nature of a substitute, Number
979 92.

980 [The Bill H.R. 4134 follows:]

981

982 *****COMMITT EEINSERT*****

983 Chairman Meeks. H.R. 8463, the Millennium Challenge
984 Corporation Eligibility Expansion Act.

985 [The Bill H.R. 8463 follows:]

986

987 *****COMMITTEE INSERT*****

988 Chairman Meeks. H.R. 6455, Prosper Africa Act, with a McCaul
989 amendment in the nature of a substitute, Number 69.

990 [The Bill H.R. 6455 follows:]

991

992 *****COMMITTEE INSERT*****

993 Chairman Meeks. So, we will now consider H.Res. 922,
994 condemning the use of hunger as a weapon of war and recognizing
995 the effect of conflict on global food security and famine, with
996 a Jacobs amendment in the nature of a substitute, Number 112.

997 Pursuant to notice, for purposes of markup, I now call up
998 H.Res. 922. And the clerk will report the resolution.

999 Ms. Hallman. H.Res. 922, condemning the use of hunger as
1000 a weapon of war and recognizing the effect of conflict on global
1001 --

1002 Chairman Meeks. Without objection, the first reading of
1003 the resolution is dispensed. And the resolution shall be
1004 considered as read and open to amendment at any point.

1005 And without objection, the Jacobs amendment in the nature
1006 of a substitute, Number 112, circulated to members, shall be
1007 considered as read and will be treated as an original text for
1008 purposes of an amendment.

1009 At this time, I recognize myself to speak briefly on the
1010 measure.

1011 I am a strong supporter of H.Res. 922, a bipartisan resolution
1012 condemning the use of hunger as a weapon of war, authored by
1013 Representative Jacobs and Representative Meijer.

1014 This timely resolution calls out horrific practices such
1015 as starving civilian populations as a weapon of warfare, and the
1016 intentional and reckless destruction of tools for food production,

1017 the denial of humanitarian access, and the willful interruption
1018 of market systems.

1019 We are seeing it now. Just a few days ago Putin's missiles
1020 hit Ukraine's seaport of Odessa just a few hours after a deal
1021 to allow grain exports to continue from the port. Russia and
1022 Ukraine account for roughly one-third of the world's wheat
1023 exports. Ukraine alone accounts for 15 percent of global maize
1024 exports, 10 percent of global wheat exports, 13 percent of global
1025 barley exports, and 50 percent of global sunflower oil exports
1026 which are now imperiled as a result of the brutal Russian, Russia,
1027 Russian's invasion.

1028 The world relies on these exports for basic food needs.

1029 I support this resolution and encourage my colleagues to
1030 do so as well. I realize members wish to speak on the measure,
1031 and that some members have amendments to offer.

1032 And I will recognize -- and I yield back the balance of my
1033 time.

1034 And I will recognize members in committee seniority, by
1035 committee seniority, alternating between Democrats and
1036 Republicans for the purpose of speaking on the measure first.
1037 If you miss your turn, please let our staff know and we will circle
1038 back to you. Then we will move on to amendments.

1039 Do any members wish to speak on the measure?

1040 I recognize Representative Jacobs from the State of

1041 California for five minutes.

1042 Ms. Jacobs. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you
1043 to so many of my colleagues here for supporting my resolution
1044 condemning the use of hunger as a weapon of war and recognizing
1045 the effect of conflict on global food security and famine.

1046 I also want to thank Congressman Meijer for partnering with
1047 me on this bipartisan resolution.

1048 Even before the Russian invasion of Ukraine we have seen
1049 how climate change, the pandemic, and conflict fueled food crises
1050 around the world, in Yemen, Syria, Ethiopia, South Sudan. And
1051 now, Russia's invasion has made all of these situations worse.

1052 Putin has repeatedly weaponized food during this war by
1053 hitting Odessa, and recently striking the port even after a
1054 landmark grain deal was struck just the day before.

1055 But we also have to recognize that we can't only sound the
1056 alarm and mobilize aid and attention when and where humanitarian
1057 crises affect people who look like us. Around the world, millions
1058 are hungry and suffering as a direct result of Putin's relentless
1059 pursuit for power.

1060 OXFAM and Save the Children estimate that more than 23 million
1061 people in the Horn of Africa are facing extreme hunger because
1062 of Russia's invasion.

1063 Afghanistan continues to face an acute humanitarian crisis
1064 where 23 million people face severe food insecurity.

1065 Haiti imports 70 percent of its food mainly from Russia and
1066 Canada. And today, 45 percent of the Haitian population faces
1067 acute hunger.

1068 In Ethiopia, 12 million people in Tigray and Afar are in
1069 dire need of humanitarian assistance, and rely on wheat imports
1070 from Ukraine and Russia.

1071 In South Sudan, where I just traveled, 12 million people
1072 are experiencing severe food insecurity, and 2 million children
1073 under the age of five are facing acute malnutrition, the most
1074 extreme level of food insecurity in the country since it became
1075 independent in 2011.

1076 Just last week I met with World Food Programme Director David
1077 Beasley, who told me that actually there is no longer a supply
1078 issue, it is an access issue. Meaning we have enough food to
1079 feed people around the world and stem these crises, but we have
1080 a challenge of logistics, whether that is due to cost, locations,
1081 or the direct targeting of agriculture and food transportation
1082 hubs.

1083 That is why it is so important that we, as a body, recognize
1084 these impacts, condemn starvation of civilians as a weapon of
1085 war, and call on the United States Government here in Congress
1086 and in the Administration to continue addressing these crises
1087 and hold perpetrators accountable.

1088 I am proud to lead this important resolution today. And

1089 I urge my colleagues to support it.

1090 I yield back the balance of my time.

1091 Chairman Meeks. The gentlelady yields back the balance of
1092 time.

1093 I now recognize Representative David Cicilline of Rhode
1094 Island for five minutes.

1095 Mr. Cicilline. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

1096 Vladimir Putin's grotesque, repugnant, illegal war on the
1097 people of Ukraine has once again exposed the fragility of global
1098 food systems and the need for there to be robust interagency plan
1099 to limit the impact that tyrants like Putin can have on ensuring
1100 that people of the world, the child in vulnerable states, do not
1101 suffer enduring hunger.

1102 I strongly support House Resolution 922 offered by my friend,
1103 Representative Jacobs, and thank her for her extraordinary
1104 leadership on this issue and this excellent resolution which
1105 condemns the use of hunger as a weapon of war.

1106 It shocks and stirs the conscious that we need to signal
1107 to the world proactively starving innocent civilians in order
1108 to meet foreign policy goals is a reprehensible crime. But after
1109 Vladimir Putin demonstrated as recently as five days ago by bombing
1110 the Port of Odessa hours after agreeing to a grain compromise,
1111 we must.

1112 No twisted delusion of grandeur held by a man like Vladimir

1113 Putin should come between a child and a warm meal.

1114 No war criminal like Vladimir Putin should stand between
1115 assistance to the poor, and the aged, and the indigent. Indeed,
1116 no one should grow thin or emaciated because they live in a time
1117 of a deranged oppressor.

1118 So, I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting this
1119 legislation so that we might work for ending manmade hunger as
1120 a result of war, and condemn in the strongest terms the use of
1121 starvation as a weapon of war.

1122 And I again want to end where I began, by thanking
1123 Congresswoman Jacobs for her extraordinary leadership on this
1124 issue.

1125 And I yield back.

1126 Chairman Meeks. The gentleman yields back.

1127 Any other members wish to speak on this measure?

1128 Anybody else wish to speak on this measure?

1129 Hearing no further requests, let's move on to amendments.

1130 Are there any amendments?

1131 Mr. Perry of Pennsylvania.

1132 Mr. Cicilline. Mr. Chairman, I reserve a point of order.

1133 Chairman Meeks. A point of order is reserved.

1134 What number?

1135 Mr. Perry. 744, Mr. Chairman.

1136 [The Amendment offered by Mr. Perry follows:]

1137

1138

*****COMMITTEE INSERT*****

1139 Chairman Meeks. Clerk, please distribute the amendment to
1140 your staff virtually. And let's pause to give members a chance
1141 to review the amendment.

1142 Has everyone received a copy of the amendment?

1143 Clerk, please report the amendment.

1144 Ms. Hallman. Perry Amendment Number 744 to the amendment
1145 in the nature of a substitute to H.Res. 922.

1146 In the first clause of the preamble --

1147 Chairman Meeks. Without objection, further reading of the
1148 amendment will be dispensed with.

1149 The Representative from Pennsylvania is recognized for five
1150 minutes in support of the amendment.

1151 Mr. Perry. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

1152 This amendment simply recognizes reality, that COVID-19
1153 didn't worsen the already-occurring and rising global food
1154 insecurity. It was the unscientific and unnecessary lockdowns
1155 in reaction to the virus. The virus didn't cause layoffs and
1156 unemployment. The virus didn't cause increased poverty. The
1157 virus didn't cause supply chain disruptions.

1158 The lockdowns imposed significant economic costs around the
1159 world, likely among those who are the most vulnerable.

1160 Again, this amendment simply places the emphasis on the true
1161 culprit. I urge support.

1162 And I yield the balance.

1163 Chairman Meeks. The gentleman gives back his time.

1164 I now recognize myself for five minutes.

1165 I oppose this amendment because COVID-19 has had massive
1166 direct effects on populations around the world. The facts are
1167 that over a million Americans have died, and millions more
1168 globally. Countries, rightly, have to take the necessary steps
1169 to protect their citizens.

1170 And I yield back the balance of my time.

1171 Is there any further debate on the amendment?

1172 Representative Jacobs, five minutes.

1173 Ms. Jacobs. I oppose this amendment because it is not based
1174 in truth. The facts of COVID-19 are well-documented all over
1175 the world, have undoubtedly played a key role in worsening global
1176 food insecurities.

1177 COVID-19 has reduced incomes, has disrupted food supply
1178 chains, and it has doubled the number of food insecure people
1179 from before the pandemic.

1180 I yield back.

1181 Chairman Meeks. The gentlelady yields back.

1182 Any further debate on the amendment?

1183 Hearing no further requests to speak, the question is on
1184 the Perry amendment designated Number 744. We are going to take
1185 a vote by voice.

1186 All members please unmute your microphones.

1187 All those in favor, say aye.

1188 All those opposed, no.

1189 In the opinion of the chair, the nays have it. And the
1190 amendment is not agreed to.

1191 And without objection, the motion to reconsider is laid upon
1192 the table.

1193 For what purpose does the Representative from Pennsylvania,
1194 Mr. Perry, seek recognition?

1195 Mr. Perry. Mr. Chairman, I have got an amendment at the
1196 desk, Number 753.

1197 [The Amendment offered by Mr. Perry follows:]

1198

1199 *****COMMITTEE INSERT*****

1200 Mr. Cicilline. Mr. Chairman, I reserve a point of order.
1201 Chairman Meeks. A point of order is reserved.
1202 The clerk shall distribute the amendment virtually.
1203 Has everyone received a copy of the amendment?
1204 The clerk will please report the amendment.
1205 Ms. Hallman. Perry Amendment Number 753 to the amendment
1206 in the nature of a substitute to H.Res. 922.
1207 Page 4 --
1208 Chairman Meeks. Without objection, further reading of the
1209 amendment will be dispensed with.
1210 And the Representative from Pennsylvania, Mr. Perry, is now
1211 recognized for five minutes in support of his amendment.
1212 Mr. Perry. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
1213 This amendment stipulated that crisis modifiers used in
1214 existing USAID programs shall be used specifically to divert,
1215 decrease, or cease programming.
1216 I know many folks here will say that these crisis modifiers
1217 are only used to divert or cease programming. I acknowledge that
1218 there are situations, like in Afghanistan, where it is helpful
1219 to have a mechanism to immediately stop or divert funding. I
1220 mean, we certainly don't want to continue sending funding to the
1221 enemy that just took over in a place like that.
1222 However, crisis modifiers have never, have never been used
1223 to increase funding. I think the text I am offering today is

1224 a good compromise.

1225 And again, that text is, and I quote, "Ensuring existing
1226 interagency strategies, crisis response efforts, and ongoing
1227 programs consider, integrate, and adapt to address conflict by
1228 utilizing crisis modifiers in the United States Agency for
1229 International Development program to respond to rapid shock and
1230 stress, such as the willful targeting of food systems by diverting,
1231 decreasing, or ceasing funding."

1232 Not doing anything that it doesn't already do. We are just
1233 clarifying so that it doesn't go the other direction. That is
1234 all we are doing. That is all I am asking to do. And so, it
1235 should be easy for everybody to support that.

1236 With that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

1237 Mr. Cicilline. Will the gentleman yield for a question?

1238 Mr. Perry. Certainly.

1239 Mr. Cicilline. So, your amendment says, adds language "by
1240 diverting, decreasing, or ceasing assistance." It doesn't
1241 actually speak about funding. And so if there is different
1242 assistance that would be an appropriate response, USAID would
1243 not be permitted to do it.

1244 That seems like a very bad idea.

1245 Mr. Perry. As I understand, as I am reading it to you, "by
1246 diverting, decreasing, or ceasing funding."

1247 Mr. Cicilline. No, that is not.

1248 It says "ceasing assistance."

1249 Mr. Perry. All right. Then I am not sure which one of us
1250 stands corrected. I see what the amendment says, but I am seeing
1251 what my text says here.

1252 I appear to stand corrected.

1253 Mr. Cicilline. Does that mean you will withdraw the
1254 amendment?

1255 Mr. Perry. I am fine with "ceasing funding" or "assistance."

1256 Mr. Cicilline. Well, "funding" is not there at all.

1257 Mr. Perry. Okay. I am fine with "ceasing assistance."

1258 Mr. Cicilline. But I guess that was my question. If you
1259 are saying "ceasing assistance," if they make a determination
1260 that a different kind of assistance --

1261 Mr. Perry. Okay. Then --

1262 Mr. Cicilline. -- would be entitled, you would not want
1263 to preclude that from happening.

1264 Mr. Perry. Fair enough then. Would you accept the
1265 amendment if it said "ceasing funding" as opposed to "assistance"?

1266 Mr. Cicilline. No. I think that is an equally dumb idea,
1267 frankly, with all due respect.

1268 But certainly this one I think is particularly harmful
1269 because it doesn't even allow the agency to make modifications
1270 in what kind of assistance might be useful. It seems to me that
1271 doesn't serve the interests of the American people.

1272 Mr. Perry. All it does is say -- essentially all this does
1273 is agree with already, what is already there, which says we are
1274 not going to increase, using the modifiers to increase.

1275 And I don't know why anybody has a problem with that, with
1276 that idea. We are just saying you shouldn't use the modifiers
1277 to increase these things. And if they have always been used to
1278 decrease, then we all should be on the same page.

1279 But it seems to me that somebody is actually interested in
1280 increasing it, but they don't want to say that.

1281 I yield, Chairman.

1282 Mr. Cicilline. I mean, I have tremendous confidence in
1283 USAID. So, I, I am not concerned about them using modifiers
1284 inappropriately.

1285 You seem to suggest that somehow increasing assistance is
1286 problematic. It may, in fact, advance the interests of the United
1287 States and the mission of the agency.

1288 Mr. Perry. All I am saying is --

1289 Mr. Cicilline. I am not sure why we would want to restrict
1290 it.

1291 Mr. Perry. All I am saying is using the crisis modifiers.
1292 Should only be used to divert or cease programs.

1293 Mr. Cicilline. But where do you get that notion, I guess?
1294 You have made a limitation on crisis modifiers that you think
1295 is consistent with your view of it. But where does that come

1296 from other than a general notice that USAID should do less?

1297 Mr. Perry. I am not saying it should do less. I am just
1298 saying that should use the crisis -- it should use the crisis
1299 modifiers, so you have got a crisis somewhere, like in Afghanistan
1300 where the enemy has taken over, we don't want to send them more
1301 money. We don't want to send them more aid.

1302 Mr. Cicilline. I think if you look at the beginning of that
1303 paragraph you say, "calls on the United States Government to
1304 prioritize diplomatic efforts to call out and address instances
1305 where hunger and intentional deprivation of food is being utilized
1306 as a weapon of war, to make efforts to ensure that security efforts
1307 do not undermine livelihoods of local populations, to minimize
1308 harm."

1309 And then you go to C: Ensure that existing interagency
1310 strategies, crisis response efforts, and ongoing programs
1311 consider, integrate, and adapt to address conflicts by utilizing
1312 crisis modifiers of the United States Agency for International
1313 Development programs to respond to rapid shock and stress.

1314 Chairman Meeks. The gentleman's time has expired.

1315 Anyone else seek recognition?

1316 Mr. Mast. Representative Mast.

1317 Chairman Meeks. First, let me just say this. I recognize
1318 myself.

1319 I oppose this amendment. This amendment is not applicable

1320 to this cause. Number one, because USAID is not authorized to
1321 cease assistance.

1322 This resolution already addresses actions to be taken to
1323 hold individuals, governments, militias, and/or entities
1324 responsible for using hunger as a weapon in conflict.

1325 I yield back the balance of my time.

1326 Who seeks recognition?

1327 Mr. Mast. Representative Mast.

1328 Chairman Meeks. Representative Mast is recognized for five
1329 minutes.

1330 Mr. Mast. Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

1331 I am going to yield as much time as my colleague Mr. Perry
1332 may need to him. But after, if there is any time remaining I
1333 would be curious to hear you expand just a little bit on your
1334 last statement, Mr. Chairman, saying that USAID is not at their
1335 leisure to cease assistance. I would be curious to just hear
1336 more about it, if there is a remainder of time.

1337 But I yield to Representative Perry.

1338 Mr. Perry. I thank the, I thank the gentleman from Florida.

1339 Text is "ensuring that existing interagency strategies,
1340 crisis response efforts, and ongoing programs consider,
1341 integrate, and adapt to address conflict by utilizing crisis
1342 modifiers in the United States Agency for International
1343 Development Program to respond to rapid shock and stress, such

1344 as the willful targeting of food systems by diverting,
1345 decreasing," and as the amendment reads, "ceasing assistance."

1346 All the amendment seeks to do is make sure that we don't
1347 use the opportunity of crisis modifiers, of crisis modifiers --
1348 that is the point, the crisis modifier -- to increase these
1349 activities. That is all it seeks to do.

1350 I am not saying it has ever been done before. To my knowledge
1351 it never has been done before. But I would make the point that
1352 since it has never been done before, that we should have no problem
1353 with this amendment.

1354 And with that, Mr. Chairman, I don't know if you want to
1355 entertain Mr. Mast's question, but I yield the balance of that
1356 time to you.

1357 Chairman Meeks. Well, I would just say that Congress is
1358 the authorizer. They are just the authorizer, not USAID.

1359 Mr. Mast. Mr. Chairman.

1360 Chairman Meeks. Yes?

1361 Mr. Mast. Mr. Chairman, like I said, I was just generally
1362 curious on what you were saying. You are saying that USAID, the
1363 administrators there, they, if they see something happening on
1364 the ground, somebody that is there providing something, whatever
1365 the case may be, pick your hypothetical situations, they don't
1366 have the authority to, let's call it stop delivery or, or anything
1367 more broad than that? Obviously, it could be far more broad than

1368 that.

1369 But is that, is that what you are saying?

1370 Chairman Meeks. I am just saying that they could come back
1371 to Congress, but Congress ultimately makes the determination of
1372 what is authorized and what is not.

1373 Mr. Mast. I am not trying to pigeonhole you into something.
1374 I am really just generally wondering.

1375 Somebody on the ground doesn't have the authority, you are
1376 saying, to stop that without an act of Congress?

1377 Chairman Meeks. Well, I am saying that, yes, I am saying
1378 that Congress ultimately has the jurisdiction to determine, to
1379 authorize, and/or to cut off authorization.

1380 Mr. Mast. Certainly. And I agree with that. I understand
1381 that we administer that.

1382 What I am wondering is does somebody on the ground have the
1383 authority to, let's say, pump the brakes on something being
1384 delivered?

1385 Chairman Meeks. I believe that is what they would be
1386 recommendations and what would come from the organization. If
1387 there is something that they do not need or utilize, they would
1388 come, or not by, or not authorized, and say you don't need it
1389 and, therefore, that money would be reserved in their cache.

1390 But complete, sort of clear that complete authorization is
1391 done by, done by the Congress.

1392 Ms. Jacobs. If Mr. Mast would yield.

1393 Mr. Mast. I would yield. That is what I am curious on.

1394 Mr. Cicilline. I think maybe the reason that this is
1395 difficult to follow, maybe Mr. Perry doesn't mean this, but the
1396 current language says to ensure existing interagency strategies,
1397 crisis response efforts, and ongoing programs consider,
1398 integrate, and adapt to address conflict by utilizing crisis
1399 modifiers in the USAID programming.

1400 Crisis modifiers bring together the worlds of both
1401 development and humanitarian assistance. There are financing
1402 mechanisms within the development program.

1403 So, basically, the sentence wouldn't make any sense if you
1404 say bring together these two missions for purpose of responding
1405 to the crisis.

1406 Oh, and by the way, you can't do so by diverting, decreasing,
1407 or ceasing assistance. It is exactly for that purpose that you
1408 are able to respond to a crisis by bringing together these two
1409 functionalities and this financing program to do it in the most
1410 cost-effective way and the way that has the greatest impact.

1411 That is the purpose of USAID.

1412 I think this is a clumsy effort to limit that, which I think
1413 would be -- really undermine the direct mission of USAID.

1414 And I urge everyone to vote against the amendment.

1415 Mr. Mast. I will regain my time here.

1416 And I think it is something that we should be looking at,
1417 you know, more broadly is our capability for very direct oversight
1418 over any assistance. I can't pretend that I do just automatically
1419 trust those that are working at USAID to, to utilize the taxpayer
1420 dollars well.

1421 I will just leave it at that.

1422 My time has expired. I yield back.

1423 Chairman Meeks. The gentleman's time has expired.

1424 Any further debate on the amendment?

1425 Ms. Jacobs from California.

1426 Ms. Jacobs. Well, thank you.

1427 Yeah, I just want to say that this amendment is very
1428 confusing, and also unnecessary and duplicative, because we
1429 already have language about holding people accountable in the
1430 very next clause. And it encourages the United States Government
1431 to use tools like the Global Magnitsky Act sanctions if they needed
1432 to hold people accountable for using hunger as a weapon of war.

1433 I also think, to answer your previous question, Mr. Mast,
1434 it would be a violation of either the Antideficiency Act or the
1435 Impoundment Act, depending which account it comes from, for the
1436 Executive Branch to not spend money that Congress has authorized.

1437 And so, it would have to come back to us for that to happen.

1438 So, we maintain control of that.

1439 With that, I --

1440 Mr. Mast. Would you yield, Ms. Jacobs?

1441 Mr. Jacobs. Sure.

1442 Mr. Mast. Yeah, and again, I just think this is a bigger
1443 conversation that we should be having as Congress about playing
1444 a larger role in each of those USAID authorizations, more
1445 specifically. But I understand that there are people that work
1446 there in the agency, might simply wish for Congress do that, that
1447 we would hold the purse strings, that we would be accountable
1448 users of the taxpayers' dollars by not just sending it to the
1449 USAID agency but really, I guess people don't like to be
1450 micromanaged, but micromanaging them a bit more.

1451 And I thank you for yielding to me a moment.

1452 Mr. Jacobs. Well, thank you.

1453 I think many would argue that given the amount of mandatory
1454 spending requirements and earmarks we put in the USAID budget
1455 we already do micromanage how they spend their money.

1456 But I will look forward to potentially working with you on
1457 some solutions to that in the USAID authorizations, though, that
1458 our committee will be working on.

1459 I yield back, Mr. Chair.

1460 Chairman Meeks. The gentlelady yields back.

1461 Any further debate on the amendment?

1462 Hearing no further requests to speak, the question is on
1463 the Perry amendment designated 753.

1464 We are going to take a vote by voice.

1465 All members please unmute your microphones.

1466 All those in favor, say aye.

1467 All those opposed, no.

1468 In the opinion of the chair, the nays have it. And the
1469 amendment is not agreed to.

1470 Without objection, the motion to reconsider is laid upon
1471 the table.

1472 For what purpose does the Representative from Pennsylvania,
1473 Mr. Perry, seek recognition?

1474 Mr. Perry. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk,
1475 Number 754.

1476 [The Amendment offered by Mr. Perry follows:]

1477

1478 *****COMMITTEE INSERT*****

1479 Mr. Cicilline. Chairman, I reserve a point of order.

1480 Chairman Meeks. A point of order is reserved.

1481 And the clerk shall distribute the amendment.

1482 Has everyone received a copy of the amendment?

1483 The clerk shall report the amendment.

1484 Ms. Hallman. Perry Amendment Number 754 to the amendment
1485 in the nature of a substitute to H.Res. 922.

1486 At the appropriate point --

1487 Chairman Meeks. Without objection, further reading of the
1488 amendment will be dispensed with.

1489 The Representative from Pennsylvania, Mr. Perry, is now
1490 recognized for five minutes in support of his amendment.

1491 Mr. Perry. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

1492 This amendment simply adds the following clause to the bill.

1493 "Whereas the pursuit of some so-called sustainable
1494 agricultural practices, specifically blanket bans of synthetic
1495 fertilizer and pesticides, and prohibitions on fossil fuels, can
1496 lead to or worsen global food shortages."

1497 This amendment highlights the horrific circumstances that
1498 led to the complete collapse of the economy of the Democratic
1499 Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, resulting in widespread unrest
1500 and the resignation of the president and prime minister of the
1501 country.

1502 The Sri Lankan Government sacrificed the prosperity and

1503 well-being of its people in order to win over the approval of
1504 the green Western elites, obtaining a nearly perfectly ESG score
1505 of 98.1.

1506 Among other green reforms, Sri Lanka instituted a ban on
1507 chemical fertilizers in an effort to promote organic farming in
1508 April of 2021. That is a year ago, a little over a year ago.

1509 In announcing their intentions, the minister of the
1510 environment stated that they were saving the planet from our own
1511 geo-engineering misuse, greed, and selfishness.

1512 By November of 2021, the ban was lifted but the damage was
1513 already done. The nation had decimated its primary source of
1514 income, and its economy completely collapsed, with officials
1515 declaring bankruptcy earlier this month. The economic toll of
1516 this decision, driven by western elites, is absolutely
1517 devastating.

1518 According to the U.N. Office for the Coordination of
1519 Humanitarian Affairs, the ban had a disastrous impact on
1520 agricultural productivity and production, resulting in an
1521 estimated 40 to 50 percent reduction for the past season. They
1522 also noted that the production devastation will continue into
1523 the next cultivation season, as only 24 percent of the usually
1524 worked land has been cultivated for the upcoming season.

1525 The economic devastation resulted in inflation levels of
1526 54.5 percent in June, with food prices rising over 80 percent,

1527 and transportation over 128 percent since May. And half a million
1528 people have sunk into poverty as early as 20 -- as early as 2022.

1529 This is a devastating reminder of the human impact of the
1530 paternalistic, colonialist efforts of the Western elites to force
1531 developing nations to sacrifice their prosperity for our green
1532 goals. It is vital that this committee recognize the devastating
1533 impact of these policies that they have on global food supply
1534 and stop this madness.

1535 This amendment would do exactly that. I urge support.

1536 And I yield the balance.

1537 Mr. Cicilline. Mr. Chairman, I wish to be heard on my point
1538 of order.

1539 Chairman Meeks. You may proceed.

1540 Mr. Cicilline. Mr. Chairman, this amendment is about
1541 sustainable agriculture. But the bill is about using hunger as
1542 a weapon of war. The amendment is not germane and introduces
1543 a new and wholly irrelevant issue to the resolution.

1544 Chairman Meeks. The chair is prepared to rule.

1545 The gentleman is correct, this amendment is not germane
1546 because this resolution is about the use of hunger as a weapon
1547 of war. And all of the "whereas" clauses mention conflict or
1548 warfare. It is not about the merits or lack thereof of sustainable
1549 agriculture, meaning the amendment introduces a subject matter
1550 in violation of Rule 16 of the House of Representatives.

1551 Thus, the point of order is sustained and the amendment fails
1552 -- falls I should say.

1553 Are there other amendments?

1554 Representative Perry is recognized.

1555 Mr. Perry. Mr. Chairman, Amendment Number 755 is at the
1556 desk.

1557 [The Amendment offered by Mr. Perry follows:]

1558

1559 *****COMMITTEE INSERT*****

1560 Mr. Cicilline. Mr. Chairman, I reserve a point of order.
1561 Chairman Meeks. A point of order is reserved.
1562 The clerk shall distribute the amendment.
1563 Clerk, please report the amendment.
1564 Ms. Hallman. Perry Amendment Number 755 to the amendment
1565 in the nature of a substitute to H.Res. --
1566 Chairman Meeks. Without objection, further reading of the
1567 amendment will be dispensed with.
1568 And the Representative from Pennsylvania, Mr. Perry, is now
1569 recognized.
1570 Mr. Perry. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.
1571 This amendment inserts a "resolved" clause that the U.S.
1572 Government should use its influence, voice, and a vote at
1573 international financial institutions to discourage the adoption
1574 of sustainable agricultural practices, including the prohibition
1575 of the use of synthetic fertilizer and restricting the use of
1576 traditional energy sources.
1577 Similar to the last statement and amendment, this amendment
1578 highlights the destructive synthetic fertilizer ban pursued by
1579 the Sri Lankan Government at the risk of contagion if the U.S.
1580 Government does not put its foot down and object to the
1581 international financial institutions coercing other developing
1582 nations down this road.
1583 Again, despite the fact that the fertilizer ban was only

1584 in place for 8 months, it drove the Sri Lankan economy to complete
1585 collapse, reduced production by 50 to 60 percent, and has resulted
1586 in less than a quarter of usable land being cultivated for the
1587 upcoming season.

1588 This led to an 80 percent spike in food prices, and an overall
1589 inflation rate of 56 percent, dropping over half a million people
1590 into poverty.

1591 Despite the obvious impacts of the policies that drove the
1592 Government into bankruptcy at the beginning of July, the Sri Lankan
1593 Government signed a green energy taxonomy with the International
1594 Finance Corporation in May of this year that included a commitment
1595 to organic fertilizers, among other things.

1596 The continued push to impose top-down prohibitions on farmers
1597 at the behest of international financial institutions and the
1598 green Western elite, has, and will continue to destroy prosperity
1599 in the developing world, limiting already scarce global food
1600 supplies, and resulting in the untimely deaths of tens of
1601 thousands, if not more.

1602 Likewise, the assault on reliable electricity projects at
1603 IFI that started under the Obama Administration, and resumed under
1604 the Biden Administration, has plunged millions into electricity
1605 scarcity and precluded rapid development across the world.

1606 The wholesale export of these regressive policies to the
1607 developing world is a reprehensible attempt to preclude these

1608 countries from developing their natural resources and providing
1609 their citizens access to reliable electric grids and the
1610 significant benefits that offers in terms of quality and length
1611 of life.

1612 Condemning these nations to inefficient and costly renewable
1613 energy source by slave labor represents the worst kind of
1614 neocolonialist elitism the West has to offer. It is abundantly
1615 clear that we cannot continue to push this immoral,
1616 ideologically-driven mind set without precluding the further
1617 development, and costing lives, yet that is exactly what the
1618 majority in this Administration seeks to do.

1619 Enough is enough. Let these folks access the benefits of
1620 modern life and develop their countries as they see fit, not
1621 subject them to the whims of the global green elite.

1622 This amendment would clearly establish a U.S. policy,
1623 opposition to these ridiculous, life-threatening policies at
1624 international financial institutions.

1625 I urge my colleagues to adopt the amendment.

1626 And I yield the balance.

1627 Chairman Meeks. The gentleman yields the balance of his
1628 time.

1629 Mr. Cicilline. Mr. Chairman, I wish to press my point of
1630 order.

1631 This amendment is a violation of Rule 10 of the House of

1632 Representatives because it concerns international financial
1633 institutions, which are not the appropriate jurisdiction of this
1634 committee and are properly the jurisdiction of the Financial
1635 Services Committee. Therefore, despite Mr. Perry's keen
1636 interest, I will prevent us from considering this amendment.

1637 Chairman Meeks. The chair is prepared to rule.

1638 The gentleman is correct. The amendment pertains to
1639 international financial institutions, which are appropriately
1640 within the jurisdiction of the Financial Services Committee.
1641 Therefore, the amendment is a violation of Rule 10 of the House
1642 of Representatives, and we cannot consider it.

1643 We are going to take a vote by voice on the Jacobs amendment
1644 in the nature of a substitute designated 112 to H.Res. 922.

1645 The question is now on the Jacobs amendment in the nature
1646 of a substitute designated 112.

1647 We are going to take a vote by voice.

1648 All members please unmute your microphone.

1649 All those in favor, say aye.

1650 All opposed, no.

1651 In the opinion of the chair, the ayes have it.

1652 And without objection, the motion to reconsider is laid upon
1653 the table. The amendment in the nature of a substitute is adopted.

1654 The question to report H.Res. 922 is amended. And with the
1655 recommendation that the resolution do pass, as amended.

1656 We are going to take a vote by voice.

1657 All members, please, again unmute your microphone.

1658 All those in favor, say aye.

1659 All opposed, no.

1660 In the opinion of the chair, the ayes have it. And without
1661 objection, the motion to reconsider is laid upon the table.

1662 The measure is ordered favorably reported, as amended.

1663 We now consider H.R. 6498, the PEACE through Music Diplomacy
1664 Act, with a McCaul amendment in the nature of a substitute, Number
1665 59.

1666 Pursuant to notice, the purposes of markup, for purposes
1667 of markup I now call up H.R. 6498, the PEACE through Music Diplomacy
1668 Act.

1669 The clerk will report the bill.

1670 Ms. Hallman. H.R. 6498, to authorize music-related exchange
1671 programs facilitated by the Department of State --

1672 Chairman Meeks. Without objection, the first reading of
1673 the bill is dispensed with. And the bill shall be considered
1674 as read and open to amendment at any point.

1675 And without objection, the McCaul amendment in the nature
1676 of a substitute, Number 59, circulated to members, shall be
1677 considered as read. It will be treated as original text for
1678 purposes of amendment.

1679 At this time I recognize myself to speak briefly on the

1680 measure.

1681 First, let me thank Ranking Member McCaul and Chairman Deutch
1682 for drafting this very important bill. And I am thrilled to
1683 support it.

1684 This bill does many things. It authorizes music-related
1685 exchange programs. It encourages the private sector to engage
1686 in these programs. And it calls on the State Department to come
1687 up with a strategy that advances conflict resolution and peace
1688 building efforts through music-related exchange programs.

1689 Most importantly, the bill highlights the role of music in
1690 diplomacy. Music is unifying, universal, and it can be healing.

1691 Music is a part of every culture, and found in all parts of the
1692 world.

1693 People-to-people musical exchanges are powerful tools that
1694 can be used to spread American values, diminish conflict, and
1695 build cross-cultural understanding to advance peace abroad.

1696 And I happen to have seen myself, going to a concert, where
1697 you had two conflicting countries but they had music. They had
1698 different performers from each country. And it had that feeling
1699 of bringing them together. It is, indeed, universal. And we
1700 should encourage that kind of diplomacy.

1701 And that is why I ask everyone to join me in supporting this
1702 bill put forth by Mr. McCaul and Mr. Deutch.

1703 I yield back the balance of my time.

1704 Any other members wish to speak on this measure?

1705 Ms. Wagner from Missouri.

1706 Mrs. Wagner. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

1707 I would also like to register my strong support for the
1708 ranking member's bill, the PEACE through Music Act. And urge
1709 all of my colleagues to support it.

1710 Cultural exchanges, they are the cornerstone of effective
1711 diplomacy and the key to building mutual trust and partnership
1712 through pure appreciation of your counterparts' history, their
1713 music, and their culture is a difference between a good diplomat
1714 and a great diplomat.

1715 When I had the privilege to represent the United States of
1716 America as U.S. Ambassador to Luxembourg, I found that music was
1717 an essential element of conducting diplomacy. I invited
1718 musicians and artists to join every dinner and event as possible.

1719 Because it was that important in terms of the work that I needed
1720 to do on behalf of the United States Government.

1721 My Luxembourgish counterparts and I may have disagreed on
1722 certain policy matters -- and we frequently did -- but we all
1723 agreed on music, art, and culture. It was something on which
1724 we could build trust and accord.

1725 And every diplomat knows that the global dominance of
1726 American culture, especially our music, significantly extends
1727 the reach of the State Department in every city and in every world

1728 -- and across the world, American songs by American artists play,
1729 in stores and restaurants, at dinner parties, and on the street
1730 corners, and over the radio. It is hard to overstate the
1731 importance of music in contributing to a global understanding
1732 of our optimistic and joyful culture, our openness, and our
1733 dynamism.

1734 The ranking member's bill authorizes the State Department's
1735 highly effective music exchange programs, and encourages State
1736 to draw from the private sector of expertise in designing and
1737 carrying out these programs. Through these programs the State
1738 Department is able to reach thousands of young people, teaching
1739 the next generation to appreciate the power and importance of
1740 cultural diplomacy.

1741 I would urge my colleagues to vote in support of the PEACE
1742 through Music Act.

1743 And I will yield back, Mr. Chairman.

1744 Chairman Meeks. The gentlelady yields back the balance of
1745 her time.

1746 Do other members wish to speak on the bill?

1747 Mr. Deutch. Mr. Chairman.

1748 Chairman Meeks. Mr. Deutch is recognized for five minutes.

1749 Mr. Deutch. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

1750 I am honored to join Ranking Member McCaul as the Democratic
1751 co-lead for the PEACE through Music Diplomacy Act, which

1752 authorizes the State Department to implement music-related
1753 exchange programs, including those that promote diplomacy, and
1754 direct the State Department to leverage our music industry's
1755 expertise and resources when it comes to designing and executing
1756 these programs.

1757 As few members of this committee would know, I lead the
1758 Congressional Songwriters' Caucus. I spent years advocating for
1759 musicians of Congress. I have met across Congress who have
1760 devoted their lives to creating the music that we love, moreover,
1761 the music that people all around the world love and enjoy.

1762 I have spent my time here in Congress, among other things,
1763 working to enhance America's ability to promote diplomacy. And
1764 have had the occasion even to play music on trips overseas with
1765 my colleagues.

1766 This bill, this piece of legislation allows us to leverage
1767 the power of music as a common language, one that can transcend
1768 borders and cultures, and language differences, as well as the
1769 expertise and resources of the U.S. music industry to strengthen
1770 our ability to promote diplomacy, peace, and prosperity

1771 This is a good piece of bipartisan legislation. I urge my
1772 colleagues to support it

1773 And I yield back the balance of my time.

1774 Chairman Meeks. The gentleman yields back.

1775 Any further requests to speak?

1776 Mr. Cicilline of Rhode Island, five minutes.

1777 Mr. Cicilline. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

1778 I, too, would like to congratulate Mr. Deutch on this
1779 legislation, and the ranking member.

1780 Music has a unique ability to move us and inspire us. Music
1781 knows no bounds and is not constrained by any border. Music speaks
1782 to us as the most universal language of all. And music can take
1783 us back to the moments that matter most in our life.

1784 Music is the very essence of life itself in so many ways.

1785 Six decades ago, Rhode Island's own Claiborne Pell recognized
1786 the transformative power of the arts and music and wrote the
1787 legislation that would establish the National Endowment for the
1788 Arts and the National Endowment for Humanities.

1789 Senator Pell understood that America's artists could touch
1790 the lives of not only their fellow citizens but people around
1791 the world. He knew that art and music could erode divisions and
1792 bring each of us close together. And he understood that art is
1793 a mirror in which to view our own fundamental humanity, and that
1794 through billions sharing the experience of art and music lasting
1795 peace is ever more possible.

1796 Now, the PEACE through Music Diplomacy Act, H.R. 6498,
1797 offered by Mr. Deutch and Ranking Member McCaul, echoes that same
1798 fundamental belief. The United States is the proud home of many
1799 of the world's most talented singers, songwriters, musicians,

1800 dance companies, and composers. The world is home to many more.
1801 This will allow the State Department and nations around the world
1802 to give the global community the gift of music so that music may
1803 bring us closer together and closer to peace.

1804 And as I was thinking about this legislation, in so many
1805 ways it reflects the great symphony of Congressman Deutch's work
1806 here in Congress. The commitment that he has always had to music,
1807 and music creators, and recognizing the value of the creation
1808 of songwriters, and fighting so relentlessly that they be properly
1809 compensated, and his enduring legacy of fighting for peace not
1810 only in the Middle East but all around the world.

1811 So, this in many ways, this piece of legislation brings
1812 together two of the most important pieces of work that Congressman
1813 Deutch has worked on while in Congress and nearing the end of
1814 his service. And I think it is a really magnificent way to honor
1815 him by passing this piece of legislation so that music may continue
1816 to be heard around the world and peace reigns forever.

1817 And I yield back.

1818 Chairman Meeks. The gentleman yields back.

1819 Any further members wish to speak?

1820 Hearing no further requests, let's move on to amendments.

1821 For what purpose does the Representative from Pennsylvania,
1822 Mr. Perry, seek recognition?

1823 Mr. Perry. Mr. Chairman, I request unanimous consent to

1824 withdraw the amendments I have on this bill.

1825 Chairman Meeks. Without objection Perry amendments on this
1826 bill are withdrawn.

1827 Hearing no further requests to speak, we are going to take
1828 a vote by voice.

1829 All please unmute your microphone.

1830 Mr. Wilson. And I feel bad for some staffer who spent a
1831 lot of time.

1832 Mr. Issa. Can we hear an aye?

1833 Mr. Mast. I hear you, Mr. Issa.

1834 Mr. Deutch. Gilbert & Sullivan from The Ambassador, please.

1835 Chairman Meeks. The question is on McCaul amendment
1836 designated Number 59.

1837 A recorded vote is ordered. A voice vote is ordered.

1838 Please unmute your microphone.

1839 All those in favor, say aye.

1840 All those opposed, no.

1841 In the opinion of the chair, the ayes have it.

1842 The question is now to report H.R. 6498, as amended, with
1843 the recommendation that the bill do pass, as amended.

1844 Again, we are going to take a vote by voice.

1845 All members please unmute your microphone.

1846 All those in favor, say aye.

1847 All opposed, no.

1848 Chairman Meeks. In the opinion of the chair, the ayes have
1849 it.

1850 Mr. Perry. Mr. Chairman, I request a recorded vote.

1851 Chairman Meeks. A recorded vote is ordered. A recorded
1852 vote is ordered.

1853 Please mute your microphone.

1854 The question is to report H.R. 6498, with the recommendation
1855 -- We are going to roll this vote till tomorrow.

1856 All votes are being recorded. We are going to roll this
1857 vote till tomorrow. We will probably call it for the end of
1858 markup.

1859 We now consider H.R. 7240, the Reinforcing Education
1860 Accountability in Development Act.

1861 Pursuant to notice, for purposes of markup, I now call up
1862 H.R. 7240. The clerk shall report the bill.

1863 Ms. Hallman. H.R. 7240, to reauthorize the READ Act. Be
1864 it enacted --

1865 [The Bill H.R. 7240 follows:]

1866 *****COMMITTEE INSERT*****

1867 Chairman Meeks. Without objection, the first reading of
1868 the bill is dispensed with and the bill shall be considered as
1869 read and open to amendment at any point.

1870 At this time, I recognize myself to speak briefly on the
1871 measure. I want to thank Chairwoman Bass and Ranking Member Smith
1872 for drafting this important and timely bill, and I am excited
1873 to support it.

1874 The READ Act was first signed into law in 2017. It required
1875 USAID to create a 5-year comprehensive strategy to promote quality
1876 basic education in partner countries by expanding access to basic
1877 education for all children and measurably improve the quality
1878 of basic education and learning outcomes.

1879 The bill before us today is calling for a simple 5-year
1880 extension of the READ Act, which would allow USAID to update their
1881 comprehensive strategy to address new and emerging issues we face
1882 today.

1883 As we continue to confront the COVID-19 pandemic, continuing
1884 and expanding access to education must be a top priority. Around
1885 the world millions of kids were unable to attend school due
1886 to the pandemic. We must reauthorize the READ Act to adopt to
1887 these new challenges and help forge a strong and more educated
1888 future for children everywhere. And to do that, we are making
1889 for a better world.

1890 We don't know. Those children, once they are given the

1891 opportunity to learn and be educated, could be the next leaders.
1892 They could be the next ones -- next scientists, the next doctors,
1893 that can solve and help resolve some of the many issues that we
1894 still face.

1895 And so we cannot allow certain things like COVID-19 pandemic
1896 and other things that have prevented some the opportunity to
1897 continue that education. It is a way to having a better world,
1898 and so I ask all the members to please join me in supporting this
1899 bill.

1900 Are there any other members that wish to speak on this
1901 measure?

1902 Ms. Bass. Mr. Chair?

1903 Chairman Meeks. Yes. Who seeks recognition?

1904 Ms. Bass. Bass.

1905 Chairman Meeks. Chairwoman Bass is recognized for
1906 5 minutes.

1907 Ms. Bass. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate this
1908 opportunity to speak on this issue, and I would like to note the
1909 significant number of measures affecting Africa. I am encouraged
1910 to see my colleagues address several significant issues for the
1911 continent.

1912 Today I am bringing H.R. 7240, the READ Act, to the Committee
1913 for consideration. This bipartisan bill co-led by Africa
1914 Subcommittee Ranking Member Chris Smith is a straightforward

1915 reauthorization of the Reinforcing Education Accountability in
1916 Development Act of 2017, which was signed into law in the 115th
1917 Congress.

1918 The original Act required a 5-year comprehensive strategy
1919 to access -- to expand access to basic education for children
1920 around the globe and measurably improve the quality of basic
1921 education and learning outcomes with a specific focus on
1922 supporting the most vulnerable children.

1923 My legislation would extend that authorization by an
1924 additional 5 fiscal years. The authors of the original READ Act,
1925 Senators Durbin and Rubio, have introduced companion legislation
1926 to reauthorize it for an additional 5 years as well.

1927 It is the policy of the U.S., as implemented in the READ
1928 Act, to work with partner countries, other donors, multilateral
1929 institutions, the private sector, and non-governmental and civil
1930 society organizations, including faith-based organizations, to
1931 promote quality basic education through programs and activities.

1932 Since the Act's implementation, we have begun to see
1933 significant progress in building the foundational skills
1934 necessary for students to thrive and succeed in their educational
1935 endeavors. For example, in Fiscal Year 2021 alone, U.S. basic
1936 education programs reached more than 33 million pre-primary,
1937 primary, and secondary students in 73 countries, and more than
1938 1 million additional individuals with tertiary, vocational, and

1939 workforce training.

1940 The READ Act also required the President to submit a
1941 comprehensive U.S. strategy to promote basic education. The U.S.
1942 Government strategy on international basic education emerged from
1943 this effort and was designed to promote basic education in partner
1944 countries for all children, particularly children from vulnerable
1945 groups, and measurably improve the quality of basic education
1946 and achievement of key learning outcomes.

1947 This strategy has been carried out by USAID through a senior
1948 coordinator of international basic education since 2017. Since
1949 the launch of the U.S. strategy on international basic education,
1950 agencies and departments have created indicators in streamlined
1951 yearly reporting to Congress, launched the first international
1952 basic education website that includes information across all U.S.
1953 agencies involved in supporting basic education worldwide.

1954 The website highlights agency updates and resources,
1955 including yearly public reports to Congress, and increased
1956 coordination by establishing a process for sharing research tools
1957 and resources, specifically by working with USAID missions to
1958 increase coordination across federal agencies with stakeholders
1959 to better leverage taxpayer dollars.

1960 For example, when implementing the McGovern-Dole Food for
1961 Education Program, USAID serves as a subject matter expert in
1962 literacy promotion while USDA provides school meals and funding

1963 for teacher trainings and school construction, among other things,
1964 that boost school enrollment and academic performance of preschool
1965 and primary students.

1966 Although the READ Act has seen initial success, our partners
1967 at USAID and other federal agencies require time to update the
1968 strategy and adapt it to new and emerging issues in global
1969 education, such as COVID-19 pandemic, which closed schools and
1970 resulted in learning loss around the world.

1971 USAID has begun consulting implementing partners and think
1972 tanks at the working and local levels to update the strategy,
1973 and they plan to have a full rollout by September. This update
1974 will focus on equitable learning outcomes and joint reporting
1975 on global learning poverty from COVID-19, among other issues.

1976 I encourage your support -- I also encourage your support
1977 of H. Res. 922 condemning the use of hunger as a weapon of war
1978 as the Horn of Africa and the Sahel face one of the greatest food
1979 insecurity challenges across the globe in recent memory.

1980 I further encourage your support for the MCC Eligibility
1981 Expansion Act, so that MCC can reach more developing countries
1982 to meet its mission and for Keeping Girls in School Act, to
1983 establish secondary education programming at USAID for adolescent
1984 girls worldwide.

1985 And I yield the balance of my time.

1986 Chairman Meeks. The gentlelady yields the balance of her

1987 time.

1988 Any further requests to speak? Hearing none, we will move
1989 on to amendments. For what purpose does the Representative from
1990 Pennsylvania, Mr. Perry, seek recognition?

1991 Mr. Perry. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have an amendment
1992 at the desk, Number 747.

1993 Chairman Meeks. The clerk shall distribute the amendment.
1994 Has everyone received a copy of the amendment?

1995 Without objection, further reading of the -- oops. Clerk
1996 shall report the amendment.

1997 Ms. Hallman. Perry Amendment Number 747 to H.R. 7240, at
1998 the end of the bill add the following --

1999 [The Amendment offered by Mr. Perry follows:]

2000

2001 *****COMMITTEE INSERT*****

2002 Chairman Meeks. Without objection, further reading of the
2003 amendment will be dispensed with. The Representative from
2004 Pennsylvania, Mr. Perry, is now recognized for 5 minutes.

2005 Mr. Perry. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This amendment adds
2006 context that is much needed for our conversations about the
2007 now-continued programs authorized by the READ Act, the effect
2008 of COVID-19 lockdowns on access to and quality of basic education
2009 and learning outcomes.

2010 I think it is hard for anybody, except perhaps maybe Randi
2011 Weingarten, to deny that -- deny that lockdowns have had an
2012 enormous impact on children's educational and social development.

2013 Anecdotally, I know many of us got or continue--got or continue
2014 to have Zoom fatigue.

2015 However, judging by the number of members participating in
2016 hearings virtually, it is clear that not all of us do. Imagine
2017 being a kid. You are used to moving around a classroom or from
2018 class to class, going to lunch and recess and gym and seeing your
2019 friends. Instead, you are forced to spend a year or more sitting
2020 at home staring at a grid of faces on a screen, unable to have
2021 separate chats with your friends, or make new friends for that
2022 matter.

2023 For younger kids who are still learning, language and speech
2024 skills must surely pose a hurdle for many. While telehealth was
2025 an option for some, preliminary studies from both the United States

2026 and other parts of the world show a significant impact on speech
2027 and language development among children. This amendment requires
2028 a report, simply a report by the Department of State on the issue,
2029 including the impact of lockdowns on school attendance, retention,
2030 and completion, in addition to learning loss and literacy rates.

2031 To both narrow the focus of the report and increase its
2032 usefulness to Congress, the amendment instructs the Department
2033 of State to prioritize information about lockdowns in countries
2034 where READ Act programs have been implemented. I understand this
2035 is a so-called clean reauthorization and that the bill's sponsor
2036 probably doesn't want to amend it. I certainly get that.

2037 However, I think these are unprecedented times, and if we
2038 are going to reauthorize it and not acknowledge what has just
2039 happened over the course of the last couple of years, I think
2040 we are missing one heck of an opportunity and being somewhat
2041 derelict in our responsibility.

2042 I hope we can all see the importance of the issue, especially
2043 as we authorize or reauthorize the READ Act and its program for
2044 another 5 years. And with that, Mr. Chairman, I urge acceptance
2045 and yield the balance.

2046 Chairman Meeks. The gentleman yields back the balance of
2047 his time.

2048 I now recognize myself. I now recognize myself. I oppose
2049 this amendment. I oppose this amendment because the 2017 READ

2050 Act already has annual reporting requirements to update the status
2051 of access to quality basic education around the world, and has
2052 already included the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in previous
2053 reports.

2054 The 5-year reauthorization of this Act would allow USAID
2055 to continue updating and assessing its strategy to respond to
2056 the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on access to quality basic
2057 education around the globe.

2058 I yield back.

2059 Any further debate on the amendment?

2060 Ms. Bass. Yes, Mr. Chairman.

2061 Chairman Meeks. Chairwoman Bass is recognized for
2062 5 minutes.

2063 Ms. Bass. Thank you. Mr. Chairman, I echo your opposition
2064 of this amendment as it would be duplicative of ongoing reporting
2065 and monitoring activities. The READ Act currently requires
2066 monitoring and evaluation of programs to determine whether
2067 activities carried out by USAID accomplish improvements in
2068 literacy or other basic skills.

2069 Additionally, the current Act requires annual reporting that
2070 includes a description of the progress achieved over the last
2071 year toward meeting goals, with an emphasis on whether students
2072 have shown improvement. In 2018-2021 USAID education progress
2073 report, USAID directly addressed the COVID-19 pandemic and its

2074 impact on global education. The report includes data that is
2075 country-specific and further states that USAID's response was
2076 in those countries.

2077 Further, USAID reported that it held monthly calls for
2078 field-based education staff to address the new challenges the
2079 COVID-19 pandemic presented. The point of the strategy and its
2080 progress reports are to keep up to date with the circumstances
2081 that have both positive and negative impacts on learning outcomes
2082 and respond to those circumstances appropriately.

2083 USAID has shown success through this by documenting COVID-19
2084 responses in the education sector during the early stages of the
2085 pandemic. Five case studies reports were produced in Colombia,
2086 Georgia, Lebanon, Nigeria, and Zambia to document the return to
2087 learning process in the first 14 months of the pandemic.

2088 USAID also developed and implemented a returning to learning
2089 during crisis toolkit that helps education planners prepare and
2090 decide on how to return to learning during and after educational
2091 disruptions, such as COVID-19.

2092 I can imagine how difficult it is to speak to a screen, as
2093 my colleague mentioned, but I can also imagine how difficult it
2094 would be to be in an African country and have COVID and not have
2095 a hospital to go to.

2096 Also, if there is a concern about taxpayers' money, I don't
2097 know why we would duplicate resources when the Act already calls

2098 for documentation.

2099 USAID has already begun consulting implementing partners
2100 and think tanks at the working and local levels to update the
2101 strategy, and they play to have a full rollout by September.
2102 This update will focus on equitable learning outcomes and joint
2103 reporting on global learning poverty due to the learning loss
2104 caused by COVID-19.

2105 This legislation has received bipartisan and bicameral
2106 support, backing from USAID, which implements the strategy, as
2107 well as endorsements from 38 international education
2108 organizations. So I would just ask my colleagues to join me in
2109 support of this important measure and vote no on the amendment
2110 and yes on H.R. 7240.

2111 Thank you.

2112 Chairman Meeks. The gentlelady yields back.

2113 Any further debate on the amendment? Hearing no further
2114 requests to speak, the question is on the amendment, Perry Number
2115 747. We are going to take a vote by voice. All members please
2116 unmute your microphones.

2117 All those in favor, say aye.

2118 All those opposed, no.

2119 In the opinion of the chair, the noes have it, and the
2120 amendment is not agreed to. And without objection, the motion
2121 to reconsider is laid upon the table.

2122 We will now consider H.R. 4134, the Keeping Girls in School
2123 Act, with the Houlahan amendment in the nature of a substitute,
2124 Number 92.

2125 Pursuant to notice, for purposes of markup, I now call up
2126 H.R. 4134, Keeping Girls in School Act. The clerk shall report
2127 the bill.

2128 Ms. Hallman. H.R. 4134, to support empowerment, economic
2129 security, and educational opportunities for adolescent girls --

2130 [The Bill H.R. 4134 follows:]

2131

2132 *****COMMITTEE INSERT*****

2133 Chairman Meeks. Without objection, the first reading of
2134 the bill is dispensed with. And without objection, the bill shall
2135 be considered as read and open to amendment at any point.

2136 Without objection, the Houlahan amendment in the nature of
2137 a substitute, Number 92, previously circulated to members, shall
2138 be considered as read and will be treated as original text for
2139 purposes of the amendment.

2140 [The Amendment offered by Ms. Houlahan follows:]

2141

2142 *****COMMITTEE INSERT*****

2143 Chairman Meeks. And at this time, I recognize myself to
2144 speak briefly on the measure.

2145 I strongly support H.R. 4134, a bipartisan bill supporting
2146 education for adolescent girls around the world offered by
2147 Representative Frankel. This bill builds upon the fundamental
2148 pillar that equal access to quality basic education is a key tool
2149 for women and girls throughout the world, to embrace to both
2150 enhance economic growth and development as well as lower the risk
2151 for violence and instability.

2152 This legislation authorizes USAID to form agreement to
2153 support adolescent girls access to quality secondary education,
2154 with a strong focus in countries where adolescent girls are
2155 significantly more likely to drop out of school than boys.

2156 As we continue to contend with the broad-ranging and
2157 devastating impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, we must not forget
2158 the women and girls in historically marginalized and vulnerable
2159 communities around the world who have struggled to remain in
2160 school. Regardless of your gender, or where you live, every child
2161 deserves the opportunity to receive a quality education that would
2162 allow them to invest in themselves and in their communities.

2163 I strongly support this bill. It is a very important bill.
2164 It is a bill that I think that people can follow. Just think
2165 of us in the United States of America. For years women did not
2166 have the opportunity to get the kind of education and to

2167 participate in our society.

2168 We have a much better society because of the education of
2169 women and their inclusion in our society. In those where they
2170 are denied that opportunity, you will see in many of those
2171 countries they don't have diplomatic or democratic institutions.

2172 We see where those countries are suffering because they are
2173 leaving some of the most brilliant minds on the sidelines.

2174 It is very important to make sure that we are educating women
2175 and girls, and that every opportunity that we have to do that,
2176 and every time we get a chance to message that to anyone, that
2177 it is done. It is what will get and make this a better place
2178 for everyone to live.

2179 So I hope everyone joins me unanimously in supporting this
2180 measure. Do any other members wish to speak on this measure?

2181 Ms. Houlahan. Mr. Chairman, I seek recognition on the bill.

2182 Chairman Meeks. Ms. Houlahan is recognized for five
2183 minutes.

2184 Ms. Houlahan. Sorry. Apologies. Thank you,
2185 Mr. Chairman, and thank you for the very kind words about
2186 Representative Frankel's bill and my motion in the form of --
2187 amendment in the form of a substitute.

2188 For millennia, women and girls have been access to education,
2189 and even today they face barriers that prevent them from completing
2190 their education, even if they are fortunate enough to begin it.

2191 Nearly 130 million girls worldwide are not enrolled in school.
2192 The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has worsened this crisis, and
2193 according to recent U.N. reporting, 11 million girls globally
2194 may not return to school because of COVID-related disruptions
2195 in their education.

2196 Women make up more than two-thirds of the world's 796 million
2197 illiterate people. In Cambodia, 48 percent of rural women are
2198 illiterate compared to just 14 percent of rural men. And why?
2199 According to global statistics, just 39 percent of rural girls
2200 attend secondary schools. This is far fewer than rural boys at
2201 45, urban girls at 59, and urban boys at 60 percent.

2202 While progress has been made in reducing the gender gap in
2203 urban primary school enrollment, data from 42 countries shows
2204 that rural girls are twice as likely as urban girls to be out
2205 of school. In Pakistan, a half-kilometer increase in the distance
2206 to school will decrease a girl's enrollment by 20 percent.

2207 In Egypt, Indonesia, and several African countries, building
2208 local schools in rural communities increases girls' enrollments.

2209
2210 Especially in this committee, we talk a lot about the need
2211 to increase girls' access to education. But it is important to
2212 understand why this is so important and the astounding impact
2213 it can have on the broader community.

2214 Data from 68 countries indicates that a woman's education

2215 is a key factor in determining a child's survival. Vast
2216 improvements have been -- have seen the mortality rates of children
2217 decline in those less than 5 years old, since 1990, but rural
2218 rates are usually -- unusually much higher than urban ones.

2219 Children of mothers with no education in Latin American and
2220 Caribbean region are 3.1 times more likely to die than those with
2221 mothers who have secondary or tertiary education, and 1.6 times
2222 more likely to die than those whose mothers have had a primary
2223 level of education.

2224 Furthermore, rural women's deficits in education have
2225 long-term implications for poverty reduction. Every additional
2226 year of primary school increases a girl's eventual wages by 10
2227 to 20 percent. It also encourages them to marry later and leaves
2228 them less vulnerable to violence.

2229 These statistics are devastating, but can be dramatically improved
2230 if we simply put our minds to it. And that is why I am so proud
2231 to be an original co-sponsor of H.R. 4134, Keeping Girls in School
2232 Act, and in introducing this amendment in the form of a substitute
2233 on behalf of my friend, the lead sponsor of the bill,
2234 Representative Lois Frankel.

2235 The Keeping Girls in School Act is critical and
2236 straightforward legislation that would ensure that every girl
2237 around the world would have access to education in order to realize
2238 her own ambitions and to play an important and vital and active

2239 role in determining her own future.

2240 Specifically, this bill would direct USAID to address the
2241 challenges that adolescent girls face in accessing quality
2242 secondary education in countries where girls are
2243 disproportionately more likely to drop out of schools than boys.

2244

2245 These challenges include the lack of safety at schools or
2246 traveling to school and online, including harassment or other
2247 forms of physical, sexual, or psychological violence; childhood
2248 and early and forced marriage; female genital mutilation; distance
2249 from secondary school; and inadequate sanitation facilities and
2250 products available at secondary schools. Lastly, early pregnancy
2251 and motherhood as well are addressed.

2252 The bill also authorizes international development projects
2253 to improve safe and inclusive and quality education opportunities
2254 for girls by combating the challenges that girls face in
2255 successfully transitioning to and remaining enrolled in and
2256 completing secondary school.

2257 And, finally, it requires an updated U.S. global strategy
2258 to empower adolescent girls that is informed by consultation with
2259 relevant U.S. Government and Congressional authorities, U.S. and
2260 international civil society, and the multilateral organizations
2261 that have expertise in women's empowerment and gender equality.

2262 My amendment in the form of a substitute streamlines

2263 reporting requirements and incorporates technical amendments,
2264 and I appreciate the input from agencies and the dozens of NGOs
2265 in support that make this bill even stronger.

2266 The Keeping Girls in School Act has enjoyed strong support,
2267 not only in this committee but also in the House as a whole.
2268 It passed unanimously in the 116th Congress, with over 100
2269 bipartisan co-sponsors. This version has 91 co-sponsors, again,
2270 with strong bipartisan support.

2271 The United States is a global leader in these efforts, and
2272 every dollar that we spend in holistic programming to ensure girls
2273 compete will generate \$2.80 in return.

2274 I thank the chairman and Ranking Member McCaul for including
2275 the Keeping Girls in School Act in today's markup, and I encourage
2276 all of my colleagues to support the amendment in the form of a
2277 substitute and the underlying bill.

2278 And with that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

2279 Chairman Meeks. The gentlelady's time has expired.

2280 Any other members wish to speak on this measure?

2281 Mr. Deutch. Mr. Chairman? Mr. Chairman?

2282 Chairman Meeks. Mr. Deutch is recognized for 5 minutes.

2283 Mr. Deutch. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the recognition.

2284 Thank you to my friend, Representative Houlihan, for her very
2285 thoughtful and compelling presentation about a very important
2286 piece of legislation.

2287 I want to thank my good friend, Representative Lois Frankel,
2288 from the district neighboring my own, for introducing H.R. 4134,
2289 the Keeping Girls in School Act, which helps to increase
2290 educational opportunities and economic security for girls
2291 worldwide, a bill I strongly support.

2292 Representative Frankel has long been a champion of women's
2293 issues and gender equality, and this bill is yet another example
2294 of the impactful work that she does every day to improve the lives
2295 of girls and women in this country and around the world. This
2296 bill has broad bipartisan support. It easily passed the House
2297 in the last Congress, and I strongly urge all of my colleagues
2298 to support this fine piece of legislation again today.

2299 I yield back.

2300 Chairman Meeks. The gentleman yields back.

2301 Anyone else wish to speak on this measure? Hearing no
2302 further requests to speak, let's move on amendments. For what
2303 purpose does Representative Perry from Pennsylvania seek
2304 recognition?

2305 Mr. Perry. Mr. Chairman, I have got an amendment at the
2306 desk, and I believe it is Perry Number 1.

2307 Chairman Meeks. The clerk shall distribute the amendment.
2308 Has everyone received a copy of the amendment?

2309 The clerk will please report the amendment.

2310 Ms. Hallman. Perry Amendment Number 1 to the amendment in

2311 the nature of a substitute to H.R. 41 --

2312 [The Amendment offered by Mr. Perry follows:]

2313

2314 *****COMMITTEE INSERT*****

2315 Chairman Meeks. Without objection, further reading of the
2316 amendment will be dispensed with.

2317 The Representative from Pennsylvania, Mr. Perry, is now
2318 recognized for five minutes in support of his amendment.

2319 Mr. Perry. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't think anybody
2320 on this committee -- Republican, Democrat, liberal, conservative,
2321 anybody in between, including myself -- has any objection to the
2322 goals of this legislation. We all think it is laudable. As the
2323 father of two daughters, I think every parent across the globe
2324 wishes for the best for their children, whether they are sons
2325 or daughters, including me.

2326 This amendment specifies that activities funded, approved
2327 by USAID, under this program must include measurable goals,
2328 benchmarks, and outcomes, beyond just currently the bill only
2329 requires rigorous monitoring and evaluation from program
2330 applicants. And I would just say that if that were the standard
2331 in the schools for our own children, we would not accept them
2332 -- we have not accepted them, and they are not in place now.

2333 If it is good enough for us, it should be good enough for
2334 those around the world who receive our assistance, aid funding,
2335 and best wishes.

2336 While the more maybe naive of us would probably like to think
2337 -- and we would like to think -- that program applicants would
2338 easily be able to provide these metrics, or perhaps already know

2339 what rigorous monitoring and evaluation means, clearly I don't
2340 think we can rely only on that.

2341 While I understand that international development
2342 organizations and USAID likely have some standard format or
2343 procedures for these type of programs, it seems to me if we are
2344 going to spend our taxpayer money on these programs, we should
2345 ensure that USAID knows exactly what kind of metrics they should
2346 require of applicants, even if they are less than the standard
2347 that we require in the United States of America.

2348 But there should be some measurable goal or benchmark or
2349 outcome if we are going to spend money on this and ensure that
2350 indeed these young ladies around the world seeking the education
2351 and seeking the things that we are going to provide get that.
2352 And it is our job in my opinion, based on this legislation, to
2353 ensure that happens.

2354 I hope this is an amendment that the majority will consider
2355 as reasonable, because I think it is, and I think it is hard to
2356 not support it. But with that, Mr. Chairman, I will yield the
2357 balance.

2358 Chairman Meeks. The gentleman yields back.

2359 I now recognize myself to speak on this amendment. And one
2360 of the things I do know is -- because Mr. Perry and I have had
2361 the opportunity to talk about his two daughters -- I have three
2362 daughters and two granddaughters, and I know how serious he is

2363 and how loving he is of his family and his daughters and try to
2364 make sure that they have everything that is needed, so they can
2365 move forward. And I respect him for that -- for being a strong
2366 father in that regard.

2367 And while I don't view this amendment as necessary, I am
2368 going to support this amendment, because I think it takes a step
2369 to further clarify accountability in this particular section.
2370 So I am not opposed to it. I will support this amendment, and
2371 I yield back the balance of my time.

2372 I now recognize Mr. McCaul for five minutes.

2373 Mr. McCaul. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also support this
2374 amendment. I think it is responsible to have defined goals and
2375 outcomes and accountability with any federal program that we have.

2376 And I may have beat you all. I have got four daughters and
2377 triplets and one son. But having said that, I support it.

2378 I yield back.

2379 Chairman Meeks. Who seeks recognition? Hearing no further
2380 requests to speak, the question is on the amendment of Perry Number
2381 1. We are going to take a vote by voice. All members please
2382 unmute your microphones.

2383 All those in favor, say aye.

2384 All those opposed, no.

2385 In the opinion of the chair, the ayes have it, and the
2386 amendment is agreed to. And without objection, the motion to

2387 reconsider is laid upon the table.

2388 The question now is on the Houlahan amendment in the nature
2389 of a substitute designated Number 92 to H.R. 4134. We are going
2390 to take a vote by voice. All members, again, unmute your
2391 microphones.

2392 All those in favor, say aye.

2393 All opposed, no.

2394 In the opinion of the chair, the ayes have it. And without
2395 objection, the motion to reconsider is laid upon the table.

2396 The question now is to report H.R. 4134, Keeping Girls in
2397 School Act, as amended, with a recommendation that the bill do
2398 pass, as amended. We are going to take a vote by voice. All
2399 members, again, unmute.

2400 All those in favor, say aye.

2401 All opposed, no.

2402 In the opinion of the chair, the ayes have it. And without
2403 objection, the motion to reconsider is laid upon the table.

2404 We are going to return now to H.R. 7240, which we did not
2405 voice vote when it first arose. The question is to report H.R.
2406 7240 with a recommendation that the bill do pass. Again, we are
2407 going to do a vote by voice. Unmute microphones.

2408 And all those in favor, say aye.

2409 All opposed, no.

2410 In the opinion of the chair, the ayes have it. And without

2411 objection, the motion to reconsider is laid upon the table.

2412 Pursuant to notice, for purposes of markup, I now call up
2413 H.R. 8463. The clerk will report the bill.

2414 Ms. Hallman. H.R. 8463, to modify the requirements under
2415 the Millennium Challenge Act of 2003 for candidate countries --

2416 [The Bill H.R. 8463 follows:]

2417

2418 *****COMMITTEE INSERT*****

2419 Chairman Meeks. Without objection, the first reading of
2420 the bill is dispensed with. And without objection, the bill shall
2421 be considered as read and open to amendment at any point.

2422 And at this time, I recognize myself to speak briefly on
2423 this measure.

2424 The Millennium Challenge Corporation has served as a
2425 cornerstone of U.S. foreign assistance for almost 20 years.
2426 However, since its founding in 2004, MCC has only been able to
2427 operate in 50 countries. Compact thresholds have restricted a
2428 lot of middle and low-middle income countries who are not wealthy
2429 countries but have GDPs that fluctuate constantly, often affected
2430 by tourism, natural disaster, and government instability.

2431 This legislation will create more opportunities to establish
2432 MCC compacts with up to 125 countries around the world. We should
2433 support this bipartisan bill to expand MCC because if we are not
2434 engaged with middle and low-middle income countries, then our
2435 geopolitical rivals will have -- will be more than happy to fill
2436 this vacuum.

2437 I yield back the balance of my time.

2438 Do any other members wish to speak on this measure?

2439 Mr. Castro. Mr. Chairman?

2440 Chairman Meeks. Mr. Castro of Texas is recognized for five
2441 minutes.

2442 Mr. Castro. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My bipartisan

2443 legislation, which I am glad to lead together with Representative
2444 Young Kim of California, makes a small but needed adjustment to
2445 the Millennium Challenge Corporation's pool of initial candidate
2446 countries.

2447 Perhaps the most visible part of MCC's rigorous selection
2448 process is the scorecard, which evaluates more than 20 different
2449 policy indicators of good governance. Before countries are
2450 assessed on this scorecard, they must be classified as low income
2451 countries or lower middle income countries by the World Bank.

2452 This focus on developing countries is essential and a core
2453 part of the MCC's mission and mandate. But the way we define
2454 these countries has led to several issues that this legislation
2455 seeks to address.

2456 In the two decades of the MCC's existence, the number of
2457 eligible countries has shrunk by almost a third. MCC compacts,
2458 which need to be ratified by both the United States and the partner
2459 country, can take years to negotiate, ratify, and implement.

2460 Under MCC's current structure, countries can suddenly become
2461 ineligible for assistance in the middle of a multi-year
2462 negotiation. Global disruptions, like a pandemic, or major
2463 conflict can lead to similar changes in a country's eligibility.

2464 This legislation would defend the country pool as the 125
2465 poorest countries using the World Bank's GNI per capita
2466 measurements. It will ensure that MCC has a stable number of

2467 potential candidates, even as global incomes continue to change.

2468

2469 The new pool of potentially eligible countries would cover
2470 98 percent of the world's poor and 90 percent of the countries
2471 MCC is -- MCC considers facing substantial vulnerability,
2472 including to pandemics, natural disasters, migration, and food
2473 insecurity.

2474 The MCC Eligibility Expansion Act includes key safeguards
2475 to protect the MCC's development mandate and ensure that newly
2476 eligible countries did not crowd out support to low and lower
2477 middle income countries. This legislation includes language that
2478 would strengthen statutory direction to the MCC's Board to
2479 prioritize development, need, and impact.

2480 It would also require all potential candidate countries to
2481 identify appropriate national contributions during compact
2482 negotiations, meaning wealthier countries would pitch in more.

2483 Lastly, in implementing this legislation, I expect the MCC
2484 to compare this small pool of newly eligible, upper middle income
2485 countries against their peers in determine eligibility through
2486 the scorecard. This bill would provide the MCC with more
2487 certainty and stability when it chooses to pursue a compact.
2488 It makes no changes to the scorecards or to the other necessary
2489 criteria that countries need to meet, including criteria on
2490 democracy and the rule of law.

2491 While this legislation would expand the number of countries
2492 that could be considered by almost 45, only a few would meet these
2493 additional criteria and ultimately be eligible for assistance.

2494 And that is by design.

2495 When Congress established the MCC, we intended it to be a
2496 highly selective agency which would reduce global poverty through
2497 partnership with the best governing -- best governed developing
2498 countries, and MCC has consistently enjoyed bipartisan support
2499 and international credibility because it has kept unerring focus
2500 on that mission.

2501 With your support today, we can ensure that the MCC will
2502 continue its important work and have a greater impact. I urge
2503 my colleagues to support this legislation and oppose any
2504 amendments that would politicize the agency or undermine its
2505 development mandate.

2506 With that, I yield back, Chairman.

2507 Chairman Meeks. The gentleman yields back.

2508 I now recognize Representative Malliotakis from the State
2509 of New York for five minutes.

2510 Ms. Malliotakis. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like
2511 to voice my support for H.R. 8463, the Millennium Challenge
2512 Corporation Eligibility Expansion Act. The Millennium Challenge
2513 Corporation has enjoyed broad bipartisan support since its
2514 founding under President Bush. This support stems from the

2515 agency's strong track record of success in its mission of
2516 eliminating poverty through economic growth.

2517 The agency is extremely selective, choosing to partner only
2518 with countries that pass its strict eligibility criteria that
2519 include high standards for democracy, economic freedom, and
2520 respect for human rights. Across the globe, we are seeing new
2521 and dire challenges, including natural disasters, rising
2522 migration, and food insecurity being faced by countries who are
2523 on the path towards development.

2524 We must ensure that these countries are capable of their
2525 own sustainability and viability, but we must also be able to
2526 guide them and assist to the best of our abilities. The target
2527 poverty, the Millennium -- I am sorry. To target poverty, the
2528 Millennium Challenge Corporation only selects countries that fall
2529 below a certain income threshold.

2530 Since its founding, the number of countries eligible for
2531 partnerships, based only on financial standards, has dwindled
2532 to close to 80. The MCC Eligibility Expansion Act would expand
2533 the MCC's candidate pool to the world's 125 poorest countries
2534 as classified by the World Bank. This would allow the agency
2535 more flexibility to effectively address poverty wherever it
2536 exists.

2537 It would also add stability to MCC's projects, since it would
2538 remove the risk that countries could change income categories

2539 during compact development.

2540 For these reasons, I urge my colleagues to strongly support
2541 this measure, and I am very proud to join Chairman Castro in
2542 co-sponsoring it.

2543 Thank you, and I yield back.

2544 Chairman Meeks. The gentlelady yields back.

2545 Anyone else seek recognition? Hearing no further requests,
2546 let's move on to amendments. For what purpose does the
2547 Representative from Pennsylvania, Mr. Perry, seek recognition?

2548 Mr. Perry. Mr. Chairman, I have got an amendment at the
2549 desk. It appears to be Number 756.

2550 Chairman Meeks. The clerk shall distribute the amendment.

2551

2552 Mr. Castro. Chairman, I reserve a point of order.

2553 Chairman Meeks. Point of order is reserved.

2554 Has everyone received a copy of the amendment? The clerk
2555 will please report the amendment.

2556 Ms. Hallman. Perry Amendment Number 756 to H.R. 8463, at
2557 the end --

2558 [The Amendment offered by Mr. Perry follows:]

2559

2560 *****COMMITTEE INSERT*****

2561 Chairman Meeks. Without objection, further reading of the
2562 amendment will be dispensed with.

2563 The Representative from Pennsylvania, Mr. Perry, is now
2564 recognized for five minutes in support of his amendment.

2565 Mr. Perry. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is a
2566 non-controversial amendment that simply adds a report no later
2567 than 100 days after -- 180 days after enactment of this Act from
2568 the CEO of the Millennium Challenge Corporation detailing all
2569 known and suspected instances of corporations, projects, impacted
2570 by Chinese Communist Party, CCP, malign influence, and any
2571 strategy by the corporation to address instances of CCP malign
2572 influence.

2573 Just this morning, the Asia Pacific Subcommittee held a
2574 hearing on gray zone coercion in the Indo-Pacific. As we all
2575 know, China has no shortage of tools in their toolbox from the
2576 aggression in the South China Sea to Confucius Institute's
2577 wielding influences at colleges around the world.

2578 This amendment will help inform Congress as we oversee --
2579 as we oversee the Millennium Challenge Corporation, and, more
2580 importantly, continue to fight back against the CCP's malign
2581 influence around the world and specifically where the Millennium
2582 Challenge Corporation is working.

2583 With that, I urge adoption and yield the balance.

2584 Chairman Meeks. The gentleman yields the balance of his

2585 time.

2586 Mr. Castro. I seek recognition, Chairman.

2587 Chairman Meeks. The gentleman is recognized.

2588 Mr. Castro. This legislation is about expanding the pot
2589 of countries eligible for MCC partnership. So it has nothing
2590 to do with China or the CCP. As such, the amendment introduces
2591 a new subject matter untethered from the rest of the bill, and
2592 the amendment should not be considered in order.

2593 I yield back.

2594 Chairman Meeks. The chair is prepared to rule. The
2595 amendment is not -- is not germane. The legislation is about
2596 changing eligibility rules for the Millennium Challenge
2597 Corporation. It is not about China, the CCP, or malign influence.
2598 Important topics they are, but the topic at hand they are not.
2599 Because the amendment introduces a new subject not at issue in
2600 this legislation, the amendment is not germane.

2601 Are there any other amendments?

2602 Mr. Perry. Mr. Chairman, I have got an amendment at the
2603 desk, Number 757.

2604 Chairman Meeks. The clerk shall distribute the amendment.

2605

2606 Mr. Castro. Chairman, I reserve a point of order.

2607 Chairman Meeks. Point of order is reserved.

2608 Clerk, please report the amendment.

2609 Ms. Hallman. Perry Amendment Number 757 to H.R. 8463, add
2610 at the end the following --

2611 [The Amendment offered by Mr. Perry follows:]

2612

2613 *****COMMITTEE INSERT*****

2614 Chairman Meeks. Without objection, further reading of the
2615 amendment will be dispensed with.

2616 The Representative from Pennsylvania is now recognized for
2617 five minutes in support of his amendment.

2618 Mr. Perry. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Unfortunately, it has
2619 become a pattern of the far left that they attempt to insert
2620 unrelated climate objectives into every facet of domestic and
2621 international policy. The Millennium Challenge Corporation was
2622 created to fund projects that help lift countries out of poverty,
2623 not advance so-called clean energy and sustainable so-called goals
2624 that we seek globally to push from their beachfront properties.

2625 Let's be honest here. Solar power and electric vehicles
2626 aren't really clean and sustainable goals. They are really just
2627 socialism with new branding. Just look at the solar industry.

2628 It is highly reliant on polysilicon source from China, especially
2629 from East Turkestan, which is home to four of the five largest
2630 polysilicon factories in the world.

2631 Congress has repeatedly acknowledged the atrocities
2632 perpetrated against the Uyghur population. But in legislation
2633 like this, we can't seem to do anything about it. We are unwilling
2634 to do anything about it.

2635 This amendment is just another way for Congress to assert
2636 the taxpayers' money should not be diverted for unintended purposes,
2637 specifically for these projects that don't meet the mark.

2638 I urge adoption and yield the balance.

2639 Chairman Meeks. The gentleman yields back the balance of
2640 his time.

2641 Mr. Castro. Mr. Chair, I would like to be recognized.

2642 Chairman Meeks. For what purpose does the gentleman wish
2643 to be recognized?

2644 Mr. Castro. I will argue against the amendment. The Perry
2645 amendment includes funding prohibitions on carrying out an
2646 executive order that has mandates far beyond this committee's
2647 jurisdiction, including for the Secretary of Interior, the
2648 Secretary of Defense, and the Secretary of Commerce. And the
2649 amendment is a violation of Rule 10 of the House of
2650 Representatives.

2651 I yield back.

2652 Chairman Meeks. Is the gentleman addressing his point of
2653 order?

2654 Mr. Castro. Yes.

2655 Chairman Meeks. The chair is prepared to rule. This
2656 amendment references an executive order, which includes many
2657 directives far outside the committee's jurisdiction. As such,
2658 it is a violation of Rule 10 of the House of Representatives.
2659 The point of order is sustained, and the amendment fails.

2660 Are there any other amendments? The question is to report
2661 8463 with a recommendation that the bill do pass. We are going

2662 to take a vote by voice. All members unmute your microphones.

2663 All those in favor, say aye.

2664 All opposed, no.

2665 In the opinion of the chair, the ayes have it. And without
2666 objection, the motion to reconsider is laid upon the table.

2667 Mr. Perry. Mr. Chairman, I request a recorded vote.

2668 Chairman Meeks. A recorded vote is ordered. The question
2669 is to report H.R. -- and we will roll the vote until tomorrow.

2670 We will -- as indicated to other members, we will then take all
2671 recorded votes.

2672 We will now consider H.R. 6455, the Prosper Africa Act, with
2673 the McCaul amendment in the nature of a substitute, Number 69.

2674 Pursuant to notice, for purposes of markup, I now call up H.R.
2675 6455, the Prosper Africa Act.

2676 The clerk will report the bill.

2677 Ms. Hallman. H.R. 6455, to promote, facilitate, and
2678 increase two-way trade and investment between the United States
2679 and --

2680 [The Bill H.R. 6455 follows:]

2681

2682 *****COMMITTEE INSERT*****

2683 Chairman Meeks. Without objection, the first reading of
2684 the bill is dispensed with, and the bill shall be considered as
2685 read and open to amendment at any point.

2686 And without objection, the McCaul amendment in the nature
2687 of a substitute designated Number 69, circulated to members, shall
2688 be considered as read and will be treated as original text for
2689 purposes of amendment.

2690 [The Amendment offered by Mr. McCaul follows:]

2691

2692 *****COMMITTEE INSERT*****

2693 Chairman Meeks. I recognize myself to speak briefly on this
2694 measure.

2695 For the United States to remain a trusted and preferred
2696 partner in Africa, U.S. policy toward Africa must include a
2697 comprehensive vision to increase and sustain economic engagement
2698 and investment throughout the continent.

2699 Since Prosper Africa was established in 2019, the United
2700 States has renewed its focus on providing U.S. businesses the
2701 tools needed to navigate diverse African markets. It is clear
2702 the United States must, as a national security imperative,
2703 compete strategically -- compete strategically in a region that
2704 offers so much opportunity for our private sector, both at home
2705 and abroad.

2706 What the U.S.-Africa Economic Engagement Act will do is
2707 codify Prosper Africa and help the Administration capitalize on
2708 efforts underway by the state, USAID, and other departments and
2709 agencies to deepen economic ties with African partners.

2710 This bill will require the Administration to develop a
2711 strategy, submit comprehensive reports to Congress for 7 years,
2712 and establish a leadership committee and advisory council that
2713 will provide important strategic guidance to make Prosper Africa
2714 successful.

2715 I am honored and proud to be a co-sponsor of this important
2716 piece of legislation, which was introduced -- and I thank him

2717 for his understanding to connect and being involved, and that
2718 the United States has to step up on the continent of Africa, by
2719 my friend and colleague Ranking Member McCaul, as well as Mr.
2720 Smith and Chairwoman Bass, and I know both chair and ranking member
2721 of that committee is focused on this continent, and I would hope
2722 that all of us can join hands in support of this bill.

2723 And with that, I now recognize -- I yield back the balance
2724 of my time, and I recognize Ranking Member Michael McCaul for
2725 five minutes.

2726 Mr. McCaul. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I think we all
2727 recognize the significance of Africa. It is the fastest-growing
2728 population of any continent, and we all recognize the presence
2729 of China in the region through the Belt and Road Initiative, as
2730 demonstrated by 20 African nations abstaining from the U.N.
2731 Security Council.

2732 With respect to Russian aggression in Ukraine, that
2733 demonstrates alone that the grip that China has over 20 of those
2734 countries, I have often by told ambassadors from Africa, you know,
2735 why are you dealing with the Chinese? Why are you working with
2736 them? And why are you letting yourself into a debt trap?

2737 And the answer, quite frankly and sadly, is because you are
2738 not there. And you know how important the continent is. You
2739 have been there many times, as have I. We have got to compete
2740 and be on the field if we are going to beat China at its game,

2741 and if we can help the African people liberate themselves from,
2742 you know, the tyranny of Communist China and be more advanced
2743 in the values of the United States of America.

2744 So I want to thank you for your support on this, and I look
2745 forward to taking a trip over there with you, and hopefully many
2746 members of the committee, soon. And I look forward to its passage.

2747 I yield back.

2748 Chairman Meeks. Any further requests to speak? Hearing
2749 no further requests, let's move on to amendments.

2750 Representative Perry?

2751 Mr. Perry. Mr. Chairman, I have got an amendment at the
2752 desk, Number 758.

2753 Chairman Meeks. The clerk shall distribute the amendment.

2754

2755 Mr. Castro. I reserve of order, Mr. Chairman.

2756 Chairman Meeks. A point of order is reserved.

2757 Has everyone received a copy of the amendment? The clerk
2758 will please report the amendment.

2759 Ms. Hallman. Perry Amendment Number 758 to the amendment
2760 in the nature of a substitute to H.R. 6455 --

2761 [The Amendment offered by Mr. Perry follows:]

2762

2763 *****COMMITTEE INSERT*****

2764 Chairman Meeks. Without objection, further reading of the
2765 amendment will be dispensed with.

2766 I now recognize the gentleman from Pennsylvania for 5 minutes
2767 to speak on his amendment.

2768 Mr. Perry. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This amendment
2769 highlights the impact of regressive social policies of far left
2770 environmentalists on developing nations for the uninitiated.

2771 Many African nations are unable to provide electricity to
2772 most of their citizens, in part because Western institutions and
2773 states typically tie development assistance to the use of
2774 inefficient alternative energy resources, the inputs of which
2775 are largely sourced from China or which are otherwise included
2776 in Chinese supply chains.

2777 Here is a case in point. The United Nations Development
2778 Programme, the UNDP, which has done a lot of work in Africa, has
2779 a whole feature article on their web page entitled "Breaking Up
2780 With Fossil Fuels" arguing that it is time for governments and
2781 markets to design their leaving strategies. The COVID-19
2782 pandemic has opened the door for policymakers to act now to prevent
2783 the catastrophic and unequal consequences of climate change.
2784 Phasing out fossil fuels and taxing carbon will spur growth and
2785 innovation.

2786 Easy for them to say. Of course, the UNDP might as well
2787 be serving as a promoter of the genocidal CCP's bottom line.

2788 This amendment ensures that any assistance from
2789 international financial institutions, or IFIs, cannot be
2790 designated for any renewable energy project that utilizes Chinese
2791 supply chains. Chinese supply chains. That is it. It should
2792 be a no-brainer. No one on this committee should be on the side
2793 of supporting Chinese slave labor.

2794 This amendment, in observance of the left's ridiculous war
2795 on affordable energy, also instructs our executive directors at
2796 each IFI to oppose any ban against funding fossil fuel projects.
2797 Might be other projects. Maybe the fossil fuel one makes it;
2798 maybe it doesn't. But it shouldn't be an outright ban on them
2799 just because they exist.

2800 So long as Western countries and organizations focus on
2801 imposing a net zero vision on countries struggling to obtain even
2802 intermittent access to electricity, they will never enable these
2803 countries to confront ongoing and future national challenges in
2804 a manner that serves their -- their national priorities.

2805 To be clear, it is immoral to export these regressive policies
2806 to low-income countries who should be free to develop their natural
2807 resources and give their citizens access to an electric grid and
2808 a better life. And these countries also shouldn't be condemned
2809 to use inefficient and costly renewable energy resources sourced
2810 with slave labor that they oppose.

2811 Numerous African nations, including Angola and Nigeria, are

2812 the world leaders in oil production and have enormous -- are world
2813 leaders in oil production and have enormous amounts of coal
2814 deposits in their very own country.

2815 However, the West continues to maintain with zero shame for
2816 their hypocrisy an imposition of double standards, that those
2817 countries should be able to develop as Western nations were able
2818 to do. We just ensure that they are going to remain in poverty,
2819 so we can feel good about it.

2820 In the meantime, millions of people in low-income countries
2821 have to resort to very basic means, including burning firewood
2822 to stay warm. The March 2021 UNDP article even conceded that
2823 despite the U.N.'s awe-inspiring work in furnishing solar cookers,
2824 which are made with the help of CCP slave labor, demand for firewood
2825 in areas like east Sudan is still very high, as it is more reliable,
2826 as it is a more reliable energy source than what the UNDP are
2827 providing for the local refugee and Sudanese population.

2828 What is critically important to remember here is that there
2829 is no one-size-fits-all approach to every nation, which should
2830 come down from Western nations imposing their will on them. That
2831 may offend the paternalistic and colonialist sensibilities of
2832 some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, but it is
2833 true.

2834 Let nations develop according to what is best for their
2835 citizens, by their governments, and by them, for total rejection

2836 of imperialist green energy mind-set shared by the far left
2837 neo-Marxist climate advocates.

2838 I urge adoption of this amendment, and I yield the balance.
2839 Chairman Meeks. The gentleman yields the balance.

2840 Mr. Castro. Chairman, I would like to speak on my point
2841 of order.

2842 Chairman Meeks. The gentleman is recognized.

2843 Mr. Castro. This amendment is outside the scope of the
2844 jurisdiction of the Committee on Foreign Affairs because
2845 international financial institutions are under the jurisdiction
2846 of the Committee on Financial Services. While I share Mr. Perry's
2847 wish that international financial institutions be under our
2848 committee's jurisdiction, unfortunately, they remain firmly
2849 within the jurisdiction of financial services.

2850 Given Rule 10 of the House, we cannot consider this amendment.

2851 Chairman Meeks. The chair is prepared to rule. The
2852 gentleman is correct. This amendment directs the Secretary of
2853 Treasury to take action pertaining to international financial
2854 institutions and is, therefore, squarely within the jurisdiction
2855 of the Financial Services Committee.

2856 We now consider -- we cannot consider this amendment under
2857 Rule 10 of the House of Representatives.

2858 We are now going to take a vote by voice on the McCaul
2859 amendment in the nature of a substitute, designated Number 69 to

2860 H.R. 6455, the Prosper Africa Act.

2861 The question now is on McCaul amendment in the nature of
2862 a substitute designated Number 69, and we are going to take a
2863 vote by voice. All members unmute your microphones.

2864 All those in favor, say aye.

2865 All opposed, no.

2866 In the opinion of the chair, the ayes have it. Without
2867 objection, the motion to reconsider is laid upon the table. The
2868 amendment in the nature of a substitute is adopted.

2869 The question is to report H.R. 6455, Prosper Africa Act,
2870 as amended, with a recommendation that the bill do pass, as
2871 amended. Again, we are going to take a voice vote. All members
2872 unmute your microphones.

2873 All those in favor, say aye.

2874 All opposed, no.

2875 In the opinion of the chair, the ayes have it. And without
2876 objection, the motion to reconsider is laid upon the table, and
2877 the measure is ordered favorably reported, as amended.

2878 We are going to vote -- at this particular time, the committee
2879 will go into recess, and we will resume tomorrow morning at 9:00
2880 a.m. for all recorded votes.

2881 This markup is now in recess.

2882 [Whereupon, at 5:23 p.m., the committee recessed, to
2883 reconvene at 9:00 a.m., Friday, July 29, 2022.]