

**Hope or hype? One US lawmaker says help is on the way.** By Anna Gawel, *Devex Newswire*, 22 Jan 2026

The status of U.S. foreign assistance comes up at the World Economic Forum in Davos — with cautious but clear optimism from a key lawmaker.

Development advocates are holding their breath for — and pinning their hopes on — the [proposed \\$50 billion in U.S. foreign aid spending](#) that could pass Congress very soon.

But as we've been cautioning for over a week now, **it's still a big “could.”** Perhaps most importantly, the budget, far more than what President Donald Trump was seeking, still needs to be signed by Trump himself.

To the casual outside observer, that looks like a tall order. But to an influential Democratic lawmaker, [it looks like a distinct possibility](#).

**“Things are better than we all know and believe,** and we can and should be proud of what we've accomplished together,” says Sen. Chris Coons of Delaware, declaring that “next week, we will finish passing in Congress, **and the president will sign \$50 billion dollars [of foreign aid].”**

Is that hope more like hyperbole? Time will tell, but there are signs that the administration is serious about reinstating some development assistance — as long as it aligns with its “America First” principles.

That includes the [U.S. International Development Finance Corporation](#), or DFC, which has seen a significant boost in its mandate and funding. On the former though, there are concerns that strategic interests in middle- and high-income countries will come at the expense of poverty alleviation in lower-income ones. But Coons remains positive.

“Yes, it is going to do more than initially imagined in critical minerals and working with middle- and upper-income countries, but the reauthorization fight, which is ongoing right now, is about keeping [DFC] development-oriented,” he says.

He also points out that if the \$50 billion bill is signed, **the U.S. will remain the world's largest foreign aid partner**, my colleague Elissa Miolene, [who's in Davos](#), writes.

That may evince skepticism in bruised aid advocates, but Coons asks for patience: “We are having a fight over who we are as a country,” he says. “Give us a little time to have that fight over who we are. **Don't give up on us. We will be back.**”

**Read:** [Sen. Coons expects Senate to pass, Trump to sign \\$50B aid budget bill](#)