

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.

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## 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

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## 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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