

105TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2296

To withhold foreign assistance to Caribbean Basin Initiative countries that support membership for the Government of Cuba into the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) or the Central American Common Market (CACM), and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 30, 1997

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN (for herself, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. MCCOLLUM, Mr. DEUTSCH, and Mr. BURTON of Indiana) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To withhold foreign assistance to Caribbean Basin Initiative countries that support membership for the Government of Cuba into the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) or the Central American Common Market (CACM), and for other purposes.

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. FINDINGS AND DECLARATION OF POLICY.**

4 (a) FINDINGS.—The Congress makes the following
5 findings:

1 (1)(A) With increasing regional integration, the
2 value of Caribbean trade for the United States is
3 well established.

4 (B) Collectively, it is estimated that the 24
5 countries of the Caribbean Basin represent a market
6 of more than 50,000,000 people that has become the
7 tenth largest destination for United States goods
8 and services.

9 (2) Although the expansion of democracy
10 throughout most of the Western Hemisphere has
11 brought economic liberalization and reform, assist-
12 ance is still required to continue the reforms and to
13 diversify and stimulate investment in the Caribbean
14 Basin region.

15 (3) While progress has been made by many of
16 the Caribbean Basin countries in areas that coincide
17 with the security, economic, and humanitarian inter-
18 ests of the United States, much more needs to be
19 done.

20 (4)(A) The Castro regime in Cuba is not a
21 democratically elected government. It systemically
22 violates the individual civil liberties and human
23 rights of its citizens, does not have a market-ori-
24 ented economy, and has made it abundantly clear
25 that it will not engage in any substantive reforms

1 that would lead to a democracy and market economy
2 for Cuba.

3 (B) The totalitarian nature of the Castro re-
4 gime has deprived the Cuban people of any peaceful
5 means to improve their condition and has led thou-
6 sands of Cuban citizens to risk or lose their lives in
7 dangerous attempts to escape from Cuba to freedom.

8 (5) Since the beginning of the Castro regime, it
9 has been the policy of the United States to isolate
10 and sanction this totalitarian regime.

11 (b) DECLARATION OF POLICY.—The Congress de-
12 clares the following:

13 (1) United States trade policy must be consist-
14 ent with United States foreign policy and recipients
15 of foreign assistance must be held accountable for
16 decisions that run contrary, or could endanger, Unit-
17 ed States interests and objectives in the Western
18 Hemisphere.

19 (2) Safeguard mechanisms must be established
20 to ensure that United States foreign assistance or
21 United States trade agreements with other countries
22 are not used in any way to benefit the Castro re-
23 gime.

1 **SEC. 2. WITHHOLDING OF UNITED STATES ASSISTANCE TO**
2 **CARIBBEAN BASIN INITIATIVE COUNTRIES**
3 **THAT OFFER SUPPORT FOR MEMBERSHIP**
4 **FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF CUBA INTO**
5 **CARICOM OR CACM.**

6 Beginning 90 days after the date of the enactment
7 of this Act, the President shall withhold assistance under
8 the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151 et
9 seq.) (other than humanitarian assistance) to any Carib-
10 bean Basin Initiative country that uses its voice or vote
11 in the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) or the Central
12 American Common Market (CACM) to support provi-
13 sional, permanent, or any other form of membership for
14 the Government of Cuba into CARICOM or CACM.

15 **SEC. 3. PROHIBITION ON PROVISION OF CERTAIN TARIFF**
16 **TREATMENT TO CARIBBEAN BASIN INITIA-**
17 **TIVE COUNTRIES THAT OFFER MEMBERSHIP**
18 **FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF CUBA INTO**
19 **CARICOM OR CACM OR THAT NEGOTIATE A**
20 **FREE TRADE AREA AGREEMENT WITH CUBA.**

21 Beginning 90 days after the date of the enactment
22 of this Act, the President shall deny temporary or perma-
23 nent tariff treatment to products of a Caribbean Basin
24 Initiative country that is equivalent to treatment provided
25 to products of a NAFTA country if such Caribbean Basin
26 Initiative country—

1 (1) uses its voice or vote in CARICOM or
2 CACM to support provisional, permanent, or any
3 other form of membership for the Government of
4 Cuba into CARICOM or CACM; or

5 (2) enters into negotiations with the Govern-
6 ment of Cuba toward a free trade area agreement
7 with Cuba.

8 **SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.**

9 As used in this Act:

10 (1) CACM.—The term “CACM” means the
11 Central American Common Market established by
12 the 1960 General Treaty on Central American Eco-
13 nomic Integration.

14 (2) CARIBBEAN BASIN INITIATIVE COUNTRY.—
15 The term “Caribbean Basin Initiative country”
16 means a country designated as a beneficiary country
17 under section 212 of the Caribbean Basin Economic
18 Recovery Act for purposes of title II of such Act.

19 (3) CARICOM.—The term “CARICOM”
20 means the Caribbean Community established by the
21 1973 Treaty of Chaguaramas.

22 (4) GOVERNMENT OF CUBA.—The term “Gov-
23 ernment of Cuba”—

1 (A) includes any agency or instrumentality
2 of the Government of Cuba, and the govern-
3 ment of any political subdivision of Cuba; and

4 (B) does not include—

5 (i) a transition government in Cuba,
6 as described in section 205 of the Cuban
7 Liberty and Democratic Solidarity
8 (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996; or

9 (ii) a democratically elected govern-
10 ment in Cuba, as described in section 206
11 of such Act.

12 (5) NAFTA COUNTRY.—The term “NAFTA
13 country” has the meaning given such term in section
14 2 of the North American Free Trade Agreement Im-
15 plementation Act.

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