



# The HELP Commission

Helping to Enhance the Livelihood of People Around the Globe

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## HELP Commission Recommendations for Legislative Action

### Recommendation 2.1-1

- Grant duty-free, quota-free access to U.S. markets to those countries that are eligible for an MCC Compact or Threshold Program.
- Provide the same duty-free, quota-free status to those countries with a per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP) under \$2,000. Those countries that are otherwise ineligible for U.S. foreign assistance would be denied such access.
- Provide through legislation, improved and expanded Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) to help displaced American workers and communities retrain and retool for the future.

### Recommendation 2.2-2

- Adequately fund the State Department and USAID in areas where DoD has taken on their traditional development responsibilities in recent years so that DoD can remain focused on its core functions.
- Bolster the legislative requirements to require concurrence between the Secretary of State and DoD on all foreign aid activities consistent with scale and scope of projects carried out by DoD.
- Strengthen and fund the capacities of the State Department Office S/CRS and assign it responsibility for coordinating State and Defense Department programs for security-related aspects of addressing crises and weak and failing states.

### Recommendation 3.1

- Rewrite the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961

### Recommendation 3.3

- Strike an agreement on uniform procedures for reprogramming, Congressional Notifications and holds, and other procedures governing the movement and allocation of funds.

### Recommendation 3.4

- Fund the ESF account appropriately and ensure that management of the foreign assistance budget includes provisions making clear that ESF is for short-term economic needs. Further, the Development Assistance Account must be ring-fenced so as to ensure that funding for long-term goals is protected.

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The Honorable Mary K. Bush, Chairman

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## Recommendation 3.5

- Authorize two rapid-response crisis funds: (1) A permanent Humanitarian Crisis Response Fund that can be drawn upon to respond to natural disasters; and (2) A Foreign Crisis Fund to allow for maximum flexibility when confronted with security challenges.

## Recommendation 3.6

- The Legislative branch should consider the consolidated budget as a whole, maintaining the combined National Security and Foreign Assistance resources.
- Eliminate the Operating Expense (OE) account as a separate line item in the budget in the 150 account.

## Recommendation 4.1

- Substantially increase and better train the U.S. foreign assistance agency's direct-hire workforce. Merely to fulfill current mandates, USAID or its successor agency needs a substantially larger, better-trained workforce to reduce its dependence on PSCs. Restoring staff to a level twice that of current direct-hire employees would not be unreasonable.

## Recommendation 4.3

- Abolish the OE account and replace it with a more accurate accounting process.

## Recommendation 4.4

- Provide U.S. foreign assistance agencies with sufficient staff and related funding so that grant and contract operations can proceed appropriately. Use transparent and competitive processes to the maximum extent possible, which will require a substantial increase in U.S. procurement personnel at USAID — perhaps as many as 125 additional people.
- Enact legislation to include host country recipients, civil society, and government officials as substantive participants in the grant and contract scoring and award processes in order to ensure country ownership of the projects.

## Recommendation 5.2-1

- Consider offering modest-sized U.S. Government loans, loan guarantees, and equity investments to support the growth of financial, commercial, and industrial enterprises. Require within the authorizing legislation that all investment capital be repaid to the U.S. Treasury.

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## **Recommendation 5.2-2**

- Create a new U.S. Government organization that can develop and apply innovative technologies to development problems in order to jumpstart research and development aimed at reducing global poverty.

## **Recommendation 5.2-3**

- Support initiatives to permit greater local purchases of food aid.

## **Recommendation 5.2-4**

- Overhaul, rejuvenate, and adequately fund Biden-Pell Development Education Programs, an initiative begun 27 years ago in order to promote better engagement of Americans and foreign nationals living in the United States regarding development issues.
- Clarify the intent of the statutory provisions (Sec. 539 of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations FY2006, as continued in FY2007 and FY2008) that have, at times, been interpreted by Executive agencies to limit their ability fully to explain U.S. development activities to the American people.

## **Recommendation 6.1-1**

- Reduce the number of agencies responsible for development.

## **Recommendation 6.1-2**

- Re-write the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961.

## **Recommendation 6.1-5**

- Create a new structure for foreign assistance activities.

## **Recommendation 7.7**

- If assistance is delivered in a new business model based on real partnerships; if the assistance is demand driven; if it creates lasting institutions and human capabilities; and if impacts can be responsibly monitored and evaluated, then our government should increase assistance funding substantially.

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