



## **SUMMARY OF WEAPONS TRAFFICKING LEGISLATION** **September 2024**

### **The Americas Regional Monitoring of Arms Sales Act (ARMAS Act) – HR6618, S4647**

*Senate Sponsors: Cardin, Kaine, Murphy, Durbin, Warren, Markey*

The Americas Regional Monitoring of Arms Sales (ARMAS) Act of 2023 seeks to disrupt firearm trafficking from the United States to Latin American and the Caribbean by implementing stronger transparency, accountability, and oversight mechanisms for U.S. arms exports. In March of 2020, small arms authority was transferred from the State Department to the Commerce Department, creating fewer registration requirements, less oversight, and more exemptions.

The ARMAS Act will:

1. Transfer small arms authority from the Department of Commerce and back to the Department of State to ensure greater accountability and transparency;
2. Require the development of a comprehensive interagency strategy and program, led by the State Department, to disrupt arms trafficking and diversion of exported firearms and create a certification requirement for arm sales;
3. Provide for congressional notification, review, and oversight of certain small arms exports regulated by the Department of State.

### **Caribbean Arms Trafficking Causes Harm Act – HR7799, S4067**

*Senate Sponsors: Murphy, Kaine*

On June 25, 2022, the President signed the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act into law, which created Federal criminal offenses for firearm trafficking and granted the government new authorities to prosecute these offenses. On June 8, 2023, the Vice President announced that the Department of Justice will name a Coordinator for Caribbean Firearms Prosecutions who will oversee prosecutions of arms trafficking to the Caribbean. The CATCH Act will ensure transparency and accountability in the implementation of these measures by requiring the Coordinator for Caribbean Firearms Prosecutions to report to Congress on:

1. The number, destination, and method of transportation of firearms, ammunition, and firearms accessories;
2. Coordination efforts with Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies;
3. Coordination efforts with the Department of Justice and any regional or international organizations, such as CARICOM.

### **Stop Arming Cartels Act – HR8427, S2926**

*Senate Sponsors: Durbin, Blumenthal, Wyden, Welch, Kelly, Hirono, Booker, Murphy, Warren, Kaine, Casey*

International criminal cartels arm themselves by exploiting weak gun laws, as well as the willingness of some U.S. manufacturers and dealers to look the other way as a deadly flow of weapons travels south across the border and through the Caribbean.

The Stop Arming Cartels Act would:

1. Prohibit future nongovernmental manufacture, importation, sale, transfer, or possession of .50 caliber rifles;
2. Regulate existing .50 caliber rifles under the National Firearms Act, with a fee waiver and 12-month grace period for registration on the National Firearms Registration and Transfer Record for those who lawfully possess them under current law;
3. Create an exception to the Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act (PLCAA), allowing victims of gun violence to sue manufacturers and dealers who engage in firearm transactions prohibited under the Foreign Narcotics Kingpin Designation Act (the “Kingpin Act”);
4. Prohibit the sale or transfer of firearms to individuals sanctioned under the Kingpin Act and add Kingpin Act designations to the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS); and
5. Require firearms dealers to report multiple sales of rifles to state and local law enforcement agencies, as they must currently do for handguns.

### **Haiti Criminal Collusion Transparency Act – S396**

*Senate Sponsors: Cardin, Rubio, Scott, Kaine, Cruz, Booker, Schumer, Blumenthal, Markey*

This bill, already passed in the House, requires the Department of State to provide an annual report to Congress on ties between criminal gangs and political and economic elites in Haiti, in order to determine the sources of financial support for the gangs. The bill also requires the President to impose visa- and property-blocking sanctions on certain individuals identified in the report if appropriate under U.S. law. Specifically, the report will:

1. Identify criminal gangs, describe their activities, and describe their geographical area of operation;
2. List Haitian political and economic elites who have ties to criminal gangs and describe their relationship in detail;
3. List Haitian political and economic elites who are currently subject to visa restrictions or sanctions, and include criminal organizations assessed to be trafficking Haitians and other individuals to the U.S. border;
4. Include an assessment of how this activity threatens the Haitian people as well as the interests of the United States, and offer potential actions that the governments of the United States and Haiti can take to address the findings.