



CHIN ASSOCIATION OF MARYLAND, INC.

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Appropriation Recommendations Concerning Burma for Fiscal Year 2023

The Chin Association of Maryland (CAM) is a non-profit organization that advocates for religious freedom and human rights in Burma and for the protection and humanitarian treatment of refugees and internally displaced persons from Burma. This document details CAM's recommendations for U.S. funding for Burma for Fiscal Year 2023 (FY2023).

Outstanding Matters of Concern. CAM recommends that the following matters be addressed in the final State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs (SFOPs) Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 appropriations bill and report language for Section 7043, as related to funding for Burma:

1. Explicit commitment of new funding for FY 2023 that will number no less than the [FY 2022](#) amount of \$136,127,000 for Burma.
2. Language that specifies the pursuit of religious freedom as an intended use of funding.
3. Inclusion of Burma's ethnic states and Magway and Sagaing Regions as areas of deep humanitarian concern with a high number of internally displaced persons and great humanitarian need.
4. Explicit support for cross-border assistance to Burma via India as well as Thailand.
5. Listing of the National Unity Consultative Council, the Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, and the Civil Disobedience Movement as being among the groups eligible for U.S. funding for building democracy.

Key for Color-Coded Text. Text in **green** is taken from the Senate Chairman's Mark SFOPs bill and Explanatory Statement. Text in **red** is recommended language drafted by CAM.

Recommended Bill Language. Concerning the current bill language of H.R. 8282, Sec. 7043, [pages 193-195](#), related to funding for Burma, CAM strongly urges that the final bill also include language from the Senate Chairman's Mark SFOPs bill S. 4662 of July 28, 2022, [page 206](#), (marked in **green**) which specifies that funding for Burma be not less than \$136,127,000.

CAM also strongly urges the inclusion of new language drafted by CAM (marked in **red** below) for the Burma subsection of H.R. 8282, Sec. 7043, [page 194](#), subsection (1)(C). The added language addresses deep concern about religious freedom and about the inclusion of Magway and Sagaing Regions as geographic areas with high numbers of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and great humanitarian need.

Finally, CAM strongly urges that the final bill incorporate CAM's edits (marked in **red**) for H.R. 8282, Sec. 7043, in Burma subsection (D), [page 194](#), to authorize Indo-Burma cross-border humanitarian assistance.

“Burma.—(1) Uses of Funds.—**Of the funds** appropriated by this Act, **not less than \$136,127,000** shall be made available for assistance for Burma, which....

“(1)(C) shall be made available for programs to promote ethnic **equality**, religious **freedom**, unity, and accountability and to combat gender-based violence, including in Kachin, Chin, Mon, Karen, Karenni, Rakhine, and Shan States; **and in Magway and Sagaing Regions....**”

“(1)(D) shall be made available for community-based organizations with experience operating in Thailand **and India** to provide food, medical, and other humanitarian assistance to internally displaced persons in **eastern and** western Burma, **respectively**, in addition to assistance for **refugees from Burma** from funds appropriated by this Act under the heading “Migration and Refugee Assistance”; and...”

Recommended Report Language. Concerning current report language in H.R. 117-401, [page 104](#), related to funding for Burma in H.R. 8282, Sec. 7043, CAM urges that the final report language related to funding for Burma in Section 7043 also include the following language that was provided in the Explanatory Statement for the Chairman's Mark for SFOPs bill S. 4662 of July 28, 2022, [pages 77-78](#), (marked below in **green**). CAM also suggests edits in **red** below to that section to help ensure that the ethnic states and Magway and Sagaing Regions are recognized and responded to for having high numbers of IDPs and great humanitarian need.

Burma.—The entities referenced in subsection (b)(1)(B) include, among others, the National Unity Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the National Unity Consultative Council; the Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw; the Civil Disobedience Movement; and the political, administrative, and governance institutions of the Ethnic Armed Organizations. The Committee directs that funds be made available for programs supporting: (1) conflict mitigation and stabilization; (2)

democracy, human rights, religious freedom, civil society, independent media, and rule of law (3) health; (4) education; (5) rural economic development and agriculture; and (6) humanitarian assistance.

Clarification. —Funds made available for programs for Burma in the table under Section 7032 of this explanatory statement are in addition to funds made available for the documentation of human rights violations in Burma contained in the table under the ESF heading.

Cross-Border Assistance. —The Committee supports cross-border assistance for ethnic groups and others displaced by the civil war in Burma. Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of the act, the Secretary of State, in consultation with the USAID Administrator, shall report to the Committees on Appropriations on efforts to encourage the Governments of Thailand and India to establish formal mechanisms and schemes for delivery of such assistance through local organizations, including churches.

Internally Displaced Persons and Refugees. —The Committee remains concerned with IDPs in Burma, particularly in Rakhine, Chin, Kachin, **Karen, Karenni, Mon, and Shan States, and in Magway and Sagaing Regions.**

The Committee encourages the Department of State and USAID to continue to provide necessary support for Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar, and other parts of Bangladesh, as well as those in other countries in the region. The Committee urges the Secretary of State to work with neighboring countries to ensure safe transit and full access for refugees from Burma.

Sanctions Report.--- Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of the Act, the Secretary of State shall submit a report to the appropriate congressional committees assessing: 1) the impact of U.S. sanctions against the Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise on the military junta in Burma; 2) the effect such sanctions would have on the ability of the junta; and 3) to purchase arms and other military equipment for use against the people of Burma and on limiting revenue for the junta, and the impact of such sanctions on public and private interests in Thailand.

Besides including the above language from the Senate Chairman's Mark for SFOPs, CAM urges further changes to the House's final report language for the Burma section of H.R. 8282 Sec. 7043. The report text below is from H.R. 117-401, [page 104](#); CAM's suggested edits to that text are marked in **red**. The edits aim to help ensure that the FY2023 funding for Burma can be used to protect and pursue religious freedom, that the ethnic states and Magway and Sagaing Regions are recognized as areas with high numbers of IDPs and great humanitarian need, that cross-border work is supported by the United States on both the Thai-Burma and Indo-Burma borders, that at least FY2022 funding levels continue in FY2023 for Burma, and that there is a consensus regarding eligibility for funding of, among others, well-known democracy-seeking organizations in Burma.

Burma.—Pursuant to subsection (a)(1)(A), the Committee directs that funds be made available for assistance for Burma notwithstanding any other provision of law, except section 7008 of this Act. Assistance is provided to address the ongoing humanitarian and development crisis in Burma. The Committee continues to condemn the military coup in Burma and does not provide any assistance to the Tatmadaw, State Administration Council, or entities affiliated with the military junta.

Pursuant to subsection (a)(1)(B), the Committee directs that funds shall be made available for programs supporting: (1) conflict mitigation and stabilization; (2) democracy, human rights, **religious freedom**, civil society, independent media, and rule of law (3) health; (4) education; (5) rural economic development and agriculture; and (6) humanitarian assistance.

The Committee expects that any new programs and activities initiated in fiscal year 2022 in Burma shall be subject to prior consultation with the appropriate congressional committees.

The Committee urges the Secretary of State to provide robust diplomatic engagement and assistance for refugees and other displaced people from Burma, including those who have fled violence as a result of the military coup, ethnic cleansing, **religious and political persecution**, and other attacks, **particularly in Rakhine, Chin, Kachin, Karen, Karenni, Mon, and Shan States and Magway and Sagaing Regions. The Committee supports cross-border assistance for ethnic groups and others displaced by the civil war in Burma. Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of the act, the Secretary of State, in consultation with the USAID Administrator, shall report to the Committees on Appropriations on efforts to encourage the Governments of Thailand and India to establish formal mechanisms and schemes for delivery of such assistance.**

The Committee encourages funding at not less than prior year levels **of \$136,127,000** in support of democratic governance activities that engage the non-military aligned and democratically elected members of Parliament, the National Unity Government, **the National Unity Consultative Council, the Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, the Civil Disobedience Movement**, and civil society organizations in a way that builds trust and cooperation among ethnic groups and communities. Such activities should include building capacity and promoting participation and inclusion in elections and political and democratic processes.

Funding for Refugees, IDPs, and Migration Emergencies. CAM also supports the \$3,700,000,000 appropriation for Migration and Refugee Assistance of the H.R. 8282, [page 35](#), the \$4,480,460,000 appropriation offered by the Senate Chairman's Mark on SFOPs of July 28, 2022, [page 35](#), and Congress' continued commitment to the Emergency Refugee and Migration

Assistance as reflected in the \$100,000 appropriation of H.R. 8282, [page 35](#), and the Senate Chairman's Mark on SFOPs, [page 40](#).

Conclusion. Thank you, Representatives and Senators for considering CAM's recommendations. Please contact Zo Tum Hmung, CAM Executive Director, with any comments, questions, or concerns.