# 1NC

Resolved: We negate the resolution; The United States should lift its embargo against Cuba.

Weighing Mechanism: This round should be assessed via cost benefit analysis

## Contention 1: Easing Restrictions

Claim: Easing sanctions has only yielded more religious prescription

**The Obama administration has continued its effort to expand contact between the U.S. and Cuba by easing restrictions on travel, exports, and export financing. Commerce Secretary Penny Pritzker spoke of “building a more open and mutually beneficial relationship.” Even in the best of times the Castros have never been friends of faith in anything other than themselves.** The State Department’s 2014 report on religious liberty reported that it was easier for Cubans to engage in some charitable and educational projects and import Bibles. However, “the government harassed outspoken religious leaders and their followers, including reports of beating, threats, detentions, and restrictions on travel. Religious leaders reported the government tightened controls on financial resources.” Last year the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom was similarly critical. The number of believers is growing, but the regime attempts to closely control religious practices. The Commission explained: **“Serious religious freedom violations continue in Cuba, despite improvements for government-approved religious groups.” Never mind the papal visit, “the government continues to detain and harass religious leaders and laity, interfere in religious groups’ internal affairs, and prevent democracy and human rights activists from participating in religious activities.”** <http://www.forbes.com/forbes/welcome/?toURL=http://www.forbes.com/sites/dougbandow/2016/01/28/cuba-attacks-christians-as-washington-liberalizes-economic-ties/&refURL=https://www.google.com/&referrer=https://www.google.com/>

Impact: Civil unrest between the US and Cuba

As the Obama administration slowly chipped away at the embargo, the religious prosecutions increased which means if the embargo is lifted there will be a spike in religious prosecutions for Christians in Cuba. This is against US Ideals of freedom of religion and will in turn cause civil unrest between both countries shortly after the ban is lifted which can create tensions between the countries yet again.

## Contention 2: Environmental Harms

Claim: The embargo promotes environmental sustainability

A team set to work, immobilizing the shark’s mouth and tail, pouring water over it to keep it breathing and inserting a yellow plastic tag into a small hole punched in its dorsal fin. “What is its condition?” Dr. Pina’s wife, Tamara Figueredo Martín, asked. “Excellent, the condition is excellent,” Dr. Pina said, before the team pulled out the hook, carefully lifted the shark up and tossed it back into the ocean. A marine biologist and director of Cuba’s Center for Coastal Ecosystem Research, Dr. Pina has spent much of his career studying the abundance of fish and other wildlife in this archipelago 50 miles off the country’s south coast, a region so fecund it has been called the Galápagos of the Caribbean. **As a student at Havana University, Dr. Pina took part in the first oceans survey in Jardines de la Reina (Gardens of the Queen) after the Cuban government established a 367-square-mile marine preserve here in 1996, tightly restricting tourism in the preserve and banning all fishing except for lobster**, an important part of Cuba’s economy. He has completed many other studies since, demonstrating, for example, the beneficial effects of the preserve on fish populations inside and outside the marine sanctuary. And research by Dr. Pina’s center played a role in the government’s decision to designate a marine protected area of about 830 square miles in 2010. https://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/14/science/crown-jewel-of-cubas-coral-reefs.html

The embargo, preventing many American tourists from visiting cuba, has kept the coral reefs at prime condition. However, if trade sanctions are repealed, tourism will become a major market for Cuba. Therefore, coral health will not be taken into account leading to its downfall.

Impact: Biodiversity of the oceans collapse

Coral reefs are part of the foundation of the ocean food chain. Nearly half the fish the world eats make their homes around them. Hundreds of millions of people worldwide — by some estimates, 1 billion across [Asia](http://www.csmonitor.com/tags/topic/Asia" \t "_self) alone — depend on them for their food and their livelihoods. <http://www.csmonitor.com/From-the-news-wires/2010/0326/Death-of-coral-reefs-could-devastate-nations>

Because Coral reefs are essential to the marine food chain, their extinction would essentially cause a ripple effect wiping out many more species that cannot survive without them. With Cuban coral reefs facing extinction with the repealing of sanctions, it could lead to economic unrest that is far worse than the costs we pay for keeping the embargo right now. The whole fish market will collapse due to lack of bio diversity and many other species, even on land, can suffer from this extinction effect.

## Contention 3: Foreign Aid

**“The embargo on Cuba is the most comprehensive set of US sanctions on any country, including the other countries designated by the US government to be state sponsors of terrorism”.** As (Rennack 2015) reports, the embargo prohibits foreign aid “to the present government of Cuba.”  Lifting the embargo would allow foreign aid to flow to the authoritarian and autocratic Cuban government. In an empirical study of 97 countries, Ahmed 2012 finds that providing foreign aid to an authoritarian government strengthens its regime and reduces the probability of government turnover.

Strengthening this oppressive government has three impacts.

**First, an increase in political silencing.** The Cuban government censors opposing political viewpoints, and hinders everyone from expressing who they are. This leads to a non-progressive society that will degrade the lives of citizens by preventing them from accessing all of their human rights.

**Second, an increase in religious rights violations.** Making Cuba’s authoritarian nature stronger motivates it to escalate its repression of religious institutions.As Valladares 2016 reports, this is because religion offers reasoning for individuals to keep rights that the Cuban government wants to control. He continues that there was a 1,000% increase in overall religious liberty violations from 2014 to 2015.

**Third, an increase in violence crimes.** Svolik 2012 reports in an empirical study that authoritarian repression increases military intervention when there are threats to those in power. Making Cuba’s regime stronger therefore makes military conflict a more viable method of control.

By voting Neg you are voting for an increase in Safety, Healthier atmosphere, and continuing our success as an individual country engaging in individual commerce, but as alliances.