

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NEIL L. BRADLEY
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT &
CHIEF POLICY OFFICER

1615 H STREET, NW
WASHINGTON, DC 20062
(202) 463-5310

November 6, 2019

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Chairwoman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Lowey and Ranking Member Granger:

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce strongly supports recent moves in Congress to enhance funding for the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), which plays a critical role advancing U.S. interests overseas by supporting the development of democratic institutions. Given the proliferating challenges to democratic norms posed by malign actors in several parts of the world, the increased support for NED programs endorsed by the Senate Appropriations Committee is appropriate, and the Chamber urges the House to support this robust level of funding.

The work of NED and its four core institutes —the International Republican Institute, the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, the Solidarity Center, and the Center for International Private Enterprise, which is the Chamber's non-profit affiliate — is more relevant today than ever. NED enjoys support from the business community because of its cost-effective investments that advance U.S. national and economic interests.

NED works on a bipartisan basis in more than 90 countries to help build stable and peaceful democracies. It does so by assisting grassroots, nonprofit organizations in promoting democracy, often in extremely repressive environments. NED is especially important because it funds programs in countries that federal government agencies cannot reach. It is critical that Congress not permit a reversal in the gains achieved during the last several decades in building democratic institutions and free market reform, as well as opening up authoritarian systems.

The Chamber appreciates your attention to these important issues and urges you to support enhanced funding for NED.

Sincerely,



Neil L. Bradley

cc: Members of the House Committee on Appropriations