

RE-3 Senators and Officers Post Travel Disclosure of Travel Expenses

Post Travel Filing Instructions: Complete this form within **30 days** of returning from travel. Submit all forms to the Office of Public Records in 144 Hart Building. **This form is a public disclosure. The form and all attachments will be made publicly available.**

Date/Time Stamp

RECEIVED
SECRETARY OF THE SENATE
PUBLIC RECORDS
2025 SEP -9 PM 12:59

Certification: In compliance with the Regulations Governing Privately Sponsored Travel, Senate Rule 35, and the Honest Leadership and Open Government Act of 2007, I certify that I accepted the following gift of privately sponsored travel:

Private Sponsor(s):
The Aspen Institute, Inc.

Travel Dates:
08/10/2025 to 08/17/2025

Name of accompanying family member (if any):
Mary Sorteberg

Relationship to Traveler:
Spouse

Expenses

Transportation Expenses	Lodging Expenses	Meals Expenses	Other Expenses (Amount & Description)
\$11,459.41	\$1,580.00	\$2,030.00	\$1,385.00

I also certify that attached to this form are all required documents for post travel disclosure, including:

- The final **Private Sponsor Travel Certification Form** with all attachments
- The final invitation
- The final approved itinerary

I certify that all trip information reflected in the attachments above accurately reflects the travel that I accepted. If there were any changes to the trip after I received approval from the Committee, the changes are described in ATTACHMENT 1.

I have made a determination that the travel described above was in connection with my duties as an officeholder, and did not create the appearance that I was using public office for private gain.

I have made a determination that the travel described above was in connection with my duties as an officeholder, and did not create the appearance that I was using public office for private gain.

September 9, 2025
Date

JEFF MERKLEY
Printed Name of Traveler


Signature of Traveler

ATTACHMENT 1 – CHANGES FROM APPROVED PRE-TRAVEL

Note: Material changes to a trip that occur after the Committee has issued an approval letter may invalidate the Committee's approval. Please contact the Committee with any questions regarding changes to an approved trip.

Were there any changes to the pre-approved travel expenses? (Transportation, Meals, Lodging, Other)?

Yes No

Expense Change	Revised Amount	Explanation
Meals	\$2,030.00	More exact amount now that we have conference totals was \$577 per person for those that stayed the whole time. Sen. Curtis and his wife departed a day early so their totals were \$438 per person.
Misc. Expenses	\$4,430.00	More exact amounts now that conference has passed. New total is \$1,340 per person for conference room, A/V, security, visas and conservation day. Since Sen. Curtis and his wife departed a day early, their total is \$875 per person.

Were there any changes to the pre-approved itinerary?

Yes No

Explanation: We changed the order of the speaking slots for scholars due to flight delays getting to Africa. Additionally, we modified the schedule on Thursday to accommodate a meeting with the President of Zambia: 11:00 - 1:45 Roundtable Session with President Hakainde Hichilema Meeting with President Hakainde Hichilema of Zambia to discuss the state of US Zambia relations and issues including trade, immigration, health and economic development

Were there any additional changes to the pre-approved trip?

Yes No

Explanation: There were no additional changes to the pre-approved trip.



2025, 9/9/2025



**CONGRESSIONAL
PROGRAM**
aspen institute

The Honorable Jeff Merkley

U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20515-0306

Dear Senator Merkley,

I would like to invite you and Mary to our bipartisan, bicameral congressional conference on **Global Role and U.S. Strategic Priorities** in **Livingstone, Zambia and Botswana from August 11-18, 2025**, including travel dates. Please get back to us with your interest to attend the conference **by COB Friday, May 9, 2025**. These conference spots fill up quickly, so please RSVP as soon as possible. This invitation does not guarantee your participation in the conference.

This educational conference will address a variety of important issues that have consequences for both the United States and Africa. Through a combination of roundtable discussions led by subject experts, plus visits to health, agriculture and other program sites, participants will explore security, economic, and development challenges confronting Africa and how the United States is responding. Conversations will explore threats to U.S. national security across Africa and the increasing presence of China and Russia on the continent. Access to critical minerals is significant to both economic development across Africa and to U.S. markets. Zambia plays a key role in the American and European-backed construction of the Lobito Corridor that will link ports on the Atlantic and Indian Oceans, passing through regions with some of the largest deposits of cobalt, copper, and other critical minerals. The agenda will also focus on other development sectors, including health, food security, and wildlife trafficking and conservation challenges confronting large portions of the continent. Participants will have the opportunity to engage with Zambian politicians and those from other regional nations who will share their views on the future of U.S.-African relations.

Conference attendance is by invitation only. No outside observers, no lobbyists, no congressional staff, and no media are allowed to participate. All conference sessions are off-the-record. No foreign governments are accepted to fund the Aspen Institute Congressional Program. As required by the Senate and House ethics rules, we will provide congressional participants with ethics private sponsor forms completed and signed.

Travel expenses, including business class airfare, meals, and lodging will be paid for by the Aspen Institute; no expenses for entertainment or recreation are paid for in compliance with ethics rules.

The Congressional Program is part of the Aspen Institute, Inc. a nonprofit organization founded in 1949. The Congressional Program was created to promote leadership on public policy by bringing legislators together from both political parties with internationally renowned scholars for high level discussions and analysis. Since our program's inception, more than 598 members of Congress have participated in our 160 domestic and international conferences.

We hope you can join us for this important conference.

Sincerely,

Charlie Dent

Charles W. Dent
Former Member, U.S. Congress (PA-15th, 2005-2018)
Vice President and Executive Director
Aspen Institute Congressional Program
2300 N Street NW, Suite 700, Washington, DC 20037
Mobile: (484) 553-1837

The Aspen Institute, Inc.: Aspen Institute Congressional Program Zambia 2025: US-Africa Relations in Uncertain Times

JEFF MERKLEY

Title:
Senator

Employing Office/Committee:
MERKLEY, JEFF

Duty Station:
PORTLAND,OR

Destination(s):
Livingstone, Zambia

Explain how this trip is specifically connected to the traveler's official or representational duties:

Not applicable for Senators and Officers.

Name of accompanying family member (if any):
Mary Sorteberg

Name and Relationship to Traveler:
Spouse

Organization Information

Organization Name
The Aspen Institute, Inc.

Is your organization classified as a §501(c)(3)?

Yes No

§501(c)(3) Organization Type
N/A

Address
2300 N Street, NW

Address 2 (Optional)
None

City, State Zip
Washington, District Of Columbia 20037 United States

Phone Number
425 516 8003

Organization URL

History of Congressional Travel

Aspen Institute Congressional Program (AICP) has conducted international and domestic conferences for members of Congress for over 40 years. On occasion, other policy programs of The Aspen Institute, Inc., sponsor conferences that involve members of Congress. For example, the most recent trip sponsored by AICP for members of Congress was to Spain in April 2025.

Educational Activities

The Aspen Institute, Inc. holds numerous educational activities including conferences, roundtable briefings, and other nonpartisan forums on critical issues facing the U.S. and the world. AICP, specifically, offers nonpartisan educational events for members of Congress and senior congressional staff members, with each event offering a leading scholar on a key domestic or international issue.

Lobbyist and Foreign Agent Registration Information

Lobbyist Registration Status: *I certify that the sponsor is not a federally registered lobbyist and do not retain or employ a federally registered lobbyist.*

Foreign Agent Registration Status: *I certify that the sponsor is not an agent of a foreign principal and do not retain or employ an agent of a foreign principal.*

Foreign Government Involvement

Foreign Agent Registration Status:

I certify that the sponsor is not a foreign government.

I certify that the sponsor is not an entity that is owned or operated by a foreign government.

I certify that the sponsor does not receive funding from a foreign government.

Comments

Signature Page

The signature page is below.

Purpose and Details

Provide a brief description of the trip.

This educational conference will address important issues affecting the United States and Africa. Through expert-led roundtable discussions and visits to health, agriculture and other program sites, participants will explore security, economic, and development challenges confronting Africa and how the United States is responding. Conversations will examine threats to U.S. national security and the increasing presence of China and Russia on the continent. Access to critical minerals is significant to both African development and U.S. markets and Zambia plays a key role in the Lobito Corridor linking Atlantic and Indian Ocean ports through mineral-rich regions.

Explain how the purpose of the trip relates to your organization's mission.

The Aspen Institute, Inc., is a non-profit organization, and its broad mission is conducting nonpartisan forums and the exchange of ideas on issues impacting the U.S. and the world. AICP is a program of the Aspen Institute, Inc., that provides nonpartisan educational conferences and educational forums for members of Congress and senior congressional staff members. With Africa facing complex security, economic, and development challenges amid growing geopolitical competition, this convening continues AICP's mission of helping lawmakers engage thoughtfully with the most pressing issues of our time.

Is your organization the only sponsor for this trip?

Yes

No

Grantmaking Organizations (Optional)

1. The Gates Foundation
2. The Gates Foundation

With or Without Regard for Congressional Participation

The trip is arranged or organized specifically with regard to congressional participation.

Lobbyist/Foreign Agent Involvement in Planning, Organizing, Requesting or Arranging

The trip will not in any part be planned, organized, requested, or arranged by a registered lobbyist or agent of a foreign principal, other than de minimis involvement.

Lobbyist/Foreign Agent Financing

The trip will not be financed in any part by a registered lobbyist or agent of a foreign principal.

No funds or in-kind contributions were earmarked directly or indirectly for the purpose of financing this specific trip from a registered lobbyist or agent of a foreign principal or from a private entity that retains or employs one or more registered lobbyists or agents of a foreign principal.

Lobbyist/Foreign Agent Accompaniment

Complete if all sponsors are §501(c)(3) organizations

The trip is limited to three days (for trips inside the continental United States) or seven days (for trips outside the continental United States), and no lobbyist or agents of a foreign principal will accompany the Member, officer, or employee at any point throughout the trip

The trip is limited to a one-day event (exclusive of travel time and one overnight stay) and no registered lobbyists or agents of a foreign principal will accompany the Member, officer, or employee on any segment of the trip

Complete if any of the sponsors is not a §501(c)(3) organizations.

The trip is limited to three days (for trips inside the continental United States) or seven days (for trips outside the continental United States), and no lobbyist or agents of a foreign principal will accompany the Member, officer, or employee at any point throughout the trip

The trip is limited to a one-day event (exclusive of travel time and one overnight stay) and no registered lobbyists or agents of a foreign principal will accompany the Member, officer, or employee on any segment of the trip

The trip is limited to a one-day event (exclusive of travel time and two overnight stays) and no registered lobbyists or agents of a foreign principal will accompany the Member, officer, or employee on any segment of the trip

The trip is limited to a one-day event (exclusive of travel time and two overnight stays) and no registered lobbyists or agents of a foreign principal will accompany the Member, officer, or employee on any segment of the trip

Certification of No Recreational Activity and No Alcohol

Travel expenses paid for will not include expenditures for recreational activities.

Travel expenses paid for will not include expenditures for alcohol, except as permitted by the Regulations Governing Privately Sponsored Travel.

Invitees

Members and staff from the House of Representatives **will** receive invitations.

The list of invitees is below.

Travel Details

Trip Start Date/Time:
08/10/2025 @ 04:01 PM

Trip End Date/Time:
08/17/2025 @ 04:05 PM

Will the traveler be accompanied by a family member for whom the sponsor will pay travel expenses?

Yes No

Itinerary

The itinerary is below.

Transportation (Per Member/Officer/Employee: \$11,459.41 | Accompanying Family Member: \$0.00)

Transportation Type	Class	Amount
Airfare	Business	\$11,459.41

Note
Round trip airfare

Airfare	Business	\$11,459.41
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Note
Round trip airfare

Lodging (Per Member/Officer/Employee: \$1,580.00)

Check-In	Check-Out	Facility	City	State	Country	Nights	Cost/Night	Cost Exceed Per Diem
08/12/2025	08/16/2025	The Royal Livingstone Hotel	Livingstone	None	Zambia	4	\$395.00	Yes

Check-In	Check-Out	Facility	City	State	Country	Nights	Cost/Night	Cost Exceed Per Diem
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Cost Exceeds Per Diem Reason

The secure location with onsite conferencing space was a key factor in the Hotel selection. Additionally, the accommodation costs include breakfast. There may be less expensive hotels in the area but they do not provide same conference space, availability of rooms or security.

Meals (Per Member/Officer/Employee: \$456.00)

Date	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Incidentals	Total	City	State	Country	Cost Exceeds Per Diem
08/12/2025	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$114.00	\$0.00	\$114.00	Livingstone	None	Zambia	Yes

Cost Exceeds Per Diem Reason

The daily meeting fee includes lunch and snacks. To provide food with Western standard food handling and preparation practices, these dinner meals are more costly in Zambia and a cost that is reasonable and necessary.

08/12/2025	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$114.00	\$0.00	\$114.00	Livingstone	None	Zambia	Yes
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Cost Exceeds Per Diem Reason

Please see explanation for Member 8/12

08/13/2025	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$114.00	\$0.00	\$114.00	Livingstone	None	Zambia	Yes
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Cost Exceeds Per Diem Reason

Please see explanation for Member 8/12

08/13/2025	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$114.00	\$0.00	\$114.00	Livingstone	None	Zambia	Yes
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Cost Exceeds Per Diem Reason

Please see explanation for 8/12

08/14/2025	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$114.00	\$0.00	\$114.00	Livingstone	None	Zambia	Yes
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Cost Exceeds Per Diem Reason

Please see explanation 8/12

08/14/2025	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$114.00	\$0.00	\$114.00	Livingstone	None	Zambia	Yes
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Cost Exceeds Per Diem Reason

Please see explanation for Member 8/12

08/15/2025	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$114.00	\$0.00	\$114.00	Livingstone	None	Zambia	Yes
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Cost Exceeds Per Diem Reason

Please see explanation 8/12

08/15/2025	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$114.00	\$0.00	\$114.00	Livingstone	None	Zambia	Yes
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Cost Exceeds Per Diem Reason

Please see explanation for Member 8/12

Reasonable Miscellaneous Expenses (Per Member/Officer/Employee: \$1,385.00)

Expense Type	Amount	Notes
Conference Fees	\$1,085.00	Includes lunch, dinner and convening space as well as A/V
Conference Fees	\$1,085.00	Includes lunch, dinner and convening space as well as A/V
Other (Security)	\$150.00	
Other (Security)	\$150.00	
Visa Fees	\$150.00	
Visa Fees	\$150.00	

Additional Attachments

Document Name

There are no additional attachments.

PRIVATELY SPONSORED TRAVEL

SPONSOR SIGNATURE PAGE

I hereby certify that the information submitted in connection with the trip listed below is true, complete, and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Trip Name: _____
Travel Date(s): August 10th- August 18th
Travel Destination(s): Livingstone, Zambia
Sponsor: The Aspen Institute, Inc. (Congressional Program)

Charles Dent

(printed name of sponsor representative)

Vice President-The Aspen Institute, Inc.

(title)



(signature of sponsor representative)

July 9, 2025

(date)

Grantmaking Organization Certification Form

Instructions: If a sponsor receives funds from a grantmaking organization, the sponsor must disclose this on the *Private Sponsor Travel Certification Form*, and the grantmaking organization must complete the *Grantmaking Organization Certification Form*. The completed *Grantmaking Organization Certification Form* must be submitted to the Senate Select Committee on Ethics by the trip sponsor at least 30 days prior to the travel departure date.

Grantmaking Organization: Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Private Sponsor: The Aspen Institute, Inc. (Congressional Program)

Trip Name: U.S. - Africa Relations in Uncertain Times

Travel Date(s): August 11- August 18

Destination(s): Livingstone, Zambia

In compliance with the *Regulations Governing Privately Sponsored Travel*, I certify the following:

- ☒ The grantmaking organization is a § 501(c)(3) organization.
- ☒ The grantmaking organization is not a lobbyist, lobbying firm, or foreign agent, nor an entity that retains or employs a lobbyist or foreign agent.
- ☒ The grantmaking organization provides funds under an established grant program, or in a manner that is otherwise consistent with the mission and practices of the organization.
- ☒ The grantmaking organization is not involved, directly or indirectly, in organizing and conducting the trip. This includes selecting participants for a trip.
- ☒ The grantmaking organization does not directly pay or reimburse travel expenses for any Senate Member, officer, or employee.

Mark Iozzi

(Printed name of grantmaking organization representative)

Senior Program Officer

(Title)

Mark Iozzi

(Signature of grantmaking organization representative)

Digitally signed by Mark Iozzi
Date: 2025.07.01 10:47:53 -04'00'

7/1/2025

(Date)

Grantmaking Organization Certification Form

Instructions: If a sponsor receives funds from a grantmaking organization, the sponsor must disclose this on the *Private Sponsor Travel Certification Form*, and the grantmaking organization must complete the *Grantmaking Organization Certification Form*. The completed *Grantmaking Organization Certification Form* must be submitted to the Senate Select Committee on Ethics by the trip sponsor at least 30 days prior to the travel departure date.

Grantmaking Organization: Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Private Sponsor: The Aspen Institute, Inc. (Congressional Program)

Trip Name: U.S. - Africa Relations in Uncertain Times

Travel Date(s): August 11- August 18

Destination(s): Livingstone, Zambia

In compliance with the *Regulations Governing Privately Sponsored Travel*, I certify the following:

- ☒ The grantmaking organization is a § 501(c)(3) organization.
- ☒ The grantmaking organization is not a lobbyist, lobbying firm, or foreign agent, nor an entity that retains or employs a lobbyist or foreign agent.
- ☒ The grantmaking organization provides funds under an established grant program, or in a manner that is otherwise consistent with the mission and practices of the organization.
- ☒ The grantmaking organization is not involved, directly or indirectly, in organizing and conducting the trip. This includes selecting participants for a trip.
- ☒ The grantmaking organization does not directly pay or reimburse travel expenses for any Senate Member, officer, or employee.

Mark Iozzi
(Printed name of grantmaking organization representative)

Senior Program Officer
(Title)

Mark Iozzi
(Signature of grantmaking organization representative)

Digitally signed by Mark Iozzi
Date: 2025.07.01 10:47:53 -04'00'

7/1/2025
(Date)

**Aspen Institute Congressional Program
U.S - Africa Relations in Uncertain Times
August 11-18, 2025**

1. Sen. John Curtis (R-Utah)
2. Sen. Jeff Merkley (D-Oregon)



CONGRESSIONAL PROGRAM

aspen institute

US-Africa Relations in Uncertain Times

August 11-18, 2025 | Livingstone, Zambia

AGENDA¹

SUNDAY, August 10:

Senator and Susan Curtis depart SLC at 4:01 PM on BA 1815

MONDAY, August 11:

Senator and Susan Curtis are in transit

TUESDAY, August 12:

Senator and Susan Curtis arrive at LVI at 12:35 PM on flight 4Z 0482

6 – 7 PM: Pre-Dinner Remarks:

U.S. Diplomacy in Africa: A Scene-Setter and Welcoming Remarks

As changes in U.S. foreign policy unfold, American diplomats across the African continent are confronting new challenges as well as seeking emerging opportunities to advance U.S. interests. The delegation will be welcomed by the current American Ambassador to Zambia and hear his thoughts about the top diplomatic priorities throughout the region.

Speaker:

¹ Congressional Program Executive Director Charlie Dent moderates the discussion sessions, recognizes members of Congress who have questions, and is assisted by a timekeeper to ensure the conversation is quick paced and every member of Congress has an opportunity to ask questions and discuss the issues.

Michael Gonzales, *U.S. Ambassador to Zambia*

7 – 9 PM: Working Dinner

Seating is arranged to expose participants to a diverse range of views and provide the opportunity for a meaningful exchange of ideas. Scholars and lawmakers are rotated daily. Discussions will focus on American diplomacy in Africa and other topics that are part of the conference agenda.

WEDNESDAY, August 13:

7:30– 8:30 AM: Breakfast available to all participants

7:30– 8:30 AM: Experts and Scholars meet for breakfast with Charlie Dent to review conference procedures

8:30 – 8:45 AM: Introduction and Framework of the Conference

This conference is organized into roundtable conversations, working lunches, and pre-dinner remarks. This segment will highlight how the conference will be conducted, how those with questions will be recognized, and how responses will be timed to allow for as much engagement as possible.

Speaker:

Charlie Dent, *Vice President, Aspen Institute;*
Executive Director, Congressional Program

8:45 – 10 AM: Roundtable Discussion:

***Chartering a New Course for the Future of U.S. Foreign Assistance:
Implications for Africa***

Since January 2025, the Trump Administration has both implemented and proposed substantial changes in America's foreign aid policies and resource allocations. In recent months, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has been dismantled with thousands of staff losing their jobs. Over 80 percent of the Agency's programs have been terminated while what remains is being folded into the State Department. The President's FY2026 budget request cuts State Department and other international affairs agencies by 49 percent compared with current levels and seeks the additional rescission of \$21.6 billion in previously appropriated funds. Secretary of State Rubio justifies this reorientation of foreign aid, stating that going forward, the Department will only fund programs that make America "stronger, safer, and more prosperous" and eliminate divisive and ineffective foreign assistance activities.

For Africa, as U.S. foreign assistance downsizes, the State Department has outlined another approach for engagement with the continent based on commercial diplomacy with greater emphasis placed on supporting market reforms in coordination with African governments, strengthening the region's private sector, investing in infrastructure projects in priority countries and expanding opportunities for American businesses. The goal, according to senior State Department officials, is "to increase U.S. exports and investment in Africa, eliminate trade deficits and drive mutual prosperity".

These actions have been sharply criticized by those who believe in the three-pronged approach of defense, diplomacy and development as essential to American national security and economic interests globally, including in Africa. The sudden and chaotic nature of aid terminations, critics say, has badly damaged America's reputation as a reliable partner, left African finance ministries scrambling to cover financing gaps created by the U.S. withdrawal, placed the health and well-being of aid beneficiaries in jeopardy, and invited others, in some cases American adversaries such as China, to fill the vacuum left by the United States. They believe that "trade not aid" is a false dichotomy and question why it can't be both.

Panelists will discuss the implications of this reorientation of U.S. engagement with Africa and what might be the vision of foreign assistance moving forward.

Speakers:

Ambassador Mark Green, *President Emeritus of the Wilson Center, former U.S. Ambassador to Tanzania and former Member of Congress*

Ambassador Mark Dybul, *Professor at the Medical Center of Georgetown University, former Executive Director of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and former U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator leading PEPFAR*

10 – 10:15 AM: Break

10:15 – 11:45 AM: Roundtable Discussion:

America's National Security Posture in Africa: Opportunities and Challenges

While the African continent is rarely perceived as central to U.S. national security and economic interests, currently and in the years to come, the people and countries in Africa will play a critical role in confronting global threats and challenges that are equally vital to America's well-being. For the second year in a row, the Sahel region of Africa has been characterized as the "epicenter" of global terrorism. Terrorist groups, such as ISIS, Al-Qaeda, and Al-Shabaab, take advantage of fragile pockets across the continent, posing direct threats to American interests. Africa retains 30 percent of the world's supply of critical minerals that are essential for U.S. national, economic, and

environmental security. Africa also finds itself increasingly entangled in U.S. competition and confrontation with China and Russia. Senior American military leaders express concern over the uptick in China's efforts to replicate American defense training and military education exchanges across the continent. At the same time, these leaders are sending a message to their African counterparts that American efforts are focused on building the capacity of militaries in the region to manage their own security and to conduct independent operations.

A representative from the U.S. Africa Command and a retired senior military officer will survey U.S. national security interests on the continent, the nexus of security with American development and diplomatic efforts, as well as discuss policy opportunities to tackle pressing security challenges.

Speaker:

Vice Admiral Matt Kohler (USN, Ret.), currently a member of the Cohen Group

11:45 AM – 12:45 PM: Working Lunch

Discussion continues between members of Congress and scholars on the future of foreign assistance and threats to American national security across the African continent.

1 – 4 PM: Educational Site Visits, including drive times

Community Health Programs Focused on HIV, Malaria and Malnutrition

The delegation will be divided into small groups in order to permit personal conversations with community health care workers and household members to learn about the objectives of each program and hear how these interventions have impacted their lives. Each group will visit two or three of the sites and see the others on August 15.

Members will visit a program that aims to mitigate the impact of HIV and improve the health of adolescents and vulnerable children using a family-centered approach. The project is supported by the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), a program launched by President George W. Bush in 2003 and is credited with saving 25 million lives, mostly in Africa. Another site will showcase the work of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria where young members of the community serve as mentors to their peers in confronting sensitive health and social challenges. At another Global Fund site, participants will learn how a small village prevents malaria through spraying, bed nets and medications. Founded in 2002 with the U.S. having been the largest donor, the Global Fund has reduced the combined death rates of AIDS, TB and malaria by 61%. Members will also visit a lab that is part of Zambia's National Multi-Pathogen Diagnostic Program where the state-of-the-art facility is able to quickly

diagnose infectious disease tests. Finally, groups will observe the work of a Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) clinic where infants who are suffering from insufficient energy, fat, protein and/or other nutrients are treated with the use of ready-to-use therapeutic food (RUTF), a highly fortified energy-dense paste. Each of the programs visited during the afternoon have received in the past U.S. government financial support.

6 – 7 PM: Pre-Dinner Remarks:

The Impact of Vaccinating Africa's Children

Speaker:

Dr. Sania Nishtar, CEO, Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance

With the support of the United States and other international aid donors, since 2000 Gavi has reached 469 million children in Africa with routine immunizations and averted an estimated 12 million future deaths across the continent. Gavi is an important contributor to global health security efforts with a portfolio of 21 infectious disease vaccines, including Ebola, malaria and mpox. Dr. Nishtar will discuss the state of child immunizations in Africa and challenges Gavi faces as financial support for the Alliance faces growing headwinds. At a June 25, 2025 pledging conference, the United States announced that it would no longer contribute to Gavi.

7 – 9 PM: Working Dinner with Local Aid Implementing Offices

Seating is arranged to expose participants to a diverse range of views and provide the opportunity for a meaningful exchange of ideas with representatives from non-governmental organizations, including CARE, Project Concern Zambia, Save the Children, CGIAR, and Wildlife Crime Prevention Zambia. Scholars and lawmakers are rotated daily. Discussions will focus on challenges faced by these organizations during a significant transition in U.S. foreign assistance policy and resources.

THURSDAY, August 14:

7:30– 8:30 AM: Breakfast

8:30 – 10 AM: Roundtable Discussion:

Severe Weather Patterns: Implications for African Food Security

Africa's economy is heavily dependent on agriculture, contributing 20% to the continent's GDP and employing more than 60% of the workforce. Nevertheless, recent estimates project that agricultural production will slip by 18% at a time when food supply demands will triple by 2050 due to rapid population increases. Food insecurity and malnutrition, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, already have grown significantly in recent years as a result of the global pandemic, a deepening climate crisis, land

degradation, high energy and fertilizer costs, weakened supply chains, and protracted conflicts, including the war in Ukraine. According to the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), in 2024, over 295 million people faced acute hunger in Africa following crop failures and six consecutive dry seasons.

Africa, however, also maintains untapped potential that could help close the agricultural “yield gap” that is less than 25% of what crop production could be. Strengthening local industries would also result in economic diversification and expand millions of skilled jobs. The United States has been at the forefront of partnering with African governments and communities to combat food insecurity through programs supported by USAID’s Feed the Future initiative and humanitarian food assistance, various Millennium Challenge Corporation compacts, and investments by the Development Finance Corporation. Funding for these activities, however, is now in question as the administration has proposed budgets for FY2026 that would essentially eliminate Feed the Future, cut humanitarian aid by over 60%, and reduce MCC funding by 75%. Panelists will discuss the impact of these cuts by the United States and other donors and offer thoughts on innovative ideas to address Africa’s agricultural “yield-gap” through science and research and the expansion of private sector investments.

Speakers:

Dr. Appolinaire Djikeng, *Director General of the International Livestock Research Institute and a Senior Director of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR)*

Christopher Barrett, *Professor of Applied Economics and Management, Cornell University*

10 – 10:15 AM: Break

10:15 – 11:45 AM: Roundtable Discussion:

Global Health Challenges Across Africa

The importance of a healthy population has long been recognized as a critical element of society’s economic and social development. The United States has a long record of commitment to supporting Africa’s severe health challenges, including the creation of the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), the President’s Malaria Initiative (both first implemented by President George W. Bush), and as the largest donor to Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. The U.S. has also played a large role in strengthening healthcare systems throughout Africa, building healthcare infrastructure, and promoting access to essential medicines and vaccines.

As part of the Administration's reorientation of foreign assistance, however, proposals to reduce funding for health programs, including those in Africa, are before Congress. The President's budget request for FY2026 would cut appropriations for global health programs by 62%, including reductions for PEPFAR and the Global Fund, and the elimination of funds for Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance. The State Department says the request prioritizes life-saving assistance to those suffering from HIV/AIDS, TB, polio, and malaria, and for global health security programs that protect Americans at home. But health advocates express deep concerns over these proposed funding cuts, including those for AIDS prevention efforts, and worry that the enormous achievements of programs like PEPFAR could be erased in the coming years.

This panel will focus on the impact of already terminated U.S. health activities in Africa, the implications of steep resource reductions proposed for next year, how governments across the continent are responding and what longer-term policy and financial options are available to maintain and improve a healthy Africa.

Speakers:

Peter Sands, *Executive Director of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria*

Joy Phumaphi, *Executive Secretary of the African Leaders Malaria Alliance (ALMA)*

11:45 AM – 12:45 PM: Working Lunch

Discussion continues between members of Congress and scholars on food security and health challenges facing Africa.

1 – 4 PM: Educational Site Visits, including drive times

Improving Food Production and Livelihoods and Building Resilient Farming Systems

Members will travel about an hour north of Livingstone to visit a demonstration farm and learn about CGIAR's Southern Africa Rapid Delivery Hub. The program's goal is to provide smallholder farmers with information and innovations needed, using market-based approaches, to mitigate the impact of price spikes for fertilizer and other inputs due to global events such as the war in Ukraine. The delegation will meet with Veronica Mushupa, owner of the farm, and observe innovative techniques of irrigation, planting and mechanization for thrashing and shilling. Members will also be able to interact with other farmers who can speak to the impact on their livelihoods of farming practices they are learning through CGIAR support. Several agriculture scientists and researchers affiliated with CGIAR will also be able to answer questions the group may have.

6 – 7 PM: Pre-Dinner Fireside Chat:

Access to Critical Minerals – Supporting U.S. Interests and Promoting Economic Growth on the Continent

Africa is home to roughly 30% of the world's reserves of critical minerals essential for the global energy transition and technological advancements. Minerals, such as graphite, cobalt, lithium and rare earth elements, are crucial for production of electric vehicles, renewable energy infrastructure, and digital devices. With this degree of mineral wealth, Africa is positioned to leverage these resources that will drive economic development, create jobs, and foster sustainable growth. At the same time, it also raises concerns over how mineral extraction is managed through sustainable and transparent practices that guard against the potential for exploitation.

Another aspect of Africa's mineral wealth is the competition between the United States and China for access to these critical resources. China maintains the dominant position following many years of investment and mining across the continent. The U.S. and Europe, however, are ramping up their own partnerships and activities to counter Chinese influence. The Lobito Corridor, an initiative to link the port in Lobito, Angola, with the mineral-rich areas of the Democratic Republic of Congo and Zambia through improved transportation infrastructure, is an example of more recent efforts on the part of the United States and the European Union to gain greater access to critical minerals. Kobold Metals, an American company, is a leading player in the Lobito Corridor using its AI-driven mineral exploration technology to develop copper mines in northern Zambia.

Speakers:

Mfikeyi Makayi, *CEO KoBold Metals Africa*

U.S. Development Finance Corporation Representative TBD

7 – 9 PM: Working Dinner with Peace Corps Representatives

Seating is arranged to expose participants to a diverse range of views and provide the opportunity for a meaningful exchange of ideas with Natalie Gill-Mensah, Zambia Peace Corps Country Director, and Peace Corps volunteers. Scholars and lawmakers are rotated daily. Discussions will focus on the work of the Peace Corps in Zambia and the opportunities and challenges confronting Volunteers.

FRIDAY, August 15:

7:30– 8:30 AM: Breakfast

8:30 – 10 AM: Roundtable Discussion:

U.S.-Chinese Competition on the Continent

For the past 25 years, China has been significantly increasing its presence and influence on the African continent, elevating its investment, educational and cultural programs, diplomatic posture, military cooperation, and political influence. Beijing's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), launched in 2013 as a massive global infrastructure program, further strengthened its commercial engagement with Africa. For 16 consecutive years, China has been the continent's leading bilateral trading partner, outpacing the United States by roughly four-fold. China surpassed the U.S. in terms of foreign direct investment in 2013 and remains the current leader. While trade and FDI have dominated Chinese engagement in Africa, the United States has provided significantly more development and humanitarian assistance to the continent. As the U.S. downsizes its foreign aid footprint across the region, it is an open question whether China will see this as an opportunity to expand its own health, agriculture and other development programs in order to gain greater influence in areas it has previously maintained a far smaller role compared with the United States. Likewise, with plans by the U.S. to expand trade, investment and commercial engagement in Africa, questions remain if it will be enough to offset the large advantage China has held for many years.

Speakers:

Dr. Cobus van Staden, *Managing Editor at the China Global South Project in South Africa*

Gyude Moore, *Non-Resident Fellow at the Center for Global Development and former Liberian Minister of Public Works*

10 – 10:15 AM: Break

10:15 – 11:45 AM: Roundtable Discussion:

Policy Reflections and Actions Wrap-up for Members of Congress

This time is set aside for members of Congress to reflect on what they have learned during the conference and discuss their views on implications for U.S. policy. Drawing on the full range of conversations throughout the week, members will seek to identify for each other the most promising takeaways for the United States policy process, with a special focus on opportunities for bipartisan cooperation. This is a members-only conversation.

11:45 – 12:45 PM: Working Lunch

Discussion continues between members of Congress and scholars on reflections throughout the week's presentations and potential policy options for enhancing U.S.-Africa engagement.

1 – 4 PM: Educational Site Visits, including drive times

Community Health Programs Focused on HIV, Malaria and Malnutrition

Similar to the August 13 afternoon schedule, the delegation will be divided into several small groups to permit personal conversations with community health care workers and household members to learn about the objectives of each program and hear how these interventions have impacted their lives. Today, group members will be able to visit the sites they did not see on August 13.

Members will visit a program that aims to mitigate the impact of HIV and improve the health of adolescents and vulnerable children using a family-centered approach. The project is supported by the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), a program launched by President George W. Bush in 2003 and is credited with saving 25 million lives, mostly in Africa. Another site will showcase the work of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria where young members of the community serve as mentors to their peers in confronting sensitive health and social challenges. At another Global Fund site, participants will learn how a small village prevents malaria through spraying, bed nets and medications. Founded in 2002 with the U.S. having been the largest donor, the Global Fund has reduced the combined death rates of AIDS, TB and malaria by 61%. Members will also visit a lab that is part of Zambia's National Multi-Pathogen Diagnostic Program where the state-of-the-art facility is able to quickly diagnose infectious disease tests. Finally, groups will observe the work of a Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) clinic where infants who are suffering from insufficient energy, fat, protein and/or other nutrients are treated with the use of ready-to-use therapeutic food (RUTF), a highly fortified energy-dense paste. Each of the programs visited during the afternoon have received in the past U.S. government financial support.

6 – 7 PM: Pre-Dinner Fireside Chat:

Private Sector Innovation for Strengthened Health Systems in Africa

There is an increasing recognition of the important role of the private sector in strengthening health systems and healthcare delivery in Africa. Public-private partnerships are key to leveraging private sector innovations that enhance healthcare delivery, strengthen infrastructure and make resource allocations more efficient. African governments across the continent are recognizing the expertise, technologies and funding that the private sector brings. This discussion will explore the work of Roche, a Swiss multinational healthcare company that is known for its innovative approach to healthcare, and how the private sector can best work with African governments for the well-being of a diverse and growing population on the continent.

Speakers:

Dr. Allan Pemba, *Executive Vice President of Roche*
Jennifer Lotito, *CEO of (Red)*

7 – 9 PM: Working Dinner

Seating is arranged to expose participants to a diverse range of views and provide the opportunity for a meaningful exchange of ideas. Scholars and lawmakers are rotated daily. Discussions will focus on U.S.-Africa policy issues raised over the course of the week's presentations.

SATURDAY, August 16:

Senator and Susan Curtis depart LVI at 1:15 PM on flight 4Z 0483

SUNDAY, August 17:

Senator and Susan Curtis arrive in SLC at 4:05 PM on flight BA 6812