

The FY2022 State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Budget Request

Updated June 4, 2021

Overview

Each year, Congress typically considers 12 distinct appropriations measures to fund federal programs and activities. One of these is the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs (SFOPS) bill, which supports a range of U.S. activities around the world.

On May 28, 2021, the Biden Administration released [its proposed FY2022 budget request](#) (a [summary](#) was released on April 9). The request includes \$64.15 billion in new budget authority for SFOPS accounts (\$63.62 billion net of rescissions of prior year funding), which may be compared with FY2021 funding in various ways. For example, the requested amount is

- 10% less than the total FY2021-enacted level (which includes more than \$23 billion in emergency and Overseas Contingency Operation (OCO) funds), and
- 14% more than enacted FY2021 base and OCO funding (excluding emergency funding used primarily for Coronavirus Disease 2019 [COVID-19] response).

The FY2022 SFOPS request is higher than any SFOPS total funding level enacted in the past decade, with the exception of FY2021, in current dollars (**Figure 1**).

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The Budget Control Act and OCO

Between FY2012 and FY2021, the appropriations process was shaped by discretionary spending caps put in place by the Budget Control Act of 2011 (BCA; P.L. 112-25). Congress managed the BCA constraints in part by designating a portion of annual SFOPS appropriations as “[Overseas Contingency Operations \(OCO\)](#)” or “emergency” funding, both of which were excluded from BCA discretionary budget limits.

The BCA caps expire after FY2021, so the FY2022 budget cycle is the first in a decade in which the caps will not be a consideration. The Biden Administration’s FY2022 budget request does not include OCO-designated funding.

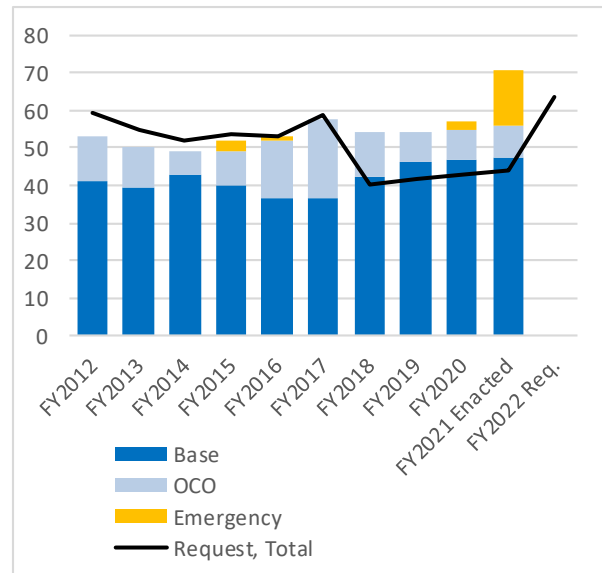
State Department and Related Agency Highlights

Title I of the SFOPS appropriations bill provides Department of State and Related Agency appropriations. It primarily supports Department of State diplomatic programs and security activities, as well as U.S. assessed contributions (required dues) to international organizations and for international peacekeeping activities. Title I also funds the U.S. Agency for Global Media (USAGM).

The Biden Administration’s stated priorities for Department of State and Related Agency accounts in FY2022 include:

- Personnel.** The Administration’s request asserts that in order for the State Department to advance U.S. foreign policy and national security interests, it must invest in a global workforce “that more fully represents the breadth of America’s talent and diversity.” To this end, the request supports funding for approximately 255 additional Foreign Service personnel and 230 additional Civil Service personnel. The request also includes \$49 million to “broaden recruitment, diversity, and inclusion programs” across the State Department, an increase of nearly \$28 million from the FY2021 funding level. The request also notes that the State Department’s personnel require state of the art cybersecurity protections to carry out their mission. It thus calls for \$101 million in cybersecurity enhancements from a new, whole-of-government Cybersecurity Reserve fund, including for cloud security, multifactor authentication, and enhanced monitoring tools, to increase the State Department’s resilience following the SolarWinds cyberattack.
- Contributions to International Organizations and for International Peacekeeping Activities.** The Administration’s request seeks \$3.59 billion for assessed contributions (membership dues) and other expenses related to U.S. membership and participation in international organizations and peacekeeping activities, exceeding the FY2021-enacted funding for these purposes by 21%. It prioritizes payment of U.S. peacekeeping arrears to United Nations (U.N.) peacekeeping missions that have accumulated as a result of a cap on such payments that Congress enacted in 1994 due to concerns that U.S. assessments were too high. The request calls for \$300 million to begin paying down such arrears and

Figure 1. SFOPS Requests and Funding, FY2012-FY2022 Request
(In billions of current U.S. \$)



Sources: Annual SFOPS CBJs; [P.L. 116-94](#); [P.L. 116-123](#); [P.L. 116-136](#); [P.L. 116-260](#); P.L. 117-2, Title X; CRS calculations.

argues that doing so will provide the United States more leverage in advancing its U.N. reform priorities. Separately, the request seeks \$9.4 million to support a Multilateral Strategy and Personnel Office within the Bureau of International Organization Affairs that is intended to “build and expand U.S. influence in international organizations.”

- **Consular and Border Security Programs.** The Consular and Border Security Programs (CBSP) account, which serves as the operating account for the State Department’s Bureau of Consular Affairs, is typically funded exclusively through department-retained consular fees and surcharges. However, disruptions in international travel related to the COVID-19 pandemic have caused such fee collections to decline. The Administration is requesting \$320 million in appropriated funds to augment reduced fee revenue (which the State Department expects to total around \$2.8 billion in FY2022, or \$700 million less than the \$3.5 billion annual collection level prior to the pandemic). Among other priorities, the request seeks a \$40 million increase in funding for the State Department’s passport services directorate, which in part reflects increased expenses associated with the Next Generation passports and a \$2.5 million decrease in funding for overseas citizen services, such as crime victim assistance and emergency support to destitute citizens.

Foreign Operations Highlights

Titles II-VI of the SFOPS bill fund the Foreign Operations accounts. They comprise the majority of U.S. foreign assistance included in the international affairs budget; the remainder is food assistance supported through the agriculture appropriation. The Administration’s budget request identifies three “critical threats” and the FY2022 Foreign Operations resources intended to address those threats:

- **COVID-19 Pandemic Public Health and Economic Crises.** The Administration requests \$10 billion in Global Health Programs, a nearly \$1 billion increase (9%) over FY2021 enacted base funding. These additional funds are intended to be complemented by increased engagement with other donors and multilateral institutions to “stamp out future infectious disease outbreaks before they become pandemics.”
- **Climate Change.** The Administration seeks to “[reestablish] U.S. leadership on climate change” through increased investments in multilateral and bilateral climate-related assistance. The proposal includes a \$625 million contribution to the Green Climate Fund, which would be the first U.S. contribution since 2017, and \$994 million for State and USAID climate programs, which is nearly double the FY2021 funding level. The budget request also seeks to integrate climate change considerations into other foreign assistance sectors, including food security, gender equality, and migration, among others.
- **Countering Authoritarianism.** The budget proposes a multipronged approach to combating authoritarianism, including countering the influences of China and Russia, but does not yet offer specific funding levels for these priorities. The request proposes level funding for the Democracy Fund when compared with FY2021-enacted levels and cites democracy, human rights, and governance as priorities within a number of appropriations accounts, including Development Assistance, Transition Initiatives, and Economic Support Fund, among others. State Department Operations and USAGM funds under Title I are likely to be dedicated for this purpose as well.

In addition to these identified priorities, notable Foreign Operations changes from the FY2021 request or enacted appropriations include the following:

- **Humanitarian Assistance.** The Administration proposes \$10 billion in humanitarian assistance, the highest request (in current U.S. dollars) for humanitarian accounts in the past decade.

- **Economic Support Fund (ESF).** The Administration requests nearly \$4.3 billion in ESF, representing a 35% increase over FY2021 base funding and the largest increase among the bilateral assistance accounts in the budget proposal.

The Administration is expected to release appendices to accompany the budget request in the coming weeks. CRS is currently preparing a comprehensive report on the FY2022 SFOPS budget request and related congressional action.

Author Information

Cory R. Gill
Analyst in Foreign Affairs

Emily M. Morgenstern
Analyst in Foreign Assistance and Foreign Policy

Marian L. Lawson
Section Research Manager

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