



MFAN Praises House Foreign Affairs Committee for Passing State Department Authorization Bill

May 22, 2009 (Washington, D.C.) – *This statement is delivered on behalf of the Modernizing Foreign Assistance Network (MFAN) by MFAN Co-Chairs David Beckmann and George Ingram:*

Chairman Howard Berman (D-CA) and other bipartisan Members of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs (HCFA) deserve credit for passing H.R. 2410, the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, which would provide funding for the State Department to carry out diplomacy and development programs. These programs are critical components of a successful, 21st-century U.S. foreign policy and our national security approach. We urge the full House to pass the bill when it comes to the floor in coming weeks.

MFAN is particularly pleased that H.R. 2410 includes strong resources for development-promoting foreign assistance programs that fight poverty and disease, create economic opportunity, and highlight American values in poor countries. Additional action is needed to make sure that these resources are used more strategically and efficiently.

To this end, we urge U.S. leaders to move forward with modernizing the U.S. foreign assistance system by supporting the Initiating Foreign Assistance Reform Act of 2009 (H.R. 2139), which was introduced by Chairman Berman and Rep. Mark Kirk (R-IL). The bill calls on the Obama Administration to create America's first-ever National Strategy for Global Development (NSGD), which would ensure that U.S. development efforts are better coordinated, monitored, and accounted for across the U.S. government. Just as importantly, the NSGD would make sure development efforts are better integrated into, and supportive of, our National Security Strategy.

We call on Congress to support these efforts because they will save more lives by making sure taxpayer-backed foreign assistance is getting directly to people who need help most.

For more information, please visit www.modernizingforeignassistance.net.

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