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## Senate Committee Aims to Overhaul Foreign Assistance

[The following article appeared on the *Defense Security Cooperation Agency Newsletter*, November 20, 2009.]

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee approved a measure that would make changes to foreign assistance programs, including the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), on Tuesday by a vote of 15-3.

The bill's aim is to modernize and rebuild foreign assistance. It would do this by:

- Establishing a council in the executive branch to research and evaluate foreign assistance. The president would appoint a director to oversee this council. The bill would authorize \$255 million over six years for the council's operation.
- Establishing an assistant administrator for policy and strategic planning, within USAID, and a bureau that would develop policy and long-term strategy, evaluate program effectiveness and establish resource and workforce allocation criteria.
- Directing the administrator of USAID to formulate a strategy to promote development to reduce global poverty. It also would set up a rotation for Foreign Service and civil service officers to go to other agencies, governments or international organizations.
- Directing the president to require all federal departments and agencies to make publicly available on their web sites comprehensive and accessible information about United States foreign assistance on a program-by-program and country-by-country basis.
- Under a Senator Kerry substitute amendment, directing the executive branch council to coordinate the release of information on the funding levels of all federal foreign assistance programs, directing the USAID administrator to provide language training for Foreign Service officers and contractors and implementing new financial disclosure requirements for certain foreign assistance recipients.