

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 4368

To authorize the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative, to enhance the United States-Caribbean security partnership, to prioritize natural disaster resilience, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 14, 2025

Mr. ESPAILLAT (for himself and Ms. SALAZAR) introduced the following bill;
which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

A BILL

To authorize the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative, to enhance the United States-Caribbean security partnership, to prioritize natural disaster resilience, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Caribbean Basin Secu-
5 rity Initiative Authorization Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

7 In this Act:

1 (1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMIT-
2 TEES.—The term “appropriate congressional com-
3 mittees” means—

4 (A) the Committee on Foreign Relations
5 and the Committee on Appropriations of the
6 Senate; and

7 (B) the Committee on Foreign Affairs and
8 the Committee on Appropriations of the House
9 of Representatives.

10 (2) BENEFICIARY COUNTRIES.—The term “ben-
11 eficiary countries” means—

12 (A) Antigua and Barbuda;

13 (B) the Bahamas;

14 (C) Barbados;

15 (D) Dominica;

16 (E) the Dominican Republic;

17 (F) Grenada;

18 (G) Guyana;

19 (H) Jamaica;

20 (I) Saint Lucia;

21 (J) Saint Kitts and Nevis;

22 (K) Saint Vincent and the Grenadines;

23 (L) Suriname; and

24 (M) Trinidad and Tobago.

1 **SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION FOR THE CARIBBEAN BASIN SECU-**
2 **RITY INITIATIVE.**

3 (a) AUTHORIZATION FOR THE CARIBBEAN BASIN SE-
4 CURITY INITIATIVE.—The Secretary of State and the Ad-
5 ministrator of the United States Agency for International
6 Development may carry out an initiative, to be known as
7 the “Caribbean Basin Security Initiative”, in beneficiary
8 countries to achieve the purposes described in subsection
9 (b).

10 (b) PURPOSES.—The purposes described in this sub-
11 section are the following:

12 (1) To promote citizen safety, security, and the
13 rule of law in the Caribbean through increased stra-
14 tegic engagement with—

15 (A) the governments of beneficiary coun-
16 tries; and

17 (B) elements of local civil society, including
18 the private sector, in such countries.

19 (2) To counter transnational criminal organiza-
20 tions and local gangs in beneficiary countries, in-
21 cluding through—

22 (A) maritime and aerial security coopera-
23 tion, including—

24 (i) assistance to strengthen capabili-
25 ties of maritime and aerial interdiction op-
26 erations in the Caribbean; and

1 (ii) the provision of support systems
2 and equipment, training, and maintenance;

3 (B) cooperation on border and port secu-
4 rity, including support to strengthen capacity
5 for screening and intercepting narcotics, weap-
6 ons, bulk cash, and other contraband at air-
7 ports and seaports; and

8 (C) capacity building and the provision of
9 equipment and support for operations tar-
10 geting—

11 (i) the finances and illegal activities of
12 such organizations and gangs; and

13 (ii) the recruitment by such organiza-
14 tions and gangs of at-risk youth.

15 (3) To advance law enforcement and justice sec-
16 tor capacity building and rule of law initiatives in
17 beneficiary countries, including by—

18 (A) strengthening special prosecutorial of-
19 fices and providing technical assistance—

20 (i) to combat—

21 (I) corruption;

22 (II) money laundering;

23 (III) human, firearms, and wild-
24 life trafficking;

25 (IV) human smuggling;

1 (V) financial crimes; and

2 (VI) extortion; and

3 (ii) to conduct asset forfeitures and
4 criminal analysis;

5 (B) supporting training for civilian police
6 and appropriate security services in criminal in-
7 vestigations, best practices for citizen security,
8 and the protection of human rights;

9 (C) supporting capacity building for law
10 enforcement and military units, including
11 professionalization, anti-corruption and human
12 rights training, vetting, and community-based
13 policing;

14 (D) supporting justice sector reform and
15 strengthening of the rule of law, including—

16 (i) capacity building for prosecutors,
17 judges, and other justice officials; and

18 (ii) support to increase the efficacy of
19 criminal courts; and

20 (E) strengthening cybersecurity and
21 cybercrime cooperation, including capacity
22 building and support for cybersecurity systems.

23 (4) To promote crime prevention efforts in ben-
24 eficiary countries, particularly among at-risk youth

1 and other vulnerable populations, including
2 through—

3 (A) improving community and law enforce-
4 ment cooperation to improve the effectiveness
5 and professionalism of police and increase mu-
6 tual trust;

7 (B) increasing economic opportunities for
8 at-risk youth and vulnerable populations, in-
9 cluding through workforce development training
10 and remedial education programs for at-risk
11 youth;

12 (C) improving juvenile justice sectors
13 through regulatory reforms, separating youth
14 from traditional prison systems, and improving
15 support and services in juvenile detention cen-
16 ters; and

17 (D) the provision of assistance to popu-
18 lations vulnerable to being victims of extortion
19 and crime by criminal networks.

20 (5) To strengthen the ability of the security
21 sector in beneficiary countries to respond to and be-
22 come more resilient in the face of natural disasters,
23 including by—

24 (A) carrying out training exercises to en-
25 sure critical infrastructure and ports are able to

1 come back online rapidly following natural dis-
2 asters; and

3 (B) providing preparedness training to po-
4 lice and first responders.

5 (6) To prioritize efforts to combat corruption
6 and include anti-corruption components in programs
7 in beneficiary countries, including by—

8 (A) building the capacity of national jus-
9 tice systems and attorneys general to prosecute
10 and try acts of corruption;

11 (B) increasing the capacity of national law
12 enforcement services to carry out anti-corrup-
13 tion investigations; and

14 (C) encouraging cooperative agreements
15 among the Department of State, other relevant
16 Federal departments and agencies, and the at-
17 torneys general of relevant countries.

18 (7) To promote the rule of law in beneficiary
19 countries and counter malign influence from authori-
20 tarian regimes, including China, Russia, Iran, Ven-
21 ezuela, Nicaragua, and Cuba, by—

22 (A) monitoring security assistance from
23 such authoritarian regimes and taking steps
24 necessary to ensure that such assistance does

1 not undermine or jeopardize United States se-
2 curity assistance;

3 (B) evaluating and, as appropriate, re-
4 stricting the involvement of the United States
5 in investment and infrastructure projects fi-
6 nanced by authoritarian regimes that might ob-
7 struct or otherwise impact United States secu-
8 rity assistance to beneficiary countries;

9 (C) monitoring and restricting equipment
10 and support from high-risk vendors of tele-
11 communications infrastructure in beneficiary
12 countries;

13 (D) countering disinformation by pro-
14 moting transparency and accountability from
15 beneficiary countries; and

16 (E) eliminating corruption linked to invest-
17 ment and infrastructure facilitated by authori-
18 tarian regimes through support for investment
19 screening, competitive tendering and bidding
20 processes, the implementation of investment
21 law, and contractual transparency.

22 (8) To support the effective branding and mes-
23 saging of United States security assistance and co-
24 operation in beneficiary countries, including by de-
25 veloping and implementing a public diplomacy strat-

1 egy for informing citizens of beneficiary countries
2 about the benefits to their respective countries of
3 United States security assistance and cooperation
4 programs.

5 (c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
6 authorized to be appropriated to the Department of State
7 and the United States Agency for International Develop-
8 ment \$88,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2025 through
9 2029 to carry out the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative
10 to achieve the purposes described in subsection (b).

11 **SEC. 4. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN.**

12 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the
13 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State,
14 in coordination with the Administrator of the United
15 States Agency for International Development, shall submit
16 to the appropriate congressional committees an implemen-
17 tation plan that includes a timeline and stated objectives
18 for actions to be taken in beneficiary countries with re-
19 spect to the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative.

20 (b) ELEMENTS.—The implementation plan required
21 by subsection (a) shall include the following elements:

22 (1) A multi-year strategy with a timeline, over-
23 view of objectives, and anticipated outcomes for the
24 region and for each beneficiary country, with respect
25 to each purpose described in section 3.

1 (2) Specific, measurable benchmarks to track
2 the progress of the Caribbean Basin Security Initia-
3 tive toward accomplishing the outcomes included
4 under paragraph (1).

5 (3) A plan for the delineation of the roles to be
6 carried out by the Department of State, the United
7 States Agency for International Development, the
8 Department of Justice, the Department of Defense,
9 and any other Federal department or agency in car-
10 rying out the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative, to
11 prevent overlap and unintended competition between
12 activities and resources.

13 (4) A plan to coordinate and track all activities
14 carried out under the Caribbean Basin Security Ini-
15 tiative among all relevant Federal departments and
16 agencies, in accordance with the publication require-
17 ments described in section 4 of the Foreign Aid
18 Transparency and Accountability Act of 2016 (22
19 U.S.C. 2394c).

20 (5) A description of the process for co-locating
21 projects of the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative
22 funded by the United States Agency for Inter-
23 national Development and the Bureau of Inter-
24 national Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs of
25 the Department of State to ensure that crime pre-

1 vention funding and enforcement funding are used
2 in the same localities as necessary.

3 (c) ANNUAL PROGRESS UPDATE.—Not later than 1
4 year after the date on which the implementation plan re-
5 quired by subsection (a) is submitted, and annually there-
6 after, the Secretary of State, in coordination with the Ad-
7 ministrators of the United States Agency for International
8 Development, shall submit to the appropriate congres-
9 sional committees a written description of results achieved
10 through the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative, including
11 with respect to—

12 (1) the implementation of the strategy and
13 plans described in paragraphs (1), (3), and (4) of
14 subsection (b);

15 (2) compliance with, and progress related to,
16 meeting the benchmarks described in paragraph (2)
17 of subsection (b); and

18 (3) funding statistics for the Caribbean Basin
19 Security Initiative for the preceding year,
20 disaggregated by country.

21 **SEC. 5. PROGRAMS AND STRATEGY TO INCREASE NATURAL**
22 **DISASTER RESPONSE AND RESILIENCE.**

23 (a) PROGRAMS.—During the 5-year period beginning
24 on the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary
25 of State, in consultation with the Administrator of the

1 United States Agency for International Development and
2 the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Inter-
3 American Foundation, shall promote natural disaster re-
4 sponse and resilience in beneficiary countries by carrying
5 out programs for the following purposes:

6 (1) Encouraging coordination between bene-
7 ficiary countries and relevant Federal departments
8 and agencies to provide expertise and information
9 sharing.

10 (2) Supporting the sharing of best practices on
11 natural disaster resilience, including on constructing
12 resilient infrastructure and rebuilding after natural
13 disasters.

14 (3) Improving rapid-response mechanisms and
15 cross-government organizational preparedness for
16 natural disasters.

17 (b) STRATEGY.—Not later than 180 days after the
18 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State,
19 in coordination with the Administrator of the United
20 States Agency for International Development and in con-
21 sultation with the President and Chief Executive Officer
22 of the Inter-American Foundation and nongovernmental
23 organizations in beneficiary countries and in the United
24 States, shall submit to the appropriate congressional com-

1 mittees a strategy that incorporates specific, measurable
2 benchmarks—

3 (1) to achieve the purposes described in sub-
4 section (a); and

5 (2) to inform citizens of beneficiary countries
6 about the extent and benefits of United States as-
7 sistance to such countries.

8 (c) ANNUAL PROGRESS UPDATE.—Not later than 1
9 year after the date on which the strategy required by sub-
10 section (b) is submitted, and annually thereafter, the Sec-
11 retary of State, in coordination with the Administrator of
12 the United States Agency for International Development,
13 shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees
14 a written description of the progress made as of the date
15 of such submission in meeting the benchmarks included
16 in the strategy.

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