

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 5463

To establish the Department of Homeland Security Northern Border Mission Center.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

DECEMBER 10, 2024

Mr. PETERS introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

A BILL

To establish the Department of Homeland Security Northern Border Mission Center.

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. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY**

4 **NORTHERN BORDER MISSION CENTER.**

5 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 1 year after
6 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall
7 establish the Department of Homeland Security Northern
8 Border Mission Center.

9 (b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the Center shall be
10 to serve as the Department’s forward deployed centralized

1 operations support center for domain awareness, informa-
2 tion sharing, intelligence, training, and stakeholder en-
3 gagement with Federal, State, tribal, local, and inter-
4 national government partners along the northern border
5 of the United States.

6 (c) LOCATION.—The Center shall be placed along the
7 northern border at a location that is collocated with an
8 existing U.S. Border Patrol sector headquarters, an Air
9 and Marine Operations branch, and a United States Coast
10 Guard air station, and other existing Department activi-
11 ties.

12 (d) COMPONENTS.—

13 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Center shall collocate
14 personnel and activities of—

15 (A) U.S. Customs and Border Protection;

16 (B) the United States Coast Guard;

17 (C) U.S. Immigration and Customs En-
18 forcement’s Homeland Security Investigations;

19 and

20 (D) other components and offices of the
21 Department that the Secretary determines to be
22 necessary, including to support the training,
23 technology testing, and development described
24 in subsection (e).

1 (2) ADDITIONAL PERSONNEL.—Additional Fed-
2 eral, State, tribal, local, and international govern-
3 ment partners may be collocated as the Secretary
4 determines to be necessary and appropriate to sup-
5 port the operations described in this section.

6 (e) FUNCTIONS.—

7 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Center shall perform
8 the functions described in this subsection in addition
9 to any other functions assigned by the Secretary. In
10 carrying out these functions, the Center shall sup-
11 port the Department’s northern border security op-
12 erations.

13 (2) NORTHERN BORDER STRATEGY.—The Cen-
14 ter, in collaboration with relevant offices and compo-
15 nents of the Department, shall—

16 (A) serve as a coordination mechanism for
17 operational components for the implementation
18 of the Department of Homeland Security
19 Northern Border Strategy and any successor
20 strategy and support appropriate offices of the
21 Department in the evaluation and updating of
22 the Department of Homeland Security North-
23 ern Border Strategy and any successor strat-
24 egy; and

1 (B) support the development of best prac-
2 tices and policies for personnel at the northern
3 border to support such implementation.

4 (3) TRAINING.—The Center shall serve as a
5 training location to support the delivery of training
6 or exercises for Department personnel and Federal,
7 State, tribal, local, and international government
8 partners.

9 (4) RESOURCE AND TECHNOLOGICAL NEEDS
10 AND CHALLENGES.—The Center, in collaboration
11 with relevant offices and components of the Depart-
12 ment, shall—

13 (A) identify resource and technological
14 needs or challenges affecting security along the
15 northern border; and

16 (B) serve as a testing ground and dem-
17 onstration location for the testing of border se-
18 curity technology, including determining such
19 technology's suitability and performance in the
20 northern border and maritime environments.

21 (5) AIR AND MARINE OPERATIONS.—

22 (A) QUICK REACTION CAPABILITIES.—In
23 support of the Center, U.S. Customs and Bor-
24 der Protection's Air and Marine Operations
25 shall establish and maintain capability that is

1 collocated with the Center and available for
2 quick deployment in support of the northern
3 border missions, U.S. Customs and Border Pro-
4 tection, and the Department, including missions
5 in the Great Lakes region.

6 (B) NORTHERN BORDER DOMAIN AWARE-
7 NESS.—In order to coordinate with the Center
8 and support its operations, the Air and Marine
9 Operations Center shall collocate personnel and
10 resources with the Center to enhance the De-
11 partment’s capabilities to—

12 (i) support air and maritime domain
13 awareness and information sharing efforts
14 along the northern border;

15 (ii) provide dedicated monitoring of
16 northern border systems; and

17 (iii) lead, in coordination with other
18 U.S. Customs and Border Protection com-
19 ponents, Federal, State, tribal, local, and
20 international governments, and private sec-
21 tor partners, the Center’s efforts to track
22 and monitor legitimate cross-border traffic
23 involving unmanned aircraft and un-
24 manned aircraft systems.

1 (6) COUNTER-UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYS-
2 TEMS.—

3 (A) IN GENERAL.—Pursuant to policies es-
4 tablished by the Secretary, consistent with sec-
5 tion 210G of the Homeland Security Act of
6 2002 (6 U.S.C. 124n), the Center shall support
7 counter-unmanned aircraft systems operations
8 along the northern border to respond to the in-
9 creased use of unmanned aircraft systems.

10 (B) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in
11 this section may be construed to provide addi-
12 tional authority related to detection, mitigation,
13 research, development, or testing of unmanned
14 aircraft systems or counter-unmanned aircraft
15 systems.

16 (7) PRIVACY AND CIVIL RIGHTS.—The Center,
17 in collaboration with the Chief Privacy Officer and
18 the Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties of the
19 Department, shall ensure that operations and prac-
20 tices of the Center comply with the privacy and civil
21 rights policies of the Department and its compo-
22 nents, and as necessary, ensure there are resources
23 or personnel available to support the Center’s mis-
24 sion onsite.

1 (8) NONCONTIGUOUS NORTHERN BORDER.—

2 The Center, in collaboration with relevant offices
3 and components of the Department, shall identify
4 the specific challenges that exist along the non-
5 contiguous international land border with Canada
6 and the maritime border with Russia, including re-
7 source, technological challenges, and domain aware-
8 ness.

9 (f) ANNUAL REPORTING.—Not later than 180 days
10 after the establishment of the Center, and annually there-
11 after, the Secretary shall submit a report, that may in-
12 clude a classified annex or a sensitive but unclassified
13 annex, to the Committee on Homeland Security and Gov-
14 ernmental Affairs of the Senate, the Committee on For-
15 eign Relations of the Senate, the Committee on Com-
16 merce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate, the
17 Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Rep-
18 resentatives, the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the
19 House of Representatives, and the Committee on Trans-
20 portation and Infrastructure of the House of Representa-
21 tives that describes the activities of the Center during the
22 most recently concluded fiscal year, including—

23 (1) personnel levels;

1 (2) additional resources that are needed to sup-
2 port the operations of the Center and northern bor-
3 der operations of the Department; and

4 (3) any additional assets or authorities that are
5 needed to increase security and domain awareness
6 along the northern border.

7 (g) TEMPORARY DUTY ASSIGNMENTS.—The Sec-
8 retary shall submit a quarterly report to the Committee
9 on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the
10 Senate and the Committee on Homeland Security of the
11 House of Representatives regarding temporary duty as-
12 signments of U.S. Border Patrol agents during the report-
13 ing period, including—

14 (1) the number of agents on temporary duty as-
15 signment;

16 (2) the duration of the temporary duty assign-
17 ment;

18 (3) the sectors from which the agents were as-
19 signed; and

20 (4) the sectors to which the agents were as-
21 signed.

22 (h) REPORT ON LARGE UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYS-
23 TEMS OPERATIONS.—Not later than 1 year after the date
24 of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland
25 Security shall submit a report to the Committee on Home-

1 land Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate, the
2 Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of
3 the Senate, the Committee on Homeland Security of the
4 House of Representatives, and the Committee on Trans-
5 portation and Infrastructure of the House of Representa-
6 tives on the Department's operation of large unmanned
7 aircraft systems. The report shall include information on
8 existing large unmanned aircraft systems, as well as rec-
9 ommendations on how to enable the operations of large
10 unmanned aircraft systems based at the Center estab-
11 lished pursuant to subsection (a) of this section.

12 (i) RULES OF CONSTRUCTION.—

13 (1) AUTHORITY TO ESTABLISH CENTER.—The
14 Center established pursuant to subsection (a) shall
15 be established separate and distinct from the Sec-
16 retary's authorities under section 708 of the Home-
17 land Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 348).

18 (2) COMMANDANT AUTHORITY.—Nothing in
19 this section shall be construed to affect, impinge, or
20 alter any authority of the Commandant of the Coast
21 Guard under title 14 or title 46, United States
22 Code, or limit the Commandant's discretion and
23 ability to deploy Coast Guard assets and personnel.

24 (j) SUNSET.—This section shall cease to be effective
25 beginning on October 1, 2027.

1 (k) NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS.—No additional funds
2 are authorized to be appropriated for the purpose of car-
3 rying out this section.

4 (l) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

5 (1) CENTER.—The term “Center” means the
6 Department of Homeland Security Northern Border
7 Mission Center established pursuant to subsection
8 (a).

9 (2) DEPARTMENT.—The term “Department”
10 means the Department of Homeland Security.

11 (3) NORTHERN BORDER.—The term “northern
12 border” means—

13 (A) the international border between the
14 United States and Canada; and

15 (B) the maritime border between Alaska
16 and the Russian Federation.

17 (4) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
18 the Secretary of Homeland Security.

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