

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE  
OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NEIL L. BRADLEY  
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT &  
CHIEF POLICY OFFICER

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March 19, 2018

The Honorable Hal Rogers  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations,  
and Related Programs  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations,  
and Related Programs  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Lindsey Graham  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations,  
and Related Programs  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations,  
and Related Programs  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairmen Rogers and Graham and Ranking Members Lowey and Leahy:

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce strongly supports full funding for the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) and its important work throughout the world, and likewise, strongly opposes the substantial funding cut to NED included in President Trump's fiscal year 2019 budget request and proposed elimination of direct funding of the NED's four core institutes, one of which is the Chamber's non-profit affiliate, the Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE). The President's request would effectively dismantle this unique family of bipartisan organizations that have operated successfully and cost-effectively for over thirty years.

Since the Reagan era, NED and its four institutes have been strategic American assets that have operated as adjunct resources to the U.S. foreign policy community. These organizations provide technical assistance to partners in developing countries, helping them build stronger political, economic, and legal policy regimes. They epitomize American soft power as they contribute to the establishment of stable and peaceful democracies, often in extremely complex or repressive environments.

The Subcommittees should reject the President's proposed changes because they would severely threaten the NED's structure, as established in the National Endowment for Democracy

Act in 1983, and would pose a grave threat to the existence of CIPE, which is arguably the only institution associated with the U.S. government that promotes free market economics throughout the world.

NED enjoys widespread support from the U.S. business community because it is a cost-effective investment that advances America's national security and economic interests. At a time when export opportunities are a significant contributor to U.S. economic growth and domestic job creation, NED and CIPE play important roles in creating and sustaining competitive markets for American businesses around the globe. Fully funding NED at FY17 levels of \$170 million would enable CIPE to continue to assist the private sector in emerging markets effectively advocate for economic reforms that are critical to improve their own commercial and social environment.

The work of NED and its institutes is more relevant today than ever before. As Congress has repeatedly found, NED is especially important because it funds programs in countries that other U.S. agencies often cannot reach effectively, and it has an operational agility which is rarely found in government entities.

We urge the Subcommittees to ensure that NED is fully funded and allowed to continue its important mission.

Sincerely,



Neil L. Bradley

cc: Members of the House and Senate Subcommittees on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs