

Global Fragility and Violence Reduction Act

Section-by-Section Summary March 2018

Cosponsors: Eliot Engel (D-NY), Ted Poe (R-TX), Michael McCaul (R-TX), Adam Smith (D-WA), Bill Keating (D-MA), and Paul Cook (R-CA).

Section 1: Entitles the bill the “Global Fragility and Violence Reduction Act of 2018.”

Section 2: Establishes findings, including that violence and violent conflict have become the leading causes of displacement worldwide; preventable violence kills at least 1.4 million people annually; containing violence costs the global economy \$14.3 trillion a year (13.4% of world GDP); violent conflicts allow terrorist and criminal organizations to recruit and thrive; US National Security Strategies over the past 15 years affirm that America has a national security interest in improving its capacity to prevent and mitigate violence, violent conflicts, and fragility; and lessons learned over the past 20 years show that doing so will require more clearly defined goals, strategies, and interagency coordination.

Section 3: Establishes that it is US policy to address the causes of violence and fragility in fragile and violence-affected countries by coordinating efforts within the US Government and with global, regional, and local organizations, expanding and enhancing the effectiveness of foreign assistance programs, supporting research and development, and improving the US Government’s monitoring, evaluation, learning, and adaptation tools and authorities.

Section 4: Establishes the “Global Initiative to Reduce Fragility and Violence.”

(a) Requires the USAID Administrator, in coordination with the Secretaries of State, Defense, and the heads of other relevant Federal agencies and departments to establish an interagency Global Initiative to Reduce Fragility and Violence, with a focus on ten pilot countries.

(b) Requires an initial interagency strategy for implementing the Initiative, including steps to improve coordination, planning, monitoring, and evaluation, as well as areas for improved collaboration with international organizations, donors, and the private sector.

(c) Requires pilot country plans for 10 countries that establish initial goals, objectives, and plans of action for efforts to reduce and address the causes of violence and fragility, including for monitoring and evaluating programs, adaptive and iterative management, and coordination within the US Government, with local entities in the pilot countries, and with international organizations, donors, and the private sector.

(d) Requires the Administrator of USAID, in coordination with the Secretaries of State and Defense to designate ten pilot countries for the Initiative based on the levels of violence and fragility in those countries and an assessment of the potential for US Government activities to reduce and address the causes of that violence and fragility. Of the ten countries, at least three must be “Core Countries,” in which levels of violence and fragility are among

the highest in the world, and at least three must be “Prevention Countries,” in which current levels of violence and fragility are lower, but warning signs for increases are significant and strategic engagement is likely to change that trend. No more than four of the countries can be in the same geographic region, but considerations should be made for including multiple countries in the same region if the drivers of violence and fragility are transnational in that region.

(e) Requires that the initiative be developed in coordination with relevant US Ambassadors, USAID Mission Directors, geographic Combatant Commands, and inter-agency country teams, as well as local civil society, local governance entities, and relevant international organizations, donors, and the private sector.

(f) Requires consultation with appropriate congressional committees during the development of the initiative.

(g) Requires inter-agency teams in each pilot country to work with stakeholders to develop monitoring and evaluation indicators for measuring levels of violence and factors that contribute to violent conflict and fragility.

Section 5: Requires the Administrator of USAID, the Secretaries of State and Defense, and other relevant individuals in each pilot country to ensure that the initiative and individual pilot country plans are implemented and used to guide US policy, and that the results of monitoring and evaluation are used to determine continuation, modification, or termination of future programming.

Section 6: Requires annual consultation and biennial reports to the appropriate congressional committees on progress made and lessons learned with respect to the initiative and pilot country plans until the plans are fully implemented.

Section 7: Expresses the sense of Congress that the President, along with the heads of relevant Federal agencies and departments, should support the creation of a fund to support Initiative activities, should work with Congress to create funding structures that support more adaptive program planning and implementation in pilot countries, and should support the creation of multilateral and other international funding structures for reducing and addressing violence and fragility.

Section 8: Requires GAO to conduct an independent review of US Government activities in the pilot countries, including descriptions of the activities undertaken in accordance with the plans, assessments of interagency coordination and monitoring and evaluation, and recommendations for improvement.

Section 9: Defines appropriate congressional committees as the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the House Foreign Affairs Committee, and the Armed Services and Appropriations Committees of the House and Senate.