

Calendar No. 284

110TH CONGRESS } 1st Session }	SENATE	{ REPORT 110-136
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SUPPORT FOR DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN
ZIMBABWE ACT OF 2007

JULY 24, 2007.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. BIDEN, from the Committee on Foreign Relations,
submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany S. 1500]

The Committee on Foreign Relations, having had under consideration the bill (S. 1500) to support democracy and human rights in Zimbabwe, and for other purposes, reports favorably thereon and recommends that the bill do pass.

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I. PURPOSE

The purpose of S. 1500 is to support democracy and human rights in Zimbabwe.

II. COMMITTEE ACTION

S. 1500 was introduced by Senators Clinton, Feingold, and Lugar on May 24, 2007. It is cosponsored by Senators Casey, Dole, Durbin, Hagel, Kerry, Lieberman, and Sanders. On June 27, 2007, the committee ordered the bill reported favorably by voice vote.

III. DISCUSSION

In recent months, the government of Zimbabwe has engaged in a systematic and brutal crackdown against persons engaged in peaceful political demonstrations as part of a broad pattern of repression. Under President Robert Mugabe, the government has violently repressed protestors, lawyers, journalists, and many others. National elections are scheduled in Zimbabwe for 2008, but President Mugabe remains on the ballot and his government and party

control the political process, often through acts of extreme violence. Through its misrule, the government of Zimbabwe has brought the country to the brink of economic collapse and humanitarian disaster.

The Department of State has detailed violations of human rights by the government of Zimbabwe including: restrictions on freedom of assembly, movement, and association; forcible evictions of civilians from their land; and the persecution and physical abuse of members of the opposition, the media, the religious community, civil society, and organized labor.

The United States, the United Nations, the European Union, and many other voices for human rights have condemned the violent repression of political freedoms in Zimbabwe and called for free and fair elections in 2008. South African President Thabo Mbeki has spearheaded an effort by the Southern African Development Community (SADC) to mediate between the Mugabe government and the opposition Movement for Democratic Change.

S. 1500 seeks to promote the advancement of human rights and democracy in Zimbabwe and to support efforts to resolve the growing political and humanitarian crisis in that country. The bill reviews Zimbabwe's economic and political decline amid rising concern for the opposition and civil society. It briefly reaffirms the longstanding policy of the United States "to support the people of Zimbabwe in their efforts to return democracy and respect for human rights to their country and to call on President Mugabe to immediately restore these rights." The bill expresses the sense of Congress commending President Mbeki for his efforts to resolve this crisis and outlines some objectives that the United States hopes will be achieved in these talks between the government and the main opposition leaders. The legislation also calls upon the United States to work with regional and international partners to open political space and support civil society, but to be prepared to impose new punitive measures if the government of Zimbabwe continues to violate fundamental rights and principles.

This legislation updates and sustains the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act of 2001 while highlighting the dramatic deterioration in Zimbabwe's economic and political environment. It directs the Secretary of State to develop, and present via quarterly congressional briefings, a comprehensive U.S. strategy for engagement with Zimbabwe. These briefings are to address needed resources, regional engagement, policy options, and the identification of benchmarks in the promotion of democracy and the protection of human rights that would allow for the removal of targeted bilateral sanctions on Zimbabwe and strengthened bilateral relations. The Secretary is directed to develop this strategy in consultation with the United Nations, the African Union, SADC, and other multilateral organizations and interested states.

S. 1500 authorizes the appropriation of up to \$10,000,000 to support democracy and governance activities in Zimbabwe consistent with the provisions of the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act of 2001 (Public Law 107-99; 22 U.S.C. 2151 note), including support for free and fair elections, support for civil society, and support for programs to defend and protect human rights in Zimbabwe.

IV. COST ESTIMATE

In accordance with Rule XXVI, paragraph 11(a) of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the committee provides this estimate of the costs of this legislation prepared by the Congressional Budget Office.

UNITED STATES CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC.
July 10, 2007.

Hon. JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR., *Chairman,*
Committee on Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN:

The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the enclosed cost estimate for S. 1500, the Support for Democracy and Human Rights in Zimbabwe Act of 2007.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them. The CBO staff contact is Sam Papenfuss, who can be reached at 226–2840.

Sincerely,

PETER R. ORSZAG

Enclosure:

cc: HON. RICHARD G. LUGAR, *Ranking Minority Member*

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

July 10, 2007.

S. 1500

S. 1500 would require the Secretary of State to provide quarterly briefings to the Congress that would detail the department's policies and plans for engaging with the country of Zimbabwe, for three years from the date of enactment. The bill also would authorize the appropriation of \$10 million to support free elections, reduce political violence, and create programs to protect human rights in Zimbabwe.

Based on historical spending patterns for similar activities, CBO estimates that implementing S. 1500 would cost \$2 million in 2008 and \$10 million over the 2008–2012 period, assuming appropriation of the authorized amount. Enacting the bill would not affect direct spending or receipts.

S. 1500 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would not affect the budgets of state, local, or tribal governments.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Sam Papenfuss, who can be reached at 226–2840. This estimate was approved by Peter H. Fontaine, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

V. EVALUATION OF REGULATORY IMPACT

Pursuant to Rule XXVI, paragraph 11(b) of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the committee has determined that there is no regulatory impact as a result of this legislation.

VI. CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW

In compliance with paragraph 12 of Rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the committee notes that no changes to existing law are made by this bill.

