

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-0301**

March 22, 2016

The Honorable Kay Granger  
Chairman  
Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on State, Foreign  
Operations and Related Agencies  
U.S. House of Representatives  
HT-2 The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on State, Foreign  
Operations and Related Agencies  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1016 Longworth HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Granger and Ranking Member Lowey:

As you begin work on the fiscal year (FY) 2017 State, Foreign Operations and Related Agencies bill, we urge you to include language that ensures that State Department resources are not wasted conducting opinion polls of foreign nations.

Accordingly, we ask that you include language similar to the following:

*“Sec. \_\_ None of the funds made available in this Act may be used by the Office of Opinion Research within the Department of State’s Bureau of Intelligence and Research for the commission of surveys of foreign public opinion or other similar polls.”*

In a 2015 article published by Breitbart, it was uncovered that the US Department of State used roughly \$36.5 million of taxpayer money between 2007 and 2014 to conduct polls on the attitudes of foreign citizens in other nations. The watchdog group OpenTheBook.com compiled the report which documented numerous examples of egregious State Department-funded polls such as a “survey on medical insurance” in Spain and public attitudes in Austria. According to the Congressional Research Service, the Office of Opinion Research – the office responsible for this polling – received around \$82.67 million over that same time period. This constitutes over 44% of their entire budget.

Such unnecessary spending is a part of the very reason our nation is more than \$19 million

dollars in debt. While the State Department has many integral tasks and functions, squandering millions of dollars conducting surveys on the opinions of foreign nations and their citizens should not be one of them. It is imperative that we rein in such out of control spending. Incorporating this language request will help ensure that State Department funds are used in a fiscally responsible manner.

We thank you for your consideration of this request, and for your leadership on the committee,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Paul A. Gosar, D.D.S.", with a large, stylized initial "P" on the left.

Paul A. Gosar, D.D.S.  
Member of Congress