

## USGLC's Liz Schray on various important topics - and on SecState on the Hill

It was incredible to look out at the room as we kicked off this year's Impact Forum, filled with nearly 500 state leaders—veterans, farmers, mayors, faith, and business leaders from around the country—who had all come to Washington to send a clear message: **America wins in the world when America leads.**



Let me share a few highlights:

- We marked 250 years since our nation's founding, and considered the next 250 years, with impressive bipartisan leaders on stage—**Sec. Gina Raimondo**, retired CENTCOM Commander **Gen. Joseph Votel**, former WFP head **Gov. David Beasley**, **Sen. Andy Kim (D-NJ)**, **Administration officials**, and **Members of Congress**.
- A common theme was the power of America's diplomacy and strategic international assistance to advance our economic and security interests.
- From panel discussions on Iran and Ukraine, global food and health security, and the critical minerals race, the message was clear—innovations in international assistance are saving lives, creating jobs, and delivering for the American people.
- And my favorite part—hundreds of state leaders took to the Hill to meet with their Senators and Representatives after hearing from Reps. **Nathaniel Moran (R-TX)**, **Sharice Davids (D-KS)**, and **Michael Baumgartner (R-WA)** on how international engagement is “providing hope and making America stronger.”

» [Watch the 2-minute recap video here](#)—and see more highlights below.

At the same time as our Forum, **Secretary Marco Rubio** was testifying on Capitol Hill in front of four separate committees regarding the Administration’s budget request. Senators and Representatives were clearly integrating our same messages into their questions—more on this below.

I am very grateful to everyone who participated in this year’s special Impact Forum. And whether you attended or not, please take a look at the content below and share your thoughts with me.

Best,

Liz

Liz Schraye, USGLC

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## The Global GAB: Special Edition USGLC’s 2026 Impact Forum Highlights

*June 2-3, 2026*

As America celebrates 250 years, nearly 500 business, veteran, humanitarian, farmer, faith, and bipartisan political leaders converged in Washington to share real stories of how America wins when America leads. Here are some highlights and videos from each session:

### AMERICA WINS WHEN AMERICA LEADS

*Schraye on how strategic diplomacy and international assistance can help America shape, lead, and win the next 250 years*



- “Thank you to our wonderful, incredible, strange bedfellows coalition for making our world just a little better and America a whole lot stronger,” said **Liz Schraye**, President and CEO, USGLC. “Our job in this moment is clear—to continue to

connect how international assistance doesn't just save lives, but makes us safer, stronger, and more prosperous right here at home.”

## THE STATE OF THE WORLD: CONFLICT, CRISIS, AND THE FUTURE OF GLOBAL STABILITY

*Votel, Kim, Miliband, and McKenna on growing global threats facing the United States  
—from the war in Iran to the Ebola outbreak in Central Africa*



- **On American global leadership:** “This is not about charity, this is about global security, it’s about global leadership,” said **Senator Andy Kim** (D-NJ). “I was at the State Department, I was at the Pentagon, so I’ve seen these three Ds of defense, diplomacy, and development working hand in hand... and it needs to happen comprehensively and strategically.”
- **On the war in Iran:** “This war is not going to be over. There may be a ceasefire, but that doesn’t mean the war is over,” said retired four-star **General Joseph Votel**, former Commander of Central Command. “The military by itself is not decisive. What is decisive is the diplomatic follow-up that comes with that—the economic tools that are applied in its wake, and the informational aspect we bring to bear—that really consolidates what we do militarily into a strategic victory.”
- **On disease threats:** “The truth about the modern world is that it’s more connected than ever before, and therefore the risks spread faster than ever before,” said former UK Foreign Minister **David Miliband**, President and CEO, International Rescue Committee. “It’s going to take really determined, patient, strategic engagement for this to be a world that doesn’t just spread risks, but also spreads opportunities and security.”

» **Watch the full conversation [HERE](#) with Senator Andy Kim; David Miliband; Gen. Joseph Votel; Tjada D’Oyen McKenna, Mercy Corps CEO; and Sen. Norm Coleman (R-MN).**

## AMERICAN PROSPERITY: A CONVERSATION WITH SECRETARY GINA RAIMONDO

*Raimondo on how economic security is national security, and the importance of investments in assistance and diplomacy to strengthen supply chains and spur trade*



- **On economic security:** “If we’re going to continue to lead the world, your tagline for this whole conference is that ‘America wins when America leads’—I couldn’t say it any better. We must invest in us: in our people, in our infrastructure, in our tech, in our economy to be strong,” said former **Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo**. “The whole point is America is strongest when we’re economically and militarily strong, and that brings the world towards us, and so I think that’s how we have to outcompete China.”

» **Watch the full conversation [HERE](#) with Gina Raimondo, former Secretary of Commerce and former Governor of Rhode Island; former Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman; and Liz Schroyer.**

## AMERICAN PROSPERITY: WINNING THE GLOBAL COMPETITION

*Kwon, Kulp, and Baker on the power of U.S. economic development tools and the private sector to outcompete China in the critical minerals and technology races*



- **On critical minerals:** “We are investing in transport infrastructure, energy infrastructure, critical minerals infrastructure, so that those deposits can come out

and go to the places where they're needed while also helping those countries," said **Sam Kwon**, General Counsel, U.S. Trade and Development Agency. "It has become very clear that's where the White House wants to focus, and we believe there will be a series of projects that will come out of it strengthening our ability and security over these valuable deposits."

- **On private sector engagement:** "We spend billions and billions of dollars with our supply chain, and that is going to small manufacturers, that's going to small businesses, that's going to companies across the great United States. You can't do any of that right without the partnership of the U.S. government to create the access, to create the conditions through their diplomacy, through their development," said **Heather Kulp**, Vice President of Government Affairs, Chevron. "That enables all of us to win and that means that America is stronger, and it means that the world ultimately gets stronger."

» **Watch the full conversation [HERE](#) with Sam Kwon; Heather Kulp; Sasha Baker, Head of National Security Policy, OpenAI; Steve Morrissey, Vice President of Regulatory and Policy, United Airlines; and Sidney Traynham, Senior Policy Director, USGLC.**

## **AMERICA 250: AMERICA'S LEGACY AS A SHINING CITY ON A HILL**

*Beasley, Steiger, and Dougherty on how strategic investments in assistance combat global hunger and improve global health outcomes*



- **On food security:** "I know when I took over, we were about a five-to-six-billion-dollar operation, and when I left, it was a \$14 billion operation. We were stabilizing populations around the world, giving hope to people all over the world, and truly saving taxpayers in America a lot of money, because we were stabilizing populations," said **David Beasley**, former Governor of South Carolina and former Executive Director of World Food Program. "When America leads as that city on the top of a hill, the world responds, the world looks to America."

- **On global health security:** “It was American scientists and American private sector companies and their partners who invented the drugs that made it possible for us to treat HIV,” said **Dr. Bill Steiger**, CEO, Malaria No More. “Whole societies were at the risk of falling apart when teachers and security officials and government officials and the commercial sector were all at risk of dying off. That posed a demonstrable risk to American security, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa.”
- **On investments in nutrition:** “Prenatal vitamins prevent stunting, small births, stillbirths,” said **Maggie Dougherty**, Vice President of North American Advocacy, Eleanor Crook Foundation. “So, these are one of the innovations that is made in America, supported by Americans, and saving lives all around the world.”

» **Watch the full conversation [HERE](#) with David Beasley; Maggie Dougherty; Dr. Jenelle Krishnamoorthy, Senior Vice President of Global Policy and Public Affairs, Merck; Dr. Bill Steiger; Sean Callahan, President and CEO, Catholic Relief Services; and Beverly Bashor, Assistant General Counsel, Compassion International.**

## IMPACT 2026: The Future of International Assistance

*Mowers, Richardson, Parker on the Trump Admin approach and opportunities to deliver strategic, effective, and accountable international assistance*



- **On advancements in global health:** “I think the really exciting one is the advancements in the prevention and treatments. You have long-term acting PrEP, Lenacapavir, the public-private partnership that Global Health Security and Diplomacy at the State Department launched with Gilead,” said **Matt Mowers**, President, Valcour LLC and former Trump White House Senior Advisor. “The number of free doses they’re putting out there—if every single individual who could potentially contract HIV takes Lenacapavir once every couple of months, you’re going to stop the disease. That’s incredible progress.”

» **Watch the full conversation [HERE](#) with Matt Mowers; Jim Richardson, National Outreach Director, USGLC; and Richard Parker, Senior Policy Advisor, USGLC.**

## **TEAM USA: LEADING A DECADE OF SPORTS DIPLOMACY**

*Placek on the role of sports as a foreign policy tool as the U.S. prepares to host FIFA World Cup games and 2028 Olympics*



- **On sports diplomacy:** “There’s hunger for this type of engagement, and we want to figure out how we can maximize the impact of sports diplomacy. It’s sometimes talked about as soft power, and soft power is great; however, it’s strategic power,” said **Rob Placek**, Senior Advisor for Sports Diplomacy, U.S. Department of State.

» **Watch the full conversation [HERE](#) with Rob Placek; Reggie Gray, President and CEO, Houston Intercontinental Chamber of Commerce; and Richard Parker.**

## **IMPACT 2026: GLOBAL LEADERSHIP AND THE MIDTERM ELECTIONS**

*Erickson and Elrod on foreign policy and the upcoming midterm elections*



- **On the midterms:** “Typically, foreign policy does not drive elections, it doesn't motivate voters in the same way that the economy does, and other kitchen table issues, but I think this one is different,” said **Adrienne Elrod**, Democratic strategist and Co-Founder, Elrod Gifford Group.
- **On America’s role in the world:** “I firmly believe, because I've seen it firsthand, that the United States not only has a role to play in the world, obviously, but should be leading,” said **Erick Erickson**, Conservative Commentator and Host, The Erick Erickson Show.

» **Watch the full conversation [HERE](#) with Adrienne Elrod; Erick Erickson; Mayor Michael Owens, City of Mableton, Georgia; and Jason Gross, Executive Director, USGLC.**

## FROM SURVIVAL TO SERVICE, TURNING PAIN INTO PURPOSE

*Keith and Aviva Siegel on surviving Hamas captivity and their humanitarian mission to spread good in the world*



- “Going through what I went through in Gaza—I was starved while they ate in front of me and smiled,” said **Aviva Siegel**. “One of the days, Keith said to me after I asked, please just ask once more for water, he begged, and we didn't get water. So, for me to think about people in this world now, 2026, that haven't got the basic water, just water. We have to help them.”

» **Watch the full conversation [HERE](#) with Keith and Aviva Siegel, Captivity Survivors and IsraAID Ambassadors; and Liz Schroyer.**

## USGLC CAPITOL HILL DAY

- On Day 2 of the Impact Forum, hundreds of our state leaders spread out across Capitol Hill for dozens of meetings with Senators and Members of Congress to thank Congress for passing a FY26 budget that funds the tools America needs to

win and lead, and to urge continued support for smart, strategic investments in international assistance and diplomacy—on the same day that Secretary of State Marco Rubio was testifying before Congress on the Department of State’s FY27 budget request (more on this below).

- Meetings included **Sen. Jerry Moran** (R-KS), **Sen. Jon Ossoff** (D-GA), **Sen. Todd Young** (R-IN), **Sen. Chris Coons** (D-DE), **Sen. Lisa Blunt-Rochester** (D-DE), **Rep. Jefferson Shreve** (R-IN), and **Rep. Chris Pappas** (D-NH), and more.

## TOP PHOTOS FROM IMPACT FORUM



» *See all the photos [here on Flickr](#)*

## SECRETARY RUBIO ON CAPITOL HILL

As USGLC leaders took our message to Capitol Hill, Secretary of State Marco Rubio testified before the four key appropriations and authorizing committees, with bipartisan members and senators raising many of our core themes.

- **SFOPS Chairman Lindsey Graham (R-SC) on soft power:** "Soft power to me has the potential to make us safer in very troubled parts of the world... global health and humanitarian aid are again national security in another form." (**See video clip [here on X](#)**)
- **Secretary Rubio on South Korea’s shift from aid recipient to trade partner:** “South Korea used to be an aid recipient... Today, South Korea is the ninth largest economy in the world, and they are a donor state.” (**See video clip [here on X](#)**)

- **Senator Susan Collins (R-ME) on GAVI:** “Gavi, as you well know, plays a critical role in preventing the spread of infectious diseases around the globe and helps to protect public health in our country as well by stopping outbreaks before they reach our borders. And that’s particularly important right now as the world is responding to the Ebola outbreak in the DRC.” *(See [video clip here on X](#))*
  - **Senator Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH) on Ambassador vacancies:** “Right now, the United States has more than 100 vacant ambassador posts...in Africa alone, 37 of our 51 embassies have no ambassador, and China’s filling that vacuum.” *(See [video clip here on X](#))*
  - **SFOPS Ranking Member Brian Schatz (D-HI) on the Global Fund:** “You have \$2.5 billion in unspent funds we provided specifically for the Global Fund... there’s still \$661 million that you could move tomorrow morning.” Sec. Rubio response: “I think that will move shortly—very quickly.” *(See [video clip here on X](#))*
  - **SFRC Chairman Jim Risch (R-ID) on the Ebola outbreak:** “The Ebola outbreak in Eastern Congo, now affecting the entire region, highlights how conflict and humanitarian crises abroad threaten the health and security of the American people here at home.” *(See [video clip here on X](#))*
  - **NSRP Ranking Member Lois Frankel (D-FL) on American leadership:** “Diplomacy prevents conflicts before they erupt... a global health program stops outbreaks before they reach our shores; development reduces the desperation that fuels extremism; and strong alliances ensure that we do not face threats alone. That’s how America leads.” *(See [video clip here on X](#))*
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