

National Endowment for Democracy

COMMUNITY REQUEST FY 2020

\$180 M

FY 2019 President's Request: \$67.28 Million
FY 2018 Enacted: \$170 Million

DESCRIPTION

For 35 years, the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) has advanced democracy efforts by supporting freedom-seekers in their pursuit of good governance, strong democracy, and the dignity afforded by human rights. NED enables civil society by supporting U.S., international, and foreign nonprofit organizations and their far-reaching networks of local citizens who advocate for greater government accountability and more personal freedom. It works in the most difficult environments, both through its four core institutes and by providing direct funding to local organizations.

WHAT DOES THIS BUY?

Supports more than 1,700 grants every year to fund the projects of nongovernmental groups abroad who are working for democratic goals in more than 90 countries.

JUSTIFICATION FOR THE REQUEST

- The U.S. government's political and financial support of NED is critical to maintaining positive change across the globe. NED-supported programming supports a vibrant civil society that works to ensure human rights, independent media, and the rule of law.
- NED **focuses many of its resources on the remaining communist and authoritarian countries** including China, North Korea, Cuba, Serbia, Sudan, and Myanmar. The funds advance American ideals where they're needed most.
- While **global democracy has slid backward in recent years,**¹ it remains at a historic peak; positive change,² such as the democratic headway made in The Gambia, Sri Lanka, and Tunisia, among others, is a reminder that democracy efforts work and deserve long-term U.S. investment.
- Last year, marked the 12th consecutive year of decline in global freedom with citizens in 71 countries experiencing a shrinking number of political and civil liberties.³
- These funds allow NED to effectively respond to various needs and ideas that come from the grassroots level.

U.S. INTEREST

With the emergence of actors, such as Russia, who aim to destabilize democracies and electoral processes, the need to support all aspects of civil society has never been more paramount.⁴ The NED seeks to support freedom of information, the rule of law, political processes, civic education, freedom of association, strengthening institutions, human rights, and developing market economies. The NED, given its operating independence from the U.S. government, supports its partners with programming for all aspects of society, while maintaining respect for sovereignty in local communities.



Looking to the Future

National Endowment for Democracy – TITLE I

BOLD VISION

- Additional investment could help U.S. partners in strategic regions such as Central America and the Middle East who remain vulnerable to economic volatility. This volatility destabilizes and promotes skepticism of government institutions. Additional investments could provide better institutional support that helps provide stronger ties between citizens and their governments.
- Additional investment could provide support, hope, and encouragement for youth and marginalized populations across the globe who struggle for opportunity in the face of organized crime, gang activity, and political extremism.

IMPACT OF CUTS

- Cuts could contribute to democratic decline around the world, preventing the advancement of freedoms and forcing people to live in conflict-prone areas and amid unresponsive institutions.
- Cuts could sever ties between the American people and DRG activists – people who share American ideals and seek to ensure freedoms and universal rights – across the globe.
- Cuts could create vacuums where repressive regimes and governments can gain control of citizens and promote ideologies that conflict with freedom and liberty.

1 https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/FH_FITW_Report_2018_Final_SinglePage.pdf.

2 <http://carnegieendowment.org/2017/04/11/democracy-is-not-dying-pub-68651>.

3 “Freedom in the World 2018: Democracy in Crisis,” Freedom House. <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/freedom-world-2018>.

4 <http://www.icnl.org/research/trends/Global%20Trends%20Vol.%207%20Iss.%203%20Challenges%20to%20Development%20Organizations%20final.pdf?pdf=trends7-3>.

5 YEAR FUNDING HISTORY

■ House ■ Senate *Funding levels may not accurately reflect those in the appropriations bills and/or reports due to rounding.*

