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Congress must end “stop work” on global aid; protect integrity of USAID

The promise of waivers remains unfulfilled. Countless lives are at stake.

On Friday January 24, the Trump Administration issued a stop work order on foreign aid. This immediately halted all programming, with very limited exceptions. This order has already been [catastrophic for communities around the world](#). Media is now reporting that the White House is moving to dismantle USAID, our country’s main development agency.

After the initial order, the Secretary of State announced a waiver for key humanitarian programs – a positive step forward. But [countless lifesaving programs still remain stopped](#), without clarity or guidance from the State Department. Clinics proudly signed with “USAID: From the American People” remain shuttered.

Local organizations cannot restart programs without clear direction and funding. Until then, lifesaving medicines are locked in warehouses. Health workers cannot care for people in need. Nutrition, education, safe childbirth – all remain stopped. These lifesaving programs have deep, longstanding bipartisan support. Congress needs to defend them.

Before the “stop work” order, the Administration announced a review of all foreign aid. Reviewing how and what the U.S. funds is a valid exercise – but stopping lifesaving programs in the meantime is completely unacceptable.

This review is a welcome chance to further strengthen the impact of health, education, and poverty programs. Congress holds both the legislative and funding authority for this work, and any review should involve their input.

In his confirmation hearing, Secretary Rubio said he would ask three questions about our foreign aid. “Does it make America safer? Does it make America stronger? Does it make America more prosperous?” Stopping aid without warning takes us backwards on all three of these points. The impact to human suffering will be irreparable.

Congress must **protect the integrity of USAID** and **reverse the stop-work order**.

Until the policy is lifted, Congress should press the State Department to verify that all programs covered by the waiver have been restarted.