

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2644

To reduce the amount of foreign assistance to El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras based on the number of unaccompanied alien children who are nationals or citizens of such countries and who in the preceding fiscal year are placed in Federal custody by reason of their immigration status.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 17, 2023

Mr. BURGESS introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on Foreign Affairs

A BILL

To reduce the amount of foreign assistance to El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras based on the number of unaccompanied alien children who are nationals or citizens of such countries and who in the preceding fiscal year are placed in Federal custody by reason of their immigration status.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Unaccompanied Alien
5 Children Assistance Control Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 Congress finds the following:

3 (1) Gang violence, poverty, and corruption are
4 the main drivers of illegal immigration from El Sal-
5 vador, Guatemala, and Honduras to the United
6 States.

7 (2) According to an independent task force re-
8 port by the Atlantic Council's Latin America Cen-
9 ter—

10 (A) systemic corruption stagnates eco-
11 nomic growth;

12 (B) eight in ten poll respondents see cor-
13 ruption as widespread;

14 (C) citizens in El Salvador, Guatemala,
15 and Honduras do not trust the government in-
16 stitutions responsible for curtailing corruption;
17 and

18 (D) investigations have revealed massive
19 networks dedicated to co-opting public funds for
20 the personal enrichment of government officials.

21 (3) There exists the potential for foreign assist-
22 ance from the United States to be misused by cen-
23 tral government officials in El Salvador, Guatemala,
24 and Honduras in order to reduce the success of anti-
25 corruption efforts.

1 (4) Systemic corruption in El Salvador, Guate-
2 mala, and Honduras undermines efforts to address
3 the driving causes of illegal immigration into the
4 United States from such countries.

5 (5) The United States provided more than
6 \$3,046,484,297 of foreign assistance for Central
7 American countries during fiscal years 2018 through
8 2021.

9 (6) For the past 5 fiscal years, the Department
10 of Homeland Security has referred to the Office of
11 Refugee Resettlement (ORR) 40,810 unaccompanied
12 children in fiscal year 2017, 69,488 in fiscal year
13 2019, 15,381 in fiscal year 2020, 122,731 in fiscal
14 year 2021, and 128,904 in fiscal year 2022.

15 (7) In fiscal year 2022, approximately 72 per-
16 cent of all children referred were over 14 years of
17 age, and 64 percent were boys. In fiscal year 2022,
18 countries of origin of youth in this program were ap-
19 proximately as follows: Guatemala (47 percent);
20 Honduras (29 percent); El Salvador (13 percent);
21 and other (11 percent).

22 (8) On average, providing care for unaccom-
23 panied alien children in ORR custody costs \$500 per
24 child, per day.

1 (9) In fiscal year 2022 the average length of
2 stay in ORR custody for an unaccompanied alien
3 child was 30 days.

4 (10) On average, the total cost of care for an
5 unaccompanied alien child in ORR custody in fiscal
6 year 2022 was \$15,000 per child and
7 \$1,933,560,000 for all children.

8 (11) According to the Department of State, the
9 United States is the largest single donor of humani-
10 tarian aid in Central America and Mexico and to
11 asylum seekers, refugees, and vulnerable migrants in
12 the region.

13 **SEC. 3. REDUCTION OF AMOUNT OF FOREIGN ASSISTANCE**
14 **TO EL SALVADOR, GUATEMALA, AND HON-**
15 **DURAS.**

16 (a) IN GENERAL.—The President shall reduce from
17 amounts made available under the Foreign Assistance Act
18 of 1961 or any other Act and allocated for a covered coun-
19 try for a fiscal year an amount equal to—

20 (1) the number of unaccompanied alien children
21 who—

22 (A) are nationals or citizens of the covered
23 country; and

1 (B) in the preceding fiscal year are placed
2 in Federal custody by reason of their immigra-
3 tion status; multiplied by
4 (2) \$15,000.

5 (b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

6 (1) the term “covered country” means El Sal-
7 vador, Guatemala, or Honduras; and

8 (2) the term “unaccompanied alien child” has
9 the meaning given the term in section 462(g)(2) of
10 the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C.
11 279(g)(2)).

12 (c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This Act shall take effect on
13 the date of the enactment of this Act and shall apply with
14 respect to amounts made available under the Foreign As-
15 sistance Act of 1961 or any other Act for fiscal year 2024
16 and each subsequent fiscal year.

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