

110TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

H. RES. 1504

Urging the President to increase efforts under the Third Border Initiative (TBI) to deepen cooperation and collaboration with Caribbean nations.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 25, 2008

Ms. CLARKE submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

RESOLUTION

Urging the President to increase efforts under the Third Border Initiative (TBI) to deepen cooperation and collaboration with Caribbean nations.

Whereas the nations of the Caribbean, our “third border”, are vital partners on security, trade, health, the environment, education, regional democracy, and other hemispheric issues;

Whereas enhancing regional measures to promote security along our “third border” remains vital to the safety of our homeland and hemispheric priority;

Whereas in response the United States established the “Third Border Initiative” (TBI) in April 2001, in order to deepen cooperation between the United States and Caribbean nations;

Whereas Caribbean nations and the United States signed a joint declaration in January 2004, stating that the TBI is “a valuable framework for structuring our engagement across the broad spectrum of matter that affect the prosperity and the well being of the region and its peoples”;

Whereas the joint declaration further stated that the objective of the TBI is to focus United States and Caribbean engagement through targeted programs to enhance cooperation in the diplomatic, security, economic, environmental, health, and education areas;

Whereas the TBI is a necessary component in defining an optimal relationship between the United States and its Caribbean neighbors, and is critical to the establishment of effective counterterrorism measures to ensure security on the southeastern border of the United States;

Whereas the TBI can strengthen United States partnerships with Caribbean nations in countering natural and man-made threats to security;

Whereas TBI programs can have a direct, positive effect on the safety and security of United States travelers to the region, as well as to the protection of United States homeland security;

Whereas the TBI can strengthen regional and local border management, protecting against criminal and terrorist elements who seek to travel freely to and through the region, and enhancing the safety of some 5,000,000 United States travelers in the Caribbean;

Whereas Assistant Secretary General of the Organization of American States Albert Ramdin stated in October 2007 that the TBI was an “explicit recognition that the security and development issues of neighboring states have

the potential to have a direct impact on security in the United States and vice versa;

Whereas according to the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, AIDS remains one of the leading causes of death among adults in the Caribbean aged 25 to 44 years old;

Whereas because of their geographic location, many Caribbean nations are transit countries for cocaine and heroin from South America destined for the United States and Europe;

Whereas many of the smaller countries of the Eastern Caribbean remain vulnerable to drug trafficking from South America and associated crimes;

Whereas according to the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy, drug flights from Venezuela to Hispaniola in the central Caribbean grew from 27 to 81 in the first three-quarters of 2007;

Whereas a March 2007 report by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the World Bank stated that narcotics trafficking in the Caribbean has contributed to high rates of crime and violence in the region, which in turn have had direct negative effects on human welfare, economic growth, and social development;

Whereas a report published by the Council of Hemispheric Affairs in December 2007, stated that the Third Border Initiative is a vital program that have been put on the back burner; and

Whereas annual funding for TBI activities has declined considerably since fiscal year 2005: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the United States House of Rep-
2 representatives—

3 (1) recognizes the special significance of the
4 Caribbean as an important partner of the United
5 States and seeks to build on the long history of con-
6 structive engagement between the United States and
7 the Caribbean;

8 (2) supports the Third Border Initiative (TBI)
9 which is designed to enhance diplomatic, economic,
10 health, education, disaster preparedness, and law en-
11 forcement cooperation and collaboration;

12 (3) especially supports TBI activities that pro-
13 vide support to help Caribbean nations plan and pre-
14 pare for natural disasters;

15 (4) urges the United States and Caribbean gov-
16 ernments to continue cooperative efforts to prevent,
17 combat, and eliminate terrorist threats to hemi-
18 spheric security;

19 (5) urges the United States and Caribbean gov-
20 ernments to expand strategies to contend with new
21 and nontraditional threats, including political, eco-
22 nomic, social, health, and environmental challenges;

23 (6) urges the President to increase efforts
24 under the TBI to deepen cooperation and collabora-

1 tion with Caribbean nations, including counter-
2 narcotics cooperation;

3 (7) urges the President to stem the decline in
4 the TBI funding levels that has occurred since fiscal
5 year 2005; and

6 (8) urges the Secretary of State to provide clear
7 information to Congress in the Department of
8 State's annual Congressional Budget Justification
9 for Foreign Operations on the amounts being re-
10 quested for the TBI and a description of the
11 projects to be funded under the TBI.

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