



## **United States-Northern Triangle Enhanced Engagement Act (H.R.2615)**

**The Problem:** The Northern Triangle countries of El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras face alarming levels of violence and instability that cause economic and security challenges and contribute to migration from the region. Cutting U.S. foreign assistance to the Northern Triangle would be detrimental to programs that have made notable progress in stabilizing the region.

**The Solution:** The US-Northern Triangle Enhanced Engagement Act will support the people of Central America and strengthen U.S. national security by addressing the root causes of migration from El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras. Specifically, the bill:

- **Authorizes \$577 million in foreign assistance to Central America** to address the root causes of migration in Fiscal Year 2020. The act includes conditions on any assistance to the central governments of El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras.
- **Requires advance notification to Congress on security assistance to Northern Triangle** countries, regardless of the dollar amount for the following three years.
- Requires the State Department and USAID to **report to Congress on annual benchmarks** and track the progress made in addressing the drivers of irregular migration.
- Requires the Secretary of State and USAID Administrator to **prioritize inclusive economic growth and development, anti-corruption and strengthening democratic institutions and security conditions** in the Northern Triangle. The act also requires multi-year strategies and annual progress reports in each area and designates a Senior Rule of Law Advisor for the Northern Triangle in the State Department's Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs.
- Implements **targeted visa bans and asset freezes on individuals who are determined to be engaged in acts of corruption** impacting the Northern Triangle countries. This includes private citizens, public officials and individuals residing outside of the Northern Triangle who are involved in corruption.
- **Enhances engagement with the Mexican government on the Northern Triangle.** The Secretary of State and various agencies in the executive branch are required to support development efforts in southern Mexico and strengthen security cooperation on Mexico's shared border with Guatemala and Belize.

**CBO Score:** H.R. 2615 would authorize the appropriation of \$577 million in 2020 for foreign assistance to El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. CBO estimates that providing assistance (promoting economic development and democratic institutions to fight corruption and crime) would cost a total of \$571 million over the 2020-2029 period, subject to appropriation of the specified amount.

**Supporters:** The U.S.-Northern Triangle Enhanced Engagement Act was introduced by Chairman Engel (D-NY) and Ranking Member McCaul (R-TX) of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, along with Reps. Sires (D-NJ), Rooney (R-FL), Torres (D-CA), Wagner (R-MO) and Cuellar (D-TX).