



The Global Fragility Act of 2019 (S.727)

The Problem: Violence, instability and fragility in countries around the world threaten U.S. national security by creating environments in which terrorism, criminal activity and corruption thrive. Violent conflict is also driving global displacement and humanitarian crises, with 68 million people forcibly displaced around the world and 134 million people in need of humanitarian assistance.

In the past decade, the U.S. Government has granted more than one-third of its foreign assistance to countries with ongoing violent conflicts. However, the U.S. lacks a coordinated long-term strategy for stabilizing violence-affected states and addressing the root causes of violence and fragility.

The Solution: The Global Fragility Act of 2019 would focus U.S. diplomatic, development and security efforts on preventing the root causes of violence and instability in countries around the world. Specifically, the bill would:

- launch a **Global Fragility Initiative**, the first-ever whole-of-government effort to address the risks of fragility by stabilizing conflict-affected areas and preventing violence and conflict;
- identify where fragility poses the greatest threat to civilian security and select those countries or regions for the **piloting of innovative diplomatic and programmatic U.S. action** in support of the Global Fragility Initiative/Strategy;
- **authorize the Complex Crises Fund**, a mechanism appropriated by Congress that provides vital, flexible funds to USAID “to prevent and respond to emerging or unforeseen crises;”
- **target the root causes of fragility**, such as extreme poverty, lack of economic opportunity and weak governance;
- **report** to Congress on which tools are most efficient in stabilizing and preventing conflict.

The Global Fragility Act is based on recommendations from the **Task Force on Extremism in Fragile States**, convened at the U.S. Institute of Peace by former 9/11 commission co-chairs Gov. Thomas Kean and Rep. Lee Hamilton. The Task Force recommended, “a government-wide Initiative that aligns U.S. policy instruments, from foreign assistance to diplomatic engagement, in support of preventing extremism in the Sahel, Horn of Africa, and the Near East.”

CBO Score: In addition to the appropriations authorized by the bill, CBO estimates that implementing S.727 would cost less than \$500,000 over the 2019-2024 period.

Supporters: The Global Fragility Act of 2019 was introduced by Sens. Coons (D-DE), Graham (R-SC), Merkley (D-OR), Rubio (R-FL), and Young (R-IN).

In the House, the bill was introduced by Reps. Engel (D-NY), McCaul (R-TX), Smith (D-WA), Wagner (R-MO), Keating (D-MA) and Rooney (R-FL). **H.R.2116 passed the house by unanimous voice vote** on May 20, 2019.

The bill is supported by more than 50 civil society and non-governmental organizations.