

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 489

To improve the conduct of strategic communication by the Federal
Government.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 13, 2009

Mr. THORNBERRY introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on Foreign Affairs

A BILL

To improve the conduct of strategic communication by the
Federal Government.

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 “Strategic Communica-
5 tion Act of 2009”.

6 **SEC. 2. ESTABLISHMENT OF CENTER FOR STRATEGIC COM-**
7 **MUNICATION.**

8 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

9 (1) The ability of the United States to credibly
10 communicate to populations throughout the world is

1 critical for achieving national objectives and is essen-
2 tial for improving national security and foreign pol-
3 icy.

4 (2) Strategic communication describes a variety
5 of instruments used by governments to understand
6 global attitudes and cultures, to engage in a dialogue
7 of ideas between peoples and institutions, to advise
8 policymakers, diplomats, and military leaders on the
9 public opinion implications of policy choices, and to
10 influence attitudes and behavior through commu-
11 nications strategies.

12 (3) There have been dramatic changes in the
13 world, including changes in technology, changes in
14 religious, ethnic, and regional conflicts, and changes
15 in economic, political, and military relationships.
16 These dramatic changes necessitate that the depart-
17 ments and agencies of the Federal Government re-
18 sponsible for national security and homeland secu-
19 rity work more closely together so they may function
20 more effectively.

21 (4) Since 2001, more than 15 private sector
22 and congressional reports have examined public di-
23 plomacy, with each coming to the conclusion that
24 United States efforts in public diplomacy, a subset
25 of strategic communication, are lacking in leader-

1 ship, strategic direction, interagency coordination,
2 and a culture of measurement and evaluation. Spe-
3 cifically, the Defense Science Board Task Force on
4 Strategic Communication concluded that “United
5 States strategic communication must be trans-
6 formed.”.

7 (b) CENTER FOR STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION.—

8 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year
9 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Sec-
10 retary of State shall solicit from organizations whose
11 primary role is research and analysis related to na-
12 tional security and foreign policy offers to establish
13 a Center for Strategic Communication (in this Act
14 referred to as the “Center”) within such organiza-
15 tions. The Secretary shall select from among such
16 offers one organization to establish the Center.

17 (2) TAX EXEMPT REQUIREMENT.—To be eligi-
18 ble to make an offer under this subsection, an orga-
19 nization shall be an organization described in section
20 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and
21 exempt from tax under section 501(a) of such Code.

22 (c) DUTIES.—The Center shall have the following du-
23 ties:

24 (1) Provide information and analysis on a reg-
25 ular basis to civilian and military decisionmakers in

1 the Department of State, the Department of De-
2 fense, the Department of Justice, the Department of
3 Homeland Security, and the Director of National In-
4 telligence on issues vital to United States national
5 security and foreign policy to enhance the ability of
6 such decisionmakers to make informed decisions re-
7 garding the following:

8 (A) Global public opinion.

9 (B) The role of culture, values, and reli-
10 gion in shaping human behavior.

11 (C) Media trends and influences on audi-
12 ences.

13 (D) Information technologies.

14 (E) The implications of all source intel-
15 ligence assessments.

16 (F) Such other subject matters or issues
17 as such decisionmakers request.

18 (2) Develop plans, themes, products, and pro-
19 grams for the creation and implementation of
20 United States communication strategies that pro-
21 mote diplomatic opportunities, provide a positive
22 view of the United States, and respond to national
23 security threats.

1 (3) Support government-wide strategic commu-
2 nication through services provided on a cost-recovery
3 basis. Such services shall—

4 (A) use, whenever possible, nongovern-
5 mental entities to foster cross-cultural ex-
6 changes of ideas, people, and information;

7 (B) maintain knowledge management sys-
8 tems, language and skills inventories, and pro-
9 cedures to recruit private sector experts for
10 short term assignments; and

11 (C) develop and maintain the ability to de-
12 ploy temporary communication teams to aug-
13 ment planning, recruitment, and training for
14 strategic communication within the Federal
15 Government.

16 (4) Develop tools and techniques to monitor
17 and evaluate the effectiveness, efficiency, and mes-
18 sage continuity of their own operations and of gov-
19 ernment-wide strategic communication initiatives to
20 help adapt plans, themes, products, and programs to
21 meet current and anticipated requirements.

22 (5) Perform functions including—

23 (A) audience polling and analysis, includ-
24 ing analysis related to ethnographic, psycho-

1 graphic, demographic, behavioral and tracking
2 research, and focus groups;

3 (B) cultural influence analysis, including
4 analysis related to values, religion, entertain-
5 ment, and education;

6 (C) analysis of media influences on audi-
7 ences, including analysis related to content
8 analysis, agendas, political and social ten-
9 dencies, relevance and credibility, and media or-
10 ganization structure, ownership, and business
11 models; and

12 (D) fostering cross-cultural exchanges of
13 ideas, peoples, and information.

14 (6) Contract with private sector and academic
15 entities, whenever possible, for a range of products
16 and programs that communicate strategic themes
17 and messages to appropriate target audiences, in-
18 cluding themes and messages related to—

19 (A) respect for human dignity and indi-
20 vidual rights;

21 (B) individual education and economic op-
22 portunity; and

23 (C) personal freedom, safety, and mobility.

24 (7) Mobilize nongovernment initiatives, includ-
25 ing temporary communication teams, coalition build-

1 ing partnerships, and deployment of language-quali-
2 fied global messengers.

3 (d) LIAISON.—The Secretary of State shall designate
4 an individual from the Department of State to serve as
5 a liaison between the departments and agencies described
6 in subsection (c)(1) and the Center.

7 (e) FUNDING.—From amounts appropriated to the
8 Department of State each fiscal year, \$250,000,000 shall
9 be made available to support the administration of the
10 Center and to fund work with private sector and academic
11 entities. Additional funding for projects and programs to
12 be carried out by the Center may be provided through con-
13 tracts and task orders entered into by departments and
14 agencies of the Government.

15 **SEC. 3. REPORT.**

16 Not later than six months after the date of the enact-
17 ment of this Act, the Secretary of State shall submit to
18 Congress a report describing the actions taken in accord-
19 ance with this Act to strengthen the Federal Government's
20 strategic communication capability. The report shall, at a
21 minimum, contain the following information:

22 (1) A description of the efforts taken to under-
23 stand global public opinion, the strategic implica-
24 tions of policymaking, and engage in more effective
25 communication with global audiences.

1 (2) A description of the efforts taken to coordi-
2 nate the components of strategic communication, in-
3 cluding components related to public diplomacy,
4 public affairs, international broadcasting, and mili-
5 tary information operations.

6 (3) Recommendations for additional statutory
7 changes to improve the public diplomacy capabilities
8 of the United States.

9 (4) An examination of the feasibility of estab-
10 lishing a strategic communication organization with-
11 in the National Security Council to coordinate the
12 efforts of the Center.

13 (5) Recommendations for elevating officials of
14 the Department of State who are responsible for
15 matters relating to public diplomacy and public af-
16 fairs to the levels of Deputy Assistant Secretary of
17 State or Senior Advisor to the Assistant Secretary.

18 (6) Recommendations for elevating the Coordi-
19 nator of the Bureau of International Information
20 Programs to Assistant Secretary of State.

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