



H.R. 1084 – RECONSTRUCTION AND STABILIZATION CIVILIAN MANAGEMENT ACT OF 2008

FLOOR SITUATION

H.R. 1084 is being considered on the floor under suspension of the rules and will require a two-thirds majority vote for passage. This legislation was introduced by Representative Sam Farr (D-CA) on February 15, 2007. The House Committee on Foreign Affairs discharged an amended version of the bill by unanimous consent.

H.R. 1084 is expected to be considered on the floor of the House on March 5, 2008.

SUMMARY

H.R. 1084 grants the President and the Secretary of State the authority to increase the abilities of U.S. civilians to provide foreign countries with stabilization and reconstruction assistance in times of crises. The bill codifies the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization within the Department of State, which has existed since 2004.

The legislation grants the President three years of authority to provide reconstruction and stabilization assistance to foreign countries who may imminently be, currently in, or transitioning from a civil conflict if the President determines and provides advance notification to the Congress that it is in the national security interests of the United States to do so. The total annual assistance that is allowed under the bill is capped at \$100 million.

The bill authorizes the establishment of a Response Readiness Corps composed of U.S. governmental personnel to assist foreign countries in times of post-crisis stabilization and reconstruction. The bill also authorizes the creation of a Civilian Reserve Corps made up of non-federal volunteers who are also skilled and experienced in foreign stabilization and reconstruction. These volunteers are to be deployed upon the President's determination that to do so is in the interest of U.S. national security. Dispatching non-federal volunteers must not impair the abilities of any State or local government in the U.S.

H.R. 1084 requires that an interagency strategy outlining any plan for reconstruction and stabilization operations be developed, and that this strategy, any current operations, and the costs and anticipated costs of the Response Readiness Corps and the Civilian Reserve Corps be submitted to Congress in an annual report. This annual report must also include a description of how the operations of these Corps impact and interact with other U.S. foreign assistance programs.

BACKGROUND

The Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (Coordinator) was created in 2004, for the purposes of leading and coordinating the ability of the U.S. Government and civilians to prevent and prepare for post-conflict situations in foreign countries, and to help bring stability and reconstruction efforts to areas in civil turmoil. The base organizational functions of the Office of the Coordinator consist of four main sections. The first section is an early warning and prevention program to identify states at risk of instability, and coordinate prevention efforts. The second program is a planning office to coordinate the U.S. response efforts to a foreign country's crisis, including those between civilian agencies and the U.S. military. The third program is a best practices and sectoral coordination office to provide technical expertise and study lessons learned from past efforts and incorporate them into future U.S. efforts. The fourth program is a response strategy and resource management office to develop and deploy U.S. resources to support stabilization and reconstruction operations.



LEGISLATIVE DIGEST

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Politically struggling countries in which the Coordinator has conducted U.S. government-civilian efforts include Darfur, Chad, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Haiti, Lebanon, Iraq and Afghanistan. There are also numerous other countries with government offices aimed at conducting efforts similar to those of the U.S. Coordinator. A few of those countries are Canada, Germany, the United Kingdom, and Scandinavian countries.

Not all such U.S. civilian efforts in fledgling foreign countries have been conducted through the Office of the Coordinator of Reconstruction and Stabilization. Examples of such U.S. efforts to provide such include the U.S. sending expert civilians to aid both Iraq and Afghanistan in their efforts to rebuild and reach a level of civil instability. The Department of Justice has sent 25 civilian criminal justice practitioners as advisors to Iraq to assist in the reconstruction of the judicial, prosecutorial and law enforcement sectors there, as well as 13 judicial officials including judges, prosecutors, public defenders and court administrators, for the purpose of training Iraqis in the administration of a justice system.

[State Department](#)

COST

The Congressional Budget Office has not yet scored the above legislation.

STAFF CONTACT

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