

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 2, 2017

The Honorable Mick Mulvaney  
Director  
Office of Management and Budget  
725 17th Street, NW,  
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Mr. Director,

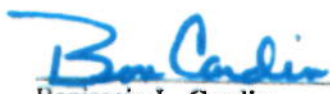
We write today to express our profound concern about the Administration's plan to pursue deep cuts to America's international affairs spending ("Function 150" budget account), which includes funding for the Department of State and U.S. foreign assistance. Our foreign affairs and foreign assistance budgets are every bit as essential to ensuring America's national security as funding for the Department of Defense, the Intelligence Community, and law enforcement.

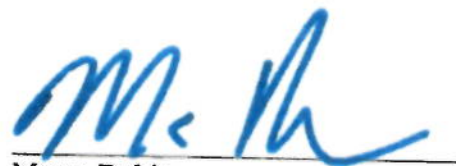
Leaders in the House of Representatives and the Senate recently received a letter from over 120 retired general and flag officers arguing that the United States must elevate and strengthen our diplomacy and development efforts to keep America safe and secure. The letter states in part that "the military will lead the fight against terrorism in the battlefield, but needs strong civilian partners in the battle against the drivers of extremism: lack of opportunity, insecurity, injustice, and hopelessness." In the war against ISIS, an approach that focuses on just one dimension of the problem, but fails to address political, economic, diplomatic and ideological conditions, is a shortsighted strategy that will not succeed in the long term. As James Mattis once wrote, "If you don't fund the State Department fully, then I need to buy more ammunition, ultimately."

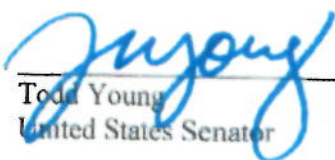
A well-designed International Affairs budget not only furthers the universal human rights and democratic principles that Americans cherish, but these investments also further America's economic and national security interests. Well-designed and closely-monitored foreign affairs programs can improve governance, reduce corruption, promote development, combat human trafficking, build partner capacity, eradicate disease, and prevent conflict. If we under-fund and undercut forward-deployed foreign affairs and foreign assistance programs, we will ultimately increase the risks to Americans.

We strongly believe that we must fully fund the diplomatic and development tools of America's national power and ensure that the Fiscal Year 2018 International Affairs budget keeps pace with growing global threats and opportunities. We look forward to reviewing your administration's budget proposals and working with you to keep Americans safe.

Sincerely,

  
Benjamin L. Cardin  
United States Senator

  
Marco Rubio  
United States Senator

  
Todd Young  
United States Senator

  
Jeanne Shaheen  
United States Senator

CC:

The Honorable Rex Tillerson, Secretary of State, U.S. Department of State  
The Honorable John F. Kelly, Secretary of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Homeland Security