

**Marocco on the Hill...and more.** *Devex*, 7 Mar 2025

### **Constitutionality challenged**

Peter Marocco, head of the U.S. State Department's Office of Foreign Assistance and acting deputy administrator at USAID, [threw a curveball in a closed-door briefing](#) with the House Foreign Affairs Committee. He posed a head-scratcher: **"Is foreign aid constitutional?"** Details were sparse on the whys and hows of it all.

The hourlong session gave members just 30 seconds each for questions, sparking some Democrats to call for a more open debate. Devex got the hushed details from insiders.

Marocco didn't hold back, **labeling USAID as "corrupt" and drifting off course** by backing LGBTQ+ and "color revolutions" — echoing Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán. That stirred the pot!

He claimed the review of foreign aid is deep and ongoing, contrary to [court documents saying it's done](#). He's also eyeing more chats with big names such as the Gates Foundation. On delayed programs, Marocco **blamed "malicious overcompliance" by NGOs** and didn't touch on nonpayment issues. He hinted at Department of Justice prosecutions for corruption coming up but kept it vague.

Rep. Mike McCaul highlighted that waivers for programs such as [PEPFAR](#), the U.S. government's global effort to combat HIV/AIDS, aren't doing much good, with funds trickling slowly. **Marocco hit PEPFAR hard, demanding major overhauls.** He also claimed that only 7.3% of USAID funding actually reaches locals — [a misinterpretation of data](#) that refers to the amount spent through local partners.

**Read:** [What Peter Marocco told lawmakers about USAID at a closed door meeting](#)

**ICYMI:** [Funding freeze on US foreign aid is 'over,' Trump administration claims](#)