

114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1579

To establish United States embassies with consular services in the five countries in the Caribbean with which the United States has diplomatic relations but no permanent diplomatic presence: Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 24, 2015

Mr. ENGEL (for himself, Mr. MEEKS, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. HASTINGS, Ms. LEE, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. SIRES, and Mr. DEUTCH) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

A BILL

To establish United States embassies with consular services in the five countries in the Caribbean with which the United States has diplomatic relations but no permanent diplomatic presence: Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “United States-Carib-
5 bean Partnership Act of 2015”.

1 **SEC. 2. DEFINITION.**

2 In this Act, the term “appropriate congressional com-
3 mittees” means the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the
4 House of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign
5 Relations of the Senate.

6 **SEC. 3. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) While often overlooked, the countries of the
9 Caribbean are important United States partners.

10 (2) United States-Caribbean cooperation on
11 commerce, security, and energy must be deepened.

12 (3) The countries of the Caribbean are key vot-
13 ing members of the Organization of American
14 States.

15 (4) There are five countries in the Caribbean
16 with which the United States has diplomatic rela-
17 tions, but within which the United States does not
18 have a permanent diplomatic presence. Those coun-
19 tries are Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, St. Kitts
20 and Nevis, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent and the Gren-
21 adines.

22 (5) Diplomatic relations with these five coun-
23 tries are conducted through the United States Em-
24 bassy in Bridgetown, Barbados.

25 (6) Due to the lack of presence of United
26 States diplomats in these five countries, citizens of

1 these five countries are required to travel to Bar-
2 bados for all consular services.

3 (7) Due to the lack of presence of United
4 States diplomats in these five countries, in order to
5 meet with local officials, civil society representatives,
6 private sector leaders, United States citizens or oth-
7 ers, embassy officials must fly from Barbados to
8 these countries on what are often expensive, some-
9 times infrequent flights and remain overnight in
10 what are often expensive hotel rooms.

11 (8) Due to the lack of presence of United
12 States diplomats in these five countries, United
13 States citizens living in and visiting these five coun-
14 tries do not have full consular services, and in the
15 event of a consular emergency, air traffic could be
16 shut off to any of these islands, in effect stranding
17 United States citizens without full in-country con-
18 sular services.

19 (9) Due to the lack of presence of United
20 States diplomats in these five countries, key events,
21 meetings, ceremonies, and other opportunities are
22 often not attended by United States officials as they
23 are in other countries where there is a permanent
24 diplomatic presence.

1 (10) Due to the lack of presence of United
2 States diplomats in these five countries, it is more
3 difficult for United States diplomats to establish
4 close working relationships with local officials, civil
5 society representatives, and others.

6 (11) Due to the lack of presence of United
7 States diplomats in these five countries, United
8 States official diplomatic interaction with these
9 countries, including delivery of demarches and other
10 diplomatic messages, which the Secretary of State
11 sometimes requires embassy officials to personally
12 deliver, particularly if of a confidential nature, is
13 often relegated to telephone, facsimile, or email, dra-
14 matically reducing the ability of the United States to
15 engage host governments in substantive dialogue.

16 (12) Due to the lack of presence of United
17 States diplomats in these five countries, it is more
18 difficult for the United States to conduct public di-
19 plomacy in these five countries.

1 **SEC. 4. ESTABLISHMENT OF UNITED STATES EMBASSIES**
2 **WITH CONSULAR SERVICES IN ANTIGUA AND**
3 **BARBUDA, DOMINICA, ST. KITTS AND NEVIS,**
4 **ST. LUCIA, AND ST. VINCENT AND THE GREN-**
5 **ADINES.**

6 Not later than five years after the date of the enact-
7 ment of this Act, the Secretary of State shall establish
8 United States embassies with consular services in Antigua
9 and Barbuda, Dominica, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia,
10 and St. Vincent and the Grenadines to—

11 (1) provide consular services to citizens of these
12 countries and United States citizens living in or
13 traveling to these countries; and

14 (2) engage in direct diplomacy with appropriate
15 government counterparts in these countries.

16 **SEC. 5. REPORT.**

17 Not later than one year after the date of the enact-
18 ment of this Act and annually thereafter until the require-
19 ments under section 4 have been satisfied, the Secretary
20 of State shall submit to the appropriate congressional
21 committees a report on the progress made toward carrying
22 out such section.

23 **SEC. 6. EXCEPTION FOR DELAY.**

24 The Secretary of State may delay for up to one year
25 the carrying out of section 4 if the Secretary determines
26 that more time is needed to carry out such section and

1 submits to the appropriate congressional committees a re-
2 port explaining the reason for such delay.

3 **SEC. 7. LIMITATION ON ADDITIONAL FUNDING.**

4 To carry out this Act, the Secretary of State may
5 use only amounts that are available from the Embassy Se-
6 curity, Construction, and Maintenance account and the
7 Diplomatic and Consular Programs account of the De-
8 partment of State for such purpose.

○