

115TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 5681

To amend the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 to clarify certain responsibilities of the Global Engagement Center of the Department of State, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 7, 2018

Mr. SCHNEIDER (for himself and Mr. TED LIEU of California) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To amend the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 to clarify certain responsibilities of the Global Engagement Center of the Department of State, and for other purposes.

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 “Global Engagement
5 Center Authorities Act of 2018”.

1 **SEC. 2. GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT CENTER.**

2 Section 1287 of the National Defense Authorization
3 Act for Fiscal Year 2017 (22 U.S.C. 2656 note) is amend-
4 ed—

5 (1) by amending paragraph (2) of subsection
6 (a) to read as follows:

7 “(2) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the Center
8 shall be to direct, lead, synchronize, integrate, and
9 coordinate efforts of the Federal Government to rec-
10 ognize, understand, expose, and counter foreign
11 state and non-state propaganda and disinformation
12 efforts aimed at undermining or influencing the poli-
13 cies, security, or stability of the United States and
14 United States allies and partner nations.”;

15 (2) in subsection (b)—

16 (A) by amending paragraph (1) to read as
17 follows:

18 “(1) Direct, lead, synchronize, integrate, and
19 coordinate interagency and international efforts to
20 track and evaluate counterfactual narratives abroad
21 that threaten the policies, security, or stability of the
22 United States and United States allies and partner
23 nations.”;

24 (B) by amending paragraph (4) to read as
25 follows:

1 “(4) Identify current and emerging trends in
2 foreign propaganda and disinformation in order to
3 coordinate and shape the development of tactics,
4 techniques, and procedures to expose and refute for-
5 eign propaganda and disinformation, and pro-ac-
6 tively support the promotion of credible, fact-based
7 narratives and policies to audiences outside the
8 United States.”;

9 (C) by redesignating paragraphs (6)
10 through (10) as paragraphs (7) through (11),
11 respectively;

12 (D) by inserting after paragraph (5) the
13 following new paragraph:

14 “(6) Measure and evaluate the activities of the
15 Center, including the outcomes of such activities,
16 and implement mechanisms to ensure activities of
17 the Center are updated to reflect the results of such
18 measurement and evaluation.”; and

19 (E) by amending paragraph (8), as so re-
20 designated, to read as follows:

21 “(8) Utilize information from appropriate inter-
22 agency entities to identify the countries, geographic
23 areas, and populations most susceptible to propa-
24 ganda and disinformation, as well as the countries,
25 geographic areas, and populations in which such

1 propaganda and disinformation is likely to cause the
2 most harm.”;

3 (3) in subsection (d), by amending paragraphs
4 (1) and (2) to read as follows:

5 “(1) DETAILEES AND ASSIGNEES.—Any Fed-
6 eral Government employee may be detailed or as-
7 signed to the Center with or without reimbursement,
8 consistent with applicable laws and regulations re-
9 garding such employee, and such detail or assign-
10 ment shall be without interruption or loss of status
11 or privilege.

12 “(2) OTHER PERSONNEL.—The Secretary of
13 State should, when hiring additional United States
14 citizen personnel, preference use of Foreign Service
15 limited appointments in accordance with section 309
16 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (22 U.S.C.
17 3949). The Secretary may hire United States citi-
18 zens or aliens, as appropriate, including as personal
19 services contractors, for purposes of personnel re-
20 sources of the Center, if—

21 “(A) the Secretary determines that exist-
22 ing personnel resources or expertise are insuffi-
23 cient;

24 “(B) the period in which services are pro-
25 vided by a personal services contractor, includ-

1 ing options, does not exceed 3 years, unless the
2 Secretary determines that exceptional cir-
3 cumstances justify an extension of up to one
4 additional year;

5 “(C) not more than 50 United States citi-
6 zens or aliens are employed as personal services
7 contractors under the authority of this para-
8 graph at any time; and

9 “(D) the authority of this paragraph is
10 only used to obtain specialized skills or experi-
11 ence or to respond to urgent needs.”;

12 (4) in subsection (e), by amending paragraph
13 (2) to read as follows:

14 “(2) NOTICE REQUIREMENT.—The Secretary of
15 Defense shall notify the Committee on Armed Serv-
16 ices, the Committee on Appropriations, and the
17 Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Rep-
18 resentatives, and the Committee on Armed Services,
19 the Committee on Appropriations, and the Com-
20 mittee on Foreign Relations of the Senate of a pro-
21 posed transfer under paragraph (1) not less than 15
22 days prior to making such transfer.”;

23 (5) in subsection (f), by amending paragraphs
24 (1) and (2) to read as follows:

1 “(1) AUTHORITY FOR GRANTS.—The Center is
2 authorized to provide grants or contracts of financial
3 support to civil society groups, media content pro-
4 viders, nongovernmental organizations, federally
5 funded research and development centers, private
6 companies, or academic institutions for the following
7 purposes:

8 “(A) To support local entities and linkages
9 among such entities, including independent
10 media entities, that are best positioned to refute
11 foreign propaganda and disinformation in af-
12 fected communities.

13 “(B) To collect and store in print, online,
14 and social media examples of disinformation
15 and propaganda directed at the United States
16 and United States allies and partner nations.

17 “(C) To analyze and report on tactics,
18 techniques, and procedures of foreign informa-
19 tion warfare and other efforts with respect to
20 disinformation and propaganda.

21 “(D) To support efforts by the Center to
22 counter efforts by foreign entities to use
23 disinformation and propaganda to undermine or
24 influence the policies, security, and social and

1 political stability of the United States and
2 United States allies and partner nations.

3 “(2) FUNDING AVAILABILITY AND LIMITA-
4 TIONS.—The Secretary of State shall provide that
5 each entity that receives funds under this subsection
6 is selected in accordance with the relevant existing
7 regulations through a process that ensures such en-
8 tity has the credibility and capability to carry out ef-
9 fectively and in accordance with United States inter-
10 ests and objectives the purposes specified in para-
11 graph (1) for which such entity received such fund-
12 ing.”;

13 (6) by redesignating subsections (h) and (i) as
14 subsections (i) and (j), respectively; and

15 (7) by inserting after subsection (g) the fol-
16 lowing new subsection:

17 “(h) CONGRESSIONAL BRIEFINGS.—The Secretary of
18 State, together with the heads of other relevant Federal
19 departments and agencies, shall provide a briefing to the
20 Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on
21 Armed Services of the House of Representatives and the
22 Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on
23 Armed Services of the Senate not less often than annually
24 regarding the activities of the Global Engagement Center.

- 1 The briefings required under this subsection shall termi-
- 2 nate on the date specified in subsection (j).”.

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