

We affirm the resolution that the United States should lift its embargo against Cuba.

A goal of the Cuban embargo¹ is “to assist the Cuban people in regaining their freedom and prosperity”. This goal has absolutely failed.

Contention 1: Healthcare.

Benefits would come to both the US and Cuban health care systems.

The National Center for Biotechnological Information² states that one of the biggest benefits of ending the Cuban embargo is “improved research collaborations between American and Cuban scientists.” WIRED³ furthers that an example of this is preventative care. Cuba has recently developed a vaccine that contributes to the preventing and curing of lung cancer. American doctors have limited access to this technology under the embargo.

In addition, benefits would come to pediatric care.

Under the terms of the U.S. embargo, medical equipment and medicines manufactured under US patents cannot be sold to the Cuban government,⁴ disproportionately affecting children. For example, the UN Population Fund and Amnesty International⁵ state that these patents include those for treatments for types of cancer, valves for pediatric cardiac arrhythmia treatment, anaesthetics, and vaccines for diseases including polio, and haemophilic influenza. Lack of access to these treatments worsens Cuban people’s health.

Contention 2: The Lift will benefit the economy.

Sub Point A: The Cuban Economy

The Cuban Embargo harms Cuba economically.

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¹ <https://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/Documents/libertad.pdf>

² <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4605162/>

³ <https://www.wired.com/2015/05/cimavax-roswell-park-cancer-institute>

⁴ https://www.wola.org/sites/default/files/downloadable/Cuba/past/cuba_myths_facts.pdf

⁵ <http://www.amnestyusa.org/pdfs/amr250072009eng.pdf>

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This has caused a huge loss to the economy of Cuba. The UN⁷ reports that the Cuban economy has cost 1.1 trillion dollars because of the embargo. In the financial year of 2015, the Cuban Embargo⁸ cost Cuba 4.6 billion dollars. Helen Yaffe⁹ says that this is 14.5% of their GDP.

This lack of wealth is reflected in food availability.

Daniel Griswold from the Cato Institute¹⁰ concludes that the embargo has reduced food quality in Cuba. Eliza Barclay¹¹ from NPR says that since former President Obama reduced some food trade restrictions on Cuba, more food can be imported into the country. This is important because Cuba imports 80% of their food. She furthered that “certain U.S. producers that don’t currently sell to Cuba — like fruit and vegetables producers — may finally be able to offer the Cuban government a competitive price.”

Amnesty International¹² adds that Cuba’s inability to import nutritional products is contributing to a high prevalence of iron deficiency anemia. UNICEF¹³ contributes that the condition affects 37.5 percent of Cuba’s children under three years old compared to the 3% of US children affected by the same disorder.¹⁴

Iron deficiency anemia leads to fatigue, weakness, heart and lung problems, and nutrition issues, according to the Mayo Clinic.¹⁵

Sub Point B: The American Economy

The office of the United States Trade Representative¹⁶ explains that “Trade is critical to America's prosperity - fueling economic growth, supporting good jobs at home, raising living standards and helping Americans provide for their families with affordable goods and services.”

This lack of trade with Cuba has created two quantifiable impacts on our economy. First, monetary losses.

⁷ <http://www.un.org/press/en/2014/ga11574.doc.htm>

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<http://www.voanews.com/a/cuba-says-us-embargo-cost-it-four-point-six-billion-dollars-last-year/3501327.html>

⁹ <http://theconversation.com/cuba-is-poor-but-who-is-to-blame-castro-or-50-years-of-us-blockade-69528>

¹⁰ <https://www.cato.org/publications/speeches/four-decades-failure-us-embargo-against-cuba>

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<http://www.npr.org/sections/thesalt/2014/12/18/371478629/what-the-change-in-u-s-cuba-relations-might-mean-for-food>

¹² <http://www.amnestyusa.org/pdfs/amr250072009eng.pdf>

¹³ http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/61/132&Lang=E

¹⁴ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3685880/>

¹⁵ <http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/iron-deficiency-anemia/symptoms-causes/dxc-20266514>

¹⁶ <https://ustr.gov/about-us/benefits-trade>

The US chamber of commerce¹⁷ reports that annually, US exporters lose an estimated 1.7 billion dollars because of the embargo. The Economist¹⁸ explains that this is because Cubans must pay American exporters in cash rather than credit, putting Americans at a disadvantage to other foreign exporters.

Second, job creation.

Natalie Ellen from the London School of Economics and Political Science¹⁹ reports that if restrictions were eased, 6,000 jobs would²⁰ be created in the United States.

Contention 3: Expanding access to technology.

Only 1 in 20 Cubans have internet in their homes, asserts Emilio San Pedro from BBC²¹. Cuba²² believes that this problem is because of the economic impacts of the embargo. The Associated Press News Director for the Caribbean^{23 24} furthers that the lack of trade from the embargo prevented access to US technology and didn't allow the Cuban government to purchase equipment from other nations. Pamina Firchow^{25 26} says that first, the internet can make an oppressed society more connected and second, that the internet provides anonymity, giving people the opportunity to speak out.

Daniel Griswold from the Cato Institute²⁷ says the absence of free trade is destroying Cuba, stating that nations open to trade are more likely to respect human rights. He furthers that "Trade and development give people tools of communication that tend to undermine oppressive authority."

¹⁷ <https://www.uschamber.com/sites/default/files/legacy/testimony/090427tradecuba.pdf>

¹⁸

<http://www.economist.com/news/united-states/21661021-despite-embargo-america-exports-plenty-goods-its-erstwhile-enemy-cuban-deals>

¹⁹

<http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/usappblog/2014/04/14/president-obama-should-pursue-measures-aimed-at-ending-the-cuba-embargo/#Author>

²⁰<https://www.uschamber.com/issue-brief/oppose-unilateral-economic-sanctions>

²¹ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-35865283>

²²

<https://www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2015/01/26/cuban-youth-build-secret-computer-network-despite-wi-fi-ban>

²³

<https://www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2015/01/26/cuban-youth-build-secret-computer-network-despite-wi-fi-ban>

²⁴ https://twitter.com/mweissenstein?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor

²⁵ <http://scar.gmu.edu/sites/default/files/02681102%252E2013%252E793119.pdf>

²⁶ <https://paminafirchow.wordpress.com/>

²⁷ <https://www.cato.org/publications/speeches/four-decades-failure-us-embargo-against-cuba>