

fact that the MCA is not fully funded and this Congress has only appropriated \$800 million this past cycle. How will we ever make the \$5 billion we were supposed to do over a 3-year period? The administration requested \$1.3 billion, but only \$800 million has been appropriated.

So I urge the restoring of the full amount to the Millennium account.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore (Mr. OSE). The Committee will rise informally.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin) assumed the Chair.

SUNDRY MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Sundry messages in writing from the President of the United States were communicated to the House by Ms. Evans, one of his secretaries.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. The Committee will resume its sitting.

FOREIGN RELATIONS AUTHORIZATION ACT, FISCAL YEARS 2004 AND 2005—Resumed

The Committee resumed its sitting.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong support of the Hyde/Lantos amendment and want to thank the gentlemen for their leadership.

The Millennium Challenge Account is an excellent initiative, and I believe it will make great strides in the way the United States provides aid to countries most in need.

I rise today, however, to speak about the Peace Corps, which will be reauthorized and expanded under this amendment.

I spent two of the greatest, most profound, years of my life serving with my wife Betsi as a Peace Corps volunteer in Fiji. Words cannot describe how important those years were to me, and how they helped me to develop as a person and a leader.

Expanding the Peace Corps from 7,000 to 14,000 members is an excellent idea. We will have an extra 7,000 well-trained and motivated young people prepared as future leaders of America. More importantly, this expansion doubles our commitment to the world's poor. 7,000 additional Peace Corps volunteers will help educate children, improve small businesses, bring cleaner water for communities, and provide hope for many more communities around the world.

I appreciate the Chairman and Ranking Member's commitment to the expansion of the Peace Corps, and urge the adoption of the Hyde/Lantos Amendment.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of the Hyde-Lantos amendment.

I am greatly encouraged by the bipartisan work of this body in moving forward with the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) and reauthorization of the Peace Corps. Today, we take a significant step forward in addressing the needs of the developing world and strengthening the United States commitment to our global neighbors and families.

While I support the unprecedented increase in foreign assistance provided through the MCA, I am concerned with the lack of environmental safeguards in the bill. Last night the

Rules Committee refused to make in order my amendment to address this critically important issue. This amendment would have promoted environmental sustainability and the protection of our natural resources by requiring the compact made between the U.S. and an eligible country, under MCA, include an environmental assessment and regular benchmarks to monitor and evaluate impacts during the implementation of the project.

Any development initiative that offers lasting relief from poverty and promotes economic opportunity must take into account the protection of the natural resources on which all people—all families—depend upon. The major environmental challenges facing the world today—water scarcity, poor sanitation, degradation of agricultural lands, and pandemic diseases, such as malaria—weaken the foundation for a strong and prosperous economy, a secure nation, and poverty reduction.

In order for developing countries to assure the protection of their natural resources, achieve sustainable economic growth and promote the health, education and well-being of their citizens an assessment of the environmental effects of projects funded through the MCA should be required to be conducted. This amendment is consistent with environmental assessments currently required under the Foreign Assistance Act for USAID and the Overseas Private Investment Corporation—two of our largest foreign development organizations. These assessments are required for U.S.-sponsored development projects around the world and I believe should continue to be used on all future projects funded through the MCA.

The MCA places a strong emphasis on the ability of developing nations to invest in their people wisely, rule justly and pursue sound economic principles that stimulate enterprise and entrepreneurship. Although we can all agree that each of these principles is critically important, it is unrealistic to expect any developing nation to achieve these principles unless a healthy environment exists. Without clean air, clean water and the protection of our natural resources, sustainable development, adequate health care and education, a stable open market and opportunities for economic growth are not possible. Economic growth at the expense of the environment is completely contradictory to the development goals of the United States.

If investments in development are to yield sustainable benefits, the effects on a developing nation's natural resources must be taken into account. To do this, an assessment of a project's environmental impact must be part of a country's development plan from the beginning.

I look forward to working with Chairman HYDE, Ranking Member LANTOS and my colleagues in the other body on this important issue in the weeks and months ahead.

Mr. THORBERRY. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the amendment offered by Chairman HYDE and Mr. LANTOS to implement the Millennium Challenge Account. MCA can truly provide the revolution in foreign assistance so desperately desired by the American taxpayers and by the people in the countries we are trying to help.

I am particularly interested in the language related to property rights. The amendment includes property rights as one of the primary objectives and metrics to be used in assessing progress in recipient countries. The work of

Peruvian economist Hernando de Soto provides real, empirical evidence that property rights is the key to economic progress. All too often, our attempts to help other peoples has ignored this fundamental building block.

Economic success of any people or nation requires that individuals are motivated to work and accumulate wealth. That "wealth" might look like a shack to us, but if one can begin to accumulate something of value and have that wealth protected by the government, one will be more likely to work to build more. If that wealth can then be passed along to one's children, one is motivated to work even harder and has a stake in the future of that system. Hope for the future is absolutely critical for future economic success and for success in the war on terrorism. Respect for the rule of law and a legal system that protects the fruits of one's labors must be established. No amount of money for economic development will be successful without them.

This amendment is a hopeful start toward much needed reform. I support it and hope we can build on it in order to achieve a better future for all of us.

Mr. PETRI. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the Hyde/Lantos amendment, which would authorize the establishment of the Millennium Challenge Account and support the doubling of the number of Peace Corps volunteers to 14,000 by the year 2007.

I served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Somalia for two years, which was a meaningful experience for me. The Peace Corps has proven to be a very cost-effective mechanism for disseminating foreign assistance—from the bottom up. Doubling the number of Peace Corps volunteers will only make these efforts more effective, and allow more U.S. citizens to serve our country on the international level.

The Hyde/Lantos amendment also provides for the establishment of a new and innovative foreign aid initiative, the Millennium Challenge Account.

This initiative shows great promise as it would fund programs which already have shown impressive rates of performance. U.S. foreign aid would then be invested in those programs that actually work, not just those that promise to work.

Expanding the Peace Corps and establishing the Millennium Challenge Account will make U.S. foreign aid more accountable and effective. I encourage my colleagues to support this amendment.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Chairman, as an original cosponsor of the Millennium Challenge Account, I rise to speak in strong support of the Hyde/Lantos amendment.

The MCA has the potential to do much good throughout the developing world and I commend Chairman HYDE and Mr. LANTOS for working together to produce a strong bipartisan bill.

This bill represents the largest spending increase in foreign aid by the United States in the past half century.

The MCA will provide increased development assistance to the world's poorest nations.

The MCA will not just give out this aid to the world's poorest countries instead they will have to meet a set of indicators to be eligible for MCA funding.

These indicators include the rule of law and good governance to name a few.

When countries realize that meeting these standards not only enables them to receive