

113TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. R. 4490

To enhance the missions, objectives, and effectiveness of United States international communications, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 28, 2014

Mr. ROYCE (for himself, Mr. ENGEL, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. KEATING, and Mr. SALMON) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

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## A BILL

To enhance the missions, objectives, and effectiveness of United States international communications, 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; TABLE OF CONTENTS.**

4 (a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the  
5 “United States International Communications Reform Act  
6 of 2014”.

7 (b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for  
8 this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; Table of contents.

- Sec. 2. Findings and declarations.
- Sec. 3. Purposes.
- Sec. 4. Definitions.
- Sec. 5. Broadcasting standards.
- Sec. 6. Eligible broadcast areas.

TITLE I—ESTABLISHMENT, ORGANIZATION, AND MANAGEMENT  
OF THE UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS  
AGENCY

Subtitle A—Establishment of the United States International Communications  
Agency

- Sec. 101. Existence within the executive branch.
- Sec. 102. Establishment of the Board of the United States International Communications Agency.
- Sec. 103. Authorities and duties of the Board of the United States International Communications Agency.
- Sec. 104. Establishment of the Chief Executive Officer of the United States International Communications Agency.
- Sec. 105. Authorities and duties of the Chief Executive Officer of the United States International Communications Agency.
- Sec. 106. Role of the Secretary of State.
- Sec. 107. Role of the Inspector General.
- Sec. 108. Enhanced coordination between United States International Communications Agency and the Freedom News Network; program content sharing; grantee independence.
- Sec. 109. Enhanced coordination among the United States International Communications Agency, the Freedom News Network, and the Department of State; Freedom News Network independence.
- Sec. 110. Grants to the Freedom News Network.
- Sec. 111. Other personnel and compensation limitations.
- Sec. 112. Reporting requirements of the United States International Communications Agency.

Subtitle B—The Voice of America

- Sec. 121. Sense of Congress.
- Sec. 122. Principles of the Voice of America.
- Sec. 123. Duties and responsibilities of the Voice of America.
- Sec. 124. Limitation on Voice of America news, programming, and content; temporary exception for Sub-Saharan Africa; exception for broadcasting to Cuba.
- Sec. 125. Director of Voice of America.

Subtitle C—General Provisions

- Sec. 131. Federal agency coordination in support of United States public diplomacy.
- Sec. 132. Federal agency assistance and coordination with the United States International Communications Agency and the Freedom News Network during international broadcast surges.
- Sec. 133. Freedom News Network right of first refusal in instances of Federal disposal of radio or television broadcast transmission facilities or equipment.
- Sec. 134. Repeal of the United States International Broadcasting Act of 1994.
- Sec. 135. Effective date.

## TITLE II—THE FREEDOM NEWS NETWORK

Sec. 201. Sense of Congress.

## Subtitle A—Consolidation of Existing Grantee Organizations

Sec. 211. Formation of the Freedom News Network from existing grantees.

Sec. 212. Mission of the Freedom News Network.

Sec. 213. Standards and principles of the Freedom News Network.

## Subtitle B—Organization of the Freedom News Network

Sec. 221. Governance of the Freedom News Network.

Sec. 222. Budget of the Freedom News Network.

Sec. 223. Assistance from other Government agencies.

Sec. 224. Reports by the Office of the Inspector General of the Department of State; audits by GAO.

Sec. 225. Amendments to the United States Information and Educational Exchange Act of 1948.

**1 SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND DECLARATIONS.**

2 Congress finds and declares the following:

3 (1) United States international broadcasting ex-  
4 ists to advance the United States interests and val-  
5 ues by presenting accurate, objective, and com-  
6 prehensive news and information, which is the foun-  
7 dation for democratic governance, to societies that  
8 lack a free media.

9 (2) Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of  
10 Human Rights states that “[e]veryone has the right  
11 to freedom of opinion and expression”, and that  
12 “this right includes freedom to hold opinions without  
13 interference and to seek, receive and impart infor-  
14 mation and ideas through any media and regardless  
15 of frontiers”.

16 (3) Secretary of State Hillary Clinton testified  
17 before the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the

1 House of Representatives on January 23, 2013, that  
2 the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) “is  
3 practically a defunct agency in terms of its capacity  
4 to be able to tell a message around the world. So  
5 we’re abdicating the ideological arena and need to  
6 get back into it.”.

7 (4) The BBG, which was created by Congress  
8 to oversee the United States international broad-  
9 casting in the wake of the Cold War, has, because  
10 of structural and managerial issues, had limited suc-  
11 cess to date in both coordinating the various compo-  
12 nents of the international broadcasting framework  
13 and managing the day-to-day operations of the Fed-  
14 eral components of the international broadcasting  
15 framework.

16 (5) The lack of regular attendance by board  
17 members and a periodic inability to form a quorum  
18 have plagued the BBG and, as a result, it has been  
19 functionally incapable of running the agency.

20 (6) The board of governors has only achieved  
21 the full slate of all nine governors for seven of its  
22 17 years of existence, which highlights the difficul-  
23 ties of confirming and retaining governors under the  
24 current structure.

1           (7) Both the Department of State’s Office of  
2           Inspector General and the Government Account-  
3           ability Office have issued reports which outline a se-  
4           verely dysfunctional organizational structure of the  
5           Broadcasting Board of Governors.

6           (8) The Inspector General of the Department of  
7           State concluded in its January 2013 report that dys-  
8           function of the BBG stems from “a flawed legisla-  
9           tive structure and acute internal dissension”.

10          (9) The Inspector General of the Department of  
11          State also found that the BBG’s structure of nine  
12          part-time members “cannot effectively supervise all  
13          United States Government-supported, civilian inter-  
14          national broadcasting”, and its involvement in day-  
15          to-day operations has impeded normal management  
16          functions.

17          (10) The Government Accountability Office re-  
18          port determined that there was significant overlap  
19          among the BBG’s languages services, and that the  
20          BBG did not systematically consider the financial  
21          cost of overlap.

22          (11) According to the Office of the Inspector  
23          General, the BBG’s Office of Contracts is not in  
24          compliance with the Federal Acquisition Regulation,  
25          lacks appropriate contract oversight, and violates the

1 Anti-Deficiency Act. The Office of the Inspector  
2 General also determined that the Broadcasting  
3 Board of Governors has not adequately performed  
4 full and open competitions or price determinations,  
5 has entered into hundreds of personal service con-  
6 tracts without statutory authority, and contractors  
7 regularly work without valid contracts in place.

8 (12) The size and make-up of the BBG work-  
9 force should be closely examined, given the agency's  
10 broader broadcasting and technical mission, as well  
11 as changing media technologies.

12 (13) The BBG should be structured to ensure  
13 that more taxpayer dollars are dedicated to the sub-  
14 stantive, broadcasting, and information-related ele-  
15 ments of the agency's mission.

16 (14) The lack of a coherent and well defined  
17 mission of the Voice of America has led to program-  
18 ming that duplicates the efforts of the Office of  
19 Cuba Broadcasting, Radio Free Asia, RFE/RL, In-  
20 corporated, and the Middle East Broadcasting Net-  
21 work that results in inefficient use of tax-payer  
22 funding.

23 (15) The annual survey conducted by the  
24 "Partnership for Public Service" consistently ranks  
25 the Broadcasting Board of Governors at or near the

1 bottom of all Federal agencies in terms of “overall  
2 best places to work” and “the extent to which em-  
3 ployees feel their skills and talents are used effec-  
4 tively.”. The consistency of these low scores point to  
5 structural, cultural, and functional problems at the  
6 Broadcasting Board of Governors.

7 (16) The Federal and non-Federal organiza-  
8 tions that comprise the United States international  
9 broadcasting framework have different, yet com-  
10 plementary, missions that necessitate coordination at  
11 all levels of management.

12 (17) The Broadcasting Board of Governors has  
13 an overabundance of senior civil service positions,  
14 defined here as full-time employees encumbering  
15 GS-14 and GS-15 positions on the General Sched-  
16 ule pay scale.

17 (18) United States international broadcasting  
18 should seek to leverage public-private partnerships,  
19 including the licensing of content and the use of  
20 technology owned or operated by non-governmental  
21 sources, where possible to expand outreach capacity.

22 (19) Congressional action is necessary at this  
23 time to improve international broadcasting oper-  
24 ations, strengthen the United States public diplo-  
25 macy efforts, enhance the grantee surrogate broad-

1 casting effort, restore focus to news, programming,  
2 and content, and maximize the value of Federal and  
3 non-Federal resources that are dedicated to public  
4 diplomacy and international broadcasting.

5 **SEC. 3. PURPOSES.**

6 The purposes of this Act are as follows:

7 (1) To provide objective, accurate, credible, and  
8 comprehensive news and information to societies  
9 that lack freedom of expression and information.

10 (2) To improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and  
11 flexibility of United States international broad-  
12 casting to allow it to adapt to constantly changing  
13 political and media environments through clarifica-  
14 tion of missions, improved coordination, and organi-  
15 zational restructuring.

16 (3) To coordinate the complementary efforts of  
17 the Department of State and United States inter-  
18 national broadcasting.

19 (4) To create a United States international  
20 broadcasting framework that more effectively  
21 leverages the broadcasting tools available and cre-  
22 ates specialization of expertise in mission oriented  
23 programming, while minimizing waste and ineffi-  
24 ciency.



1           (5) To improve United States international  
2           broadcasting workforce effectiveness, security, and  
3           satisfaction.

4 **SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.**

5           In this Act:

6           (1) **APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMIT-**  
7           **TEES.**—The term “appropriate congressional com-  
8           mittees” means the Committee on Foreign Affairs of  
9           the House of Representatives, the Committee on  
10          Foreign Relations of the Senate, the Committee on  
11          Appropriations of the House of Representatives, and  
12          the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate.

13          (2) **GRANTEE.**—The term “grantee” means the  
14          non-Federal organization described in section  
15          501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and  
16          exempt from tax under section 501(a) of such Code  
17          as of day before the date of the enactment of this  
18          Act that receives Federal funding from the Broad-  
19          casting Board of Governors, and includes Radio  
20          Free Asia, RFE/RL, Incorporated, and the Middle  
21          East Broadcasting Network.

22          (3) **FREEDOM NEWS NETWORK.**—The term  
23          “Freedom News Network” refers to the non-Federal  
24          organization described in section 501(c)(3) of the  
25          Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and exempt from tax

1 under section 501(a) of such Code that would re-  
2 ceive Federal funding and be responsible for pro-  
3 moting democratic freedoms and free media oper-  
4 ations for foreign audiences in societies that lack  
5 freedom of expression and information, and con-  
6 sisting of the consolidation of the grantee in accord-  
7 ance with section 211.

8 (4) PUBLIC DIPLOMACY.—The term “public di-  
9 plomacy” means the effort to achieve broad United  
10 States foreign policy goals and objectives, advance  
11 national interests, and enhance national security by  
12 informing and influencing foreign publics and by ex-  
13 panding and strengthening the relationship between  
14 the people and Government of the United States and  
15 citizens of other countries.

16 **SEC. 5. BROADCASTING STANDARDS.**

17 United States international broadcasting shall incor-  
18 porate the following standards into all of its broadcasting  
19 efforts:

20 (1) Be consistent with the broad foreign policy  
21 objectives of the United States.

22 (2) Be consistent with the international tele-  
23 communications policies and treaty obligations of the  
24 United States.

1           (3) Not duplicate the activities of private  
2 United States broadcasters.

3           (4) Be conducted in accordance with the high-  
4 est professional standards of broadcast journalism  
5 while remaining consistent with and supportive of  
6 the broad foreign policy objectives of the United  
7 States.

8           (5) Be based on reliable, research-based infor-  
9 mation, both quantitative and qualitative, about its  
10 potential audience.

11           (6) Be designed so as to effectively reach a sig-  
12 nificant audience.

13           (7) Promote freedom of expression, religion,  
14 and respect for human rights and human equality.

15 **SEC. 6. ELIGIBLE BROADCAST AREAS.**

16           (a) IN GENERAL.—The Board of the United States  
17 International Communications Agency and the Board of  
18 the Freedom News Network shall ensure that United  
19 States international broadcasting is conducted only to  
20 countries and regions that—

21           (1) lack democratic rule, or the indicia of demo-  
22 cratic rule, such as demonstrable proof of free and  
23 fair elections;

24           (2) lack the legal and political environment that  
25 allows media organizations and journalists to oper-

1       ate free from Government-led or permitted harass-  
2       ment, intimidation, retribution, and from economic  
3       impediments to the development, production, and  
4       dissemination of news and related programming and  
5       content;

6               (3) lack established, domestic, and widely acces-  
7       sible media that provide accurate, objective, and  
8       comprehensive news and related programming and  
9       content; and

10              (4) by virtue of the criteria described in this  
11       subsection, would benefit the national security and  
12       related interests of the United States, and the safety  
13       and security of United States citizens at home and  
14       abroad.

15       (b) EXCEPTION.—The United States International  
16       Communications Agency and the Freedom News Network  
17       may broadcast to countries that fall outside of the criteria  
18       described in subsection (a) if the Chief Executive Officer  
19       of the Agency and the Freedom News Network, in con-  
20       sultation with the Secretary of State, determine it is in  
21       the national security interest of the United States, or in  
22       the interests of preserving the safety and security of  
23       United States citizens at home and abroad, to do so.

1 **TITLE I—ESTABLISHMENT, OR-**  
2 **GANIZATION, AND MANAGE-**  
3 **MENT OF THE UNITED**  
4 **STATES INTERNATIONAL**  
5 **COMMUNICATIONS AGENCY**

6 **Subtitle A—Establishment of the**  
7 **United States International**  
8 **Communications Agency**

9 **SEC. 101. EXISTENCE WITHIN THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH.**

10 The United States International Communications  
11 Agency shall exist within the executive branch of Govern-  
12 ment as an independent establishment described in section  
13 104 of title 5, United States Code.

14 **SEC. 102. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE BOARD OF THE UNITED**  
15 **STATES INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS**  
16 **AGENCY.**

17 (a) **COMPOSITION OF THE BOARD OF THE UNITED**  
18 **STATES INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS AGENCY.—**

19 (1) **IN GENERAL.—**The Board (in this section  
20 referred to as the “Board”) of the United States  
21 International Communications Agency shall consist  
22 of nine members, as follows:

23 (A) Eight voting members who shall be ap-  
24 pointed by the President, by and with the ad-  
25 vice and consent of the Senate.

1 (B) The Secretary of State, who shall also  
2 be a voting member.

3 (2) CHAIR.—The President shall appoint one  
4 member (other than the Secretary of State) as Chair  
5 of the Board, by and with the advice and consent of  
6 the Senate.

7 (3) POLITICAL AFFILIATION.—Exclusive of the  
8 Secretary of State, not more than four members of  
9 the Board shall be of the same political party.

10 (4) RETENTION OF EXISTING BBG MEMBERS.—  
11 The presidentially appointed and Senate-confirmed  
12 members of the Broadcasting Board of Governors  
13 serving as of the date of the enactment of this Act  
14 shall constitute the Board of the United States  
15 International Communications Agency and hold of-  
16 fice the remainder of their original terms of office  
17 without reappointment to the Board.

18 (b) TERM OF OFFICE.—The term of office of each  
19 member of the Board shall be three years, except that the  
20 Secretary of State shall remain a member of the Board  
21 during the Secretary's term of service. Of the other eight  
22 voting members, the initial terms of office of two members  
23 shall be one year, and the initial terms of office of three  
24 other members shall be two years, as determined by the  
25 President. The President shall appoint, by and with the

1 advice and consent of the Senate, Board members to fill  
2 vacancies occurring prior to the expiration of a term, in  
3 which case the members so appointed shall serve for the  
4 remainder of such term. Members may not serve beyond  
5 their terms. When there is no Secretary of State, the Act-  
6 ing Secretary of State shall serve as a member of the  
7 Board until a Secretary is appointed.

8       (c) SELECTION OF BOARD.—Members of the Board  
9 shall be citizens of the United States who are not regular  
10 full-time employees of the United States Government.  
11 Such members shall be selected by the President from  
12 among citizens distinguished in the fields of public diplo-  
13 macy, mass communications, print, broadcast media, or  
14 foreign affairs.

15       (d) COMPENSATION.—Members of the Board, while  
16 attending meetings of the Board or while engaged in du-  
17 ties relating to such meetings or in other activities of the  
18 Board pursuant to this section (including travel time)  
19 shall be entitled to receive compensation equal to the daily  
20 equivalent of the compensation prescribed for level IV of  
21 the Executive Schedule under section 5315 of title 5,  
22 United States Code. While away from their homes or reg-  
23 ular places of business, members of the Board may be al-  
24 lowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of sub-  
25 sistence, in accordance with section 5703 of such title for

1 persons in the Government service employed intermit-  
2 tently. The Secretary of State shall not be entitled to any  
3 compensation under this chapter.

4 (e) DECISIONS.—Decisions of the Board shall be  
5 made by majority vote, a quorum being present. A quorum  
6 shall consist of a majority of members then serving at the  
7 time a decision of the Board is made.

8 (f) TRANSPARENCY.—The Board of the United  
9 States International Communications Agency shall adhere  
10 to the provisions specified in the Government in the Sun-  
11 shine Act (Public Law 94–409).

12 **SEC. 103. AUTHORITIES AND DUTIES OF THE BOARD OF**  
13 **THE UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL COM-**  
14 **MUNICATIONS AGENCY.**

15 The Board of the United States International Com-  
16 munications Agency shall have the following authorities:

17 (1) To review and evaluate the mission and op-  
18 eration of, and to assess the quality, effectiveness,  
19 and professional integrity of, all programming pro-  
20 duced by the United States International Commu-  
21 nications Agency to ensure alignment with the broad  
22 foreign policy objectives of the United States.

23 (2) To ensure that broadcasting of the United  
24 States International Communications Agency is con-



1 ducted in accordance with the standards specified in  
2 section 5.

3 (3) To review, evaluate, and recommend to the  
4 Chief Executive of the United States International  
5 Communications Agency, at least annually, in con-  
6 sultation with the Secretary of State, the necessity  
7 of adding or deleting of language services of the  
8 Agency.

9 (4) To submit to the President and Congress  
10 an annual report which summarizes and evaluates  
11 activities of the United States International Commu-  
12 nications Agency described in this title.

13 **SEC. 104. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFI-**  
14 **CER OF THE UNITED STATES INTER-**  
15 **NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS AGENCY.**

16 (a) IN GENERAL.—There shall be a Chief Executive  
17 Officer of the United States International Communica-  
18 tions Agency, appointed by the Board of the Agency for  
19 a five-year term, renewable at the Board's discretion, and  
20 subject to the provisions of title 5, United States Code,  
21 governing appointments, classification, and compensation.

22 (b) QUALIFICATIONS.—The Chief Executive Officer  
23 shall be selected from among United States citizens with  
24 two or more of the following qualifications:

1           (1) A distinguished career in managing a large  
2 organization or Federal agency.

3           (2) Experience in the field of mass communica-  
4 tions, print, or broadcast media.

5           (3) Experience in foreign affairs or inter-  
6 national relations.

7           (4) Experience in directing United States public  
8 diplomacy programs.

9           (c) TERMINATION AND TRANSFER.—Immediately  
10 upon appointment of the Chief Executive Officer under  
11 subsection (a), the Director of the International Broad-  
12 casting Bureau shall be terminated, and all of the respon-  
13 sibilities and authorities of the Director shall be trans-  
14 ferred to and assumed by the Chief Executive Officer.

15           (d) REMOVAL OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER.—The  
16 Chief Executive Officer under subsection (a) may be re-  
17 moved upon a two-thirds majority vote of the members  
18 of the Board of the United States International Commu-  
19 nications Agency then serving.

20           (e) COMPENSATION OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF-  
21 FICER.—Any Chief Executive Officer of the United States  
22 International Communications Agency hired after the date  
23 of the enactment of this Act, shall be eligible to receive  
24 compensation up to an annual rate of pay equivalent to

1 level I of the Executive Schedule under section 5315 of  
2 title 5, United States Code.

3 **SEC. 105. AUTHORITIES AND DUTIES OF THE CHIEF EXECU-**  
4 **TIVE OFFICER OF THE UNITED STATES**  
5 **INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS AGENCY.**

6 (a) DUTIES.—The Chief Executive Officer under sec-  
7 tion 104 shall direct operations of the United States Inter-  
8 national Communications Agency and shall have the fol-  
9 lowing non-delegable authorities, subject to the super-  
10 vision of the Board of the United States International  
11 Communications Agency:

12 (1) To supervise all Federal broadcasting activi-  
13 ties conducted pursuant to title V of the United  
14 States Information and Educational Exchange Act  
15 of 1948 (22 U.S.C. 1461 et seq.) and the Voice of  
16 America as described in subtitle B of title I of this  
17 Act.

18 (2) To make and ensure compliance with the  
19 terms and conditions of the grant agreement in ac-  
20 cordance with section 110.

21 (3) To review engineering activities to ensure  
22 that all broadcasting elements receive the highest  
23 quality and cost-effective delivery services.

24 (4) To undertake such studies as may be nec-  
25 essary to identify areas in which broadcasting activi-

1 ties under the authority of the United States Inter-  
2 national Communications Agency could be made  
3 more efficient and economical.

4 (5) To the extent considered necessary to carry  
5 out the functions of the Board, procure supplies,  
6 services, and other personal property, as well as pro-  
7 curement pursuant to section 1535 of title 31,  
8 United States Code (commonly referred to as the  
9 “Economy Act”), of such goods and services from  
10 other Federal agencies for the Board as the Board  
11 determines are appropriate.

12 (6) To appoint such staff personnel for the  
13 Board as the Board may determine to be necessary,  
14 subject to the provisions of title 5, United States  
15 Code, governing appointments in the competitive  
16 service, and to fix their compensation in accordance  
17 with the provisions of chapter 51 and subchapter III  
18 of chapter 53 of such title relating to classification  
19 and General Schedule pay rates.

20 (7) To obligate and expend, for official recep-  
21 tion and representation expenses, such amounts as  
22 may be made available through appropriations Acts.

23 (8) To make available in the annual reports re-  
24 quired under section 103 information on funds ex-  
25 pended on administrative and managerial services by

1 the Board of the United States Communications  
2 Agency, and the steps the Board has taken to re-  
3 duce unnecessary overhead costs for each of the  
4 broadcasting services.

5 (9) To provide for the use of United States  
6 Government broadcasting capacity to the Freedom  
7 News Network.

8 (10)(A) To procure temporary and intermittent  
9 personal services to the same extent as is authorized  
10 by section 3109 of title 5, United States Code, at  
11 rates not to exceed the daily equivalent of the rate  
12 provided for positions classified above grade GS-15  
13 of the General Schedule under section 5108 of such  
14 title.

15 (B) To allow those individuals providing  
16 such services, while away from their homes or  
17 their regular places of business, travel expenses  
18 (including per diem in lieu of subsistence) as  
19 authorized by section 5703 of title 5, United  
20 States Code, for persons in the Government  
21 service employed intermittently, while so em-  
22 ployed.

23 (11) To utilize the provisions of titles III, IV,  
24 V, VII, VIII, IX, and X of the United States Infor-  
25 mation and Educational Exchange Act of 1948 (22

1 U.S.C. 1431 et seq.), and section 6 of Reorganiza-  
2 tion Plan Number 2 of 1977, as in effect on the day  
3 before the effective date of title XIII of the Foreign  
4 Affairs Agencies Consolidation Act of 1998, to the  
5 extent the Board considers necessary to carry out  
6 the provisions and purposes of this Act.

7 (12) To utilize the authorities of any other stat-  
8 ute, reorganization plan, executive order, regulation,  
9 agreement, determination, or other official document  
10 or proceeding that had been available to the Director  
11 of the United States Information Agency, the Inter-  
12 national Broadcasting Bureau, or the Board of the  
13 Broadcasting Board of Governors before the date of  
14 the enactment of this Act.

15 (13)(A) To provide for the payment of primary  
16 and secondary school expenses for dependents of  
17 personnel stationed in the Commonwealth of the  
18 Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) at a cost not to  
19 exceed expenses authorized by the Department of  
20 Defense for such schooling for dependents of mem-  
21 bers of the Armed Forces stationed in the Common-  
22 wealth, if the Board determines that schools avail-  
23 able in the Commonwealth are unable to provide  
24 adequately for the education of the dependents of  
25 such personnel.

1           (B) To provide transportation for depend-  
2           ents of such personnel between their places of  
3           residence and those schools for which expenses  
4           are provided under subparagraph (A), if the  
5           Board determines that such schools are not ac-  
6           cessible by public means of transportation.

7           (b) CONSULTATIONS.—The Chief Executive Officer  
8           of the United States International Communications Agen-  
9           cy shall regularly consult with the Chief Executive Officer  
10          of the Freedom News Network and the Secretary of State  
11          as described in sections 108 and 109.

12       **SEC. 106. ROLE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE.**

13          To assist the Board of the United States Inter-  
14          national Communications Agency in carrying out its func-  
15          tions, the Secretary of State shall provide to the Board  
16          information in accordance with section 109(b), as well as  
17          guidance on United States foreign policy and public diplo-  
18          macy priorities, as the Secretary determines appropriate.

19       **SEC. 107. ROLE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL.**

20          (a) IN GENERAL.—The Inspector General of the De-  
21          partment of State and the Foreign Service shall exercise  
22          the same authorities with respect to the United States  
23          International Communications Agency and the Freedom  
24          News Network as the Inspector General exercises under

1 the Inspector General Act of 1978 with respect to the De-  
2 partment and the Foreign Service.

3 (b) JOURNALIST INTEGRITY.—The Inspector General  
4 of the Department of State shall respect the journalistic  
5 integrity of all the broadcasters covered by this Act and  
6 may not evaluate the philosophical or political perspectives  
7 reflected in the content of the broadcasts of such broad-  
8 casters.

9 **SEC. 108. ENHANCED COORDINATION BETWEEN UNITED**  
10 **STATES INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS**  
11 **AGENCY AND THE FREEDOM NEWS NET-**  
12 **WORK; PROGRAM CONTENT SHARING;**  
13 **GRANTEE INDEPENDENCE.**

14 (a) MEETINGS.—The chair of the Board and Chief  
15 Executive Officer of the United States International Com-  
16 munications Agency shall meet at least on a quarterly  
17 basis with the chair and Chief Executive Officer, as identi-  
18 fied in section 221, of the Freedom News Network to dis-  
19 cuss mutual issues of concern, including the following:

20 (1) The strategic direction of their respective  
21 organizations, including target audiences.

22 (2) Languages of information transmission.

23 (3) Prioritization of funding allocations.

24 (4) Areas for greater collaboration.

25 (5) Elimination of programming overlap.



1           (6) Efficiencies that can be realized through  
2           best practices and lessons learned.

3           (7) Sharing of program content.

4           (b) INFORMATION SHARING.—The Chief Executive  
5           Officer of the United States International Broadcasting  
6           Agency and the Chief Executive Officer of the Freedom  
7           News Network shall share all strategic planning docu-  
8           ments, including the following:

9           (1) Results monitoring and evaluation.

10          (2) Annual planning documents.

11          (3) Audience surveys conducted.

12          (4) Budget formulation documents.

13          (c) INDEPENDENCE OF FREEDOM NEWS NET-  
14          WORK.—The United States International Communications  
15          Agency, while conducting management of the grant de-  
16          scribed in section 110, shall avoid even the appearance of  
17          involvement in daily operations, decisions, and manage-  
18          ment of the Freedom News Network, and ensure that the  
19          distinctions between the United States International Com-  
20          munications Agency and Freedom News Network remain  
21          in accordance with this Act.

1 **SEC. 109. ENHANCED COORDINATION AMONG THE UNITED**  
2 **STATES INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS**  
3 **AGENCY, THE FREEDOM NEWS NETWORK,**  
4 **AND THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE; FREEDOM**  
5 **NEWS NETWORK INDEPENDENCE.**

6 (a) COORDINATION MEETINGS.—The Chief Execu-  
7 tive Officer of the United States International Commu-  
8 nications Agency and the Chief Executive Officer of the  
9 Freedom News Network shall meet, at least on a quarterly  
10 basis, with the Secretary of State to—

- 11 (1) review and evaluate broadcast activities;  
12 (2) eliminate overlap of programming; and  
13 (3) determine long-term strategies for inter-  
14 national broadcasting to ensure such strategies are  
15 in accordance with the broad foreign policy interests  
16 of the United States.

17 (b) STRATEGIC PLANNING DOCUMENTS.—The Chief  
18 Executive Officer of the United States International Com-  
19 munications Agency, the Chief Executive Officer of the  
20 Freedom News Network, and the Secretary of State shall  
21 share all relevant unclassified strategic planning docu-  
22 ments produced by the Agency, the Freedom News Net-  
23 work, and the Department of State.

24 (c) FREEDOM NEWS NETWORK INDEPENDENCE.—  
25 The Department of State, while coordinating with the  
26 Freedom News Network in accordance with subsection (a),

1 shall avoid even the appearance of involvement in the daily  
2 operations, decisions, and management of the Freedom  
3 News Network.

4 **SEC. 110. GRANTS TO THE FREEDOM NEWS NETWORK.**

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Chief Executive Officer of the  
6 United States International Communications Agency shall  
7 make grants to RFE/RL, Incorporated, Radio Free Asia,  
8 or the Middle East Broadcasting Network only after the  
9 Chief Executive Officer of the Agency and the Chief Exec-  
10 utive Officer of Freedom News Network certify to the ap-  
11 propriate congressional committees that the headquarters  
12 of the Freedom News Network and its senior administra-  
13 tive and managerial staff are in a location which ensures  
14 economy, operational effectiveness, and accountability,  
15 and the following conditions has been satisfied:

16 (1) RFE/RL, Incorporated, Radio Free Asia,  
17 and the Middle East Broadcasting Network have  
18 submitted to the Chief Executive Officer of the  
19 United States International Communications Agency  
20 a plan for consolidation and reconstitution as de-  
21 scribed in section 211 under the new corporate name  
22 “Freedom News Network” with a single organiza-  
23 tional structure and management framework, as de-  
24 scribed in section 221.

1           (2) The necessary steps towards the consolida-  
2           tion described in paragraph (1) have been com-  
3           pleted, including the selection of a Board, Chair, and  
4           Chief Executive Officer for the Freedom News Net-  
5           work, the establishment of bylaws to govern the  
6           Freedom News Network, and the filing of articles of  
7           incorporation.

8           (3) A plan for content sharing has been devel-  
9           oped in accordance with section 112(f).

10          (4) A strategic plan for programming imple-  
11          mentation has been developed in accordance with  
12          section 221(g).

13          (b) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date  
14          of the enactment of this Act, the Board of the United  
15          States International Communications Agency shall submit  
16          to Congress a report on the status of any grants made  
17          to the Freedom News Network.

18          (c) LIMITATION ON GRANT AMOUNTS.—The total  
19          amount of grants made for the operating costs of the  
20          Freedom News Network may not exceed \$270,000,000 in  
21          fiscal year 2015.

22          (d) ALTERNATIVE GRANTEE.—If the Chief Executive  
23          Officer of the United States International Communica-  
24          tions Agency, after consultation with the Board of the  
25          Agency and the appropriate congressional committees, de-

1 terminates at any time that the Freedom News Network is  
2 not carrying out the mission described in section 212 and  
3 adhering to the standards and principles described in sec-  
4 tion 213 in an effective and economical manner for which  
5 a grant has been awarded, the Chief Executive Officer of  
6 the Agency, upon approval of the Board, may award to  
7 another entity the grant at issue to carry out such func-  
8 tions after soliciting and considering applications from eli-  
9 gible entities in such manner and accompanied by such  
10 information as the Board may require.

11 (e) NOT A FEDERAL ENTITY.—Nothing in this Act  
12 may be construed to make the Freedom News Network  
13 a Federal agency or instrumentality.

14 (f) AUTHORITY.—Grants authorized under this sec-  
15 tion for the United States International Communications  
16 Agency shall be available to make annual grants to the  
17 Freedom News Network for the purpose of carrying out  
18 the mission described in section 212 and adhering to the  
19 standards and principles described in section 213.

20 (g) GRANT AGREEMENT.—Grants authorized under  
21 this section to the Freedom News Network by the Chief  
22 Executive Officer of the United States International Com-  
23 munications Agency shall only be made in accordance with  
24 a grant agreement. Such grant agreement shall include  
25 the following provisions:

1           (1) A grant be used only for activities in ac-  
2 cordance with carrying out the mission described in  
3 section 212 and adhering to the standards and prin-  
4 ciples described in section 213.

5           (2) The Freedom News Network shall comply  
6 with the requirements of this section.

7           (3) Failure to comply with the requirements of  
8 this section may result in suspension or termination  
9 of a grant without further obligation by the United  
10 States International Communications Agency or the  
11 United States.

12           (4) Use of broadcasting technology owned and  
13 operated by the United States International Commu-  
14 nications Agency be made available through an  
15 International Cooperative Administrative Support  
16 Service (ICASS) agreement or memorandum of un-  
17 derstanding.

18           (5) The Freedom News Network shall, upon re-  
19 quest, provide to the Chief Executive Officer of the  
20 United States International Communications Agency  
21 documentation which details the expenditure of any  
22 grant funds.

23           (6) A grant may not be used to require the  
24 Freedom News Network to comply with any require-

1       ments other than the requirements specified in this  
2       Act.

3               (7) A grant may not be used to allocate re-  
4       sources within the Freedom News Network in a  
5       manner that is inconsistent with the Freedom News  
6       Network strategic plan described in section 222(e).

7       (h) PROHIBITIONS ON THE USE OF GRANTS.—  
8       Grants authorized under this section may not be used for  
9       the following purposes:

10               (1)(A) Except as provided in subparagraph (B)  
11       or (C), to pay any salary or other compensation, or  
12       enter into any contract providing for the payment of  
13       salary or compensation, in excess of the rates estab-  
14       lished for comparable positions under title 5, United  
15       States Code, or the foreign relations laws of the  
16       United States, except that no employee may be paid  
17       a salary or other compensation in excess of the rate  
18       of pay payable for level II of the Executive Schedule  
19       under section 5315 of such title.

20               (B) Salary and other compensation limitations  
21       under subparagraph (A) shall not apply with respect  
22       to any employee covered by a union agreement re-  
23       quiring a salary or other compensation in excess of  
24       such limitations before the date of the enactment of  
25       this Act.

1           (C) Notwithstanding the limitations specified in  
2           subparagraph (A), grants authorized under this sec-  
3           tion may be used by the Freedom News Network to  
4           pay up to six employees employed in the Wash-  
5           ington, DC, area, salary or other compensation not  
6           to exceed the rate of pay payable for level I of the  
7           Executive Schedule under section 5314 of title 5,  
8           United States Code, except that such shall not apply  
9           to the Chief Executive Officer of the Freedom News  
10          Network in accordance with section 221(d).

11           (2) For any activity intended to influence the  
12          passage or defeat of legislation being considered by  
13          Congress.

14           (3) To enter into a contract or obligation to pay  
15          severance payments for voluntary separation for em-  
16          ployees hired after December 1, 1990, except as may  
17          be required by United States law or the laws of the  
18          country where such an employee is stationed.

19           (4) For first class travel for any employee of  
20          the Freedom News Network, or the relative of any  
21          such employee.

22 **SEC. 111. OTHER PERSONNEL AND COMPENSATION LIMITA-**  
23 **TIONS.**

24           (a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the organizational and  
25          personnel restrictions described in subsection (c), the



1 Chief Executive Officer of the United States International  
2 Communications Agency shall have the discretion to deter-  
3 mine the distribution of all personnel within the Agency,  
4 subject to the approval of the Board of the Agency.

5 (b) LIMITATION ON COMPENSATION.—

6 (1) IN GENERAL.—No employee of the United  
7 States International Communications Agency, other  
8 than the Chief Executive Officer or Director of the  
9 Voice of America, shall be eligible to receive com-  
10 pensation at a rate in excess of step 10 of GS–15  
11 of the General Schedule under section 5332 of title  
12 5, United States Code.

13 (2) EXCEPTION.—The limitation described in  
14 paragraph (1) does not apply in the case of members  
15 of the Board in accordance with section 102(d).

16 (c) PROHIBITION ON CERTAIN NEW EMPLOY-  
17 MENT.—

18 (1) IN GENERAL.—Beginning on the date of the  
19 enactment of this Act and ending on the date that  
20 is five years after such date, the United States  
21 International Communications Agency may not fill  
22 any currently unfilled full-time or part-time position  
23 compensated at an annual rate of basic pay for  
24 grade GS–14 or GS–15 of the General Schedule  
25 under section 5332 of title 5, United States Code,

1 including any currently filled position in which the  
2 incumbent resigns, retires, or otherwise leaves such  
3 position during the such five-year period.

4 (2) WAIVER.—The Chief Executive Officer of  
5 the United States International Communications  
6 Agency may waive the prohibition specified in para-  
7 graph (1) if the position is determined essential to  
8 the functioning of the Agency and documented as  
9 such in the report required under section 112(a), or  
10 necessary for the acquisition of skills or knowledge  
11 not sufficiently represented in the current workforce  
12 of the Agency. The Chief Executive Officer of the  
13 Agency shall consult with the appropriate congress-  
14 sional committees before issuing a waiver under this  
15 paragraph.

16 **SEC. 112. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS OF THE UNITED**  
17 **STATES INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS**  
18 **AGENCY.**

19 (a) REORGANIZATION REPORT.—Not later than 180  
20 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Chief  
21 Executive Officer of the United States International Com-  
22 munications Agency shall submit to the appropriate Con-  
23 gressional committees a report that includes the following:

24 (1) A plan to assess and provide recommenda-  
25 tions on the appropriate size and necessity of all

1 current offices and positions (also referred to as a  
2 “staffing pattern”) within the Agency, including full-  
3 time employee positions rated at the Senior Execu-  
4 tive Service (SES) level or at GS–14 or GS–15 on  
5 the General Schedule under section 5332 of title 5,  
6 United States Code. Such plan shall include a de-  
7 tailed organizational structure that delineates lines  
8 of authority and reporting between junior staff,  
9 management, and leadership.

10 (2) Details of how the structure and alignment  
11 of resources supports the fulfillment of the Agency’s  
12 mission and standards and principles as described in  
13 sections 5 and 122.

14 (3) A plan for developing a platform to share  
15 all programming content between the United States  
16 International Communications Agency and the Free-  
17 dom News Network, including making available for  
18 distribution all programming content licensed or pro-  
19 duced by the Agency and the Freedom News Net-  
20 work, and expanding the functionality of the plat-  
21 forms already in existence, such as the web content  
22 management system “Pangea”.

23 (b) CONTRACTING REPORT.—The Chief Executive  
24 Officer of the United States International Communica-  
25 tions Agency shall annually submit to the appropriate con-

1 gressional committees a report on the Agency’s compliance  
2 with the Federal Acquisition Regulation (the “FAR”) and  
3 the Anti-Deficiency Act, including a review of contracts  
4 awarded on a non-competitive basis, compliance with the  
5 FAR requirement for publicizing contract actions, the use  
6 of any personal service contracts without explicit statutory  
7 authority, and processes for contract oversight in compli-  
8 ance with the FAR.

9 (c) LISTENERSHIP REPORT.—The Chief Executive  
10 Officer of the United States International Communica-  
11 tions Agency shall annually submit to the appropriate con-  
12 gressional committees a report that details the trans-  
13 mission capacities, market penetration, and audience  
14 listenership of all mediums of international communication  
15 deployed by the United States International Communica-  
16 tions Agency, including a plan for how target audiences  
17 can be reached if the first medium of delivery is unavail-  
18 able.

19 (d) GAO REPORT.—Every five years after the date  
20 of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of  
21 the United States shall submit to the appropriate congres-  
22 sional committees a report that reviews the effectiveness  
23 of content sharing between the United States Inter-  
24 national Communications Agency and the Freedom News

1 Network and makes recommendations on how content  
2 sharing can be improved.

### 3 **Subtitle B—The Voice of America**

#### 4 **SEC. 121. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

5 It is the sense of Congress that—

6 (1) the Voice of America has been an indispen-  
7 sable element of United States foreign policy and  
8 public diplomacy efforts since 1942, and should re-  
9 main the flagship brand of the United States Inter-  
10 national Communications Agency;

11 (2) the Voice of America has been a reliable  
12 source of accurate, objective, and comprehensive  
13 news and related programming and content for the  
14 millions of people around the world who cannot ob-  
15 tain such news and related programming and con-  
16 tent from indigenous media outlets;

17 (3) the Voice of America’s success over more  
18 than seven decades has created valuable brand iden-  
19 tity and international recognition that justifies the  
20 maintenance of the Voice of America;

21 (4) the Voice of America’s public diplomacy  
22 mission remains essential to broader United States  
23 Government efforts to communicate with foreign  
24 populations; and

1           (5) despite its tremendous historical success,  
2           the Voice of America would benefit substantially  
3           from a recalibration of Federal international broad-  
4           casting agencies and resources, which would provide  
5           the Voice of America with greater mission focus and  
6           flexibility in the deployment of news, programming,  
7           and content.

8   **SEC. 122. PRINCIPLES OF THE VOICE OF AMERICA.**

9           The Voice of America shall adhere to the following  
10          principles in the course of fulfilling its duties and respon-  
11          sibilities:

12           (1) Serving as a consistently reliable and au-  
13           thoritative source of news on the United States, its  
14           policies, its people, and the international develop-  
15           ments that affect the United States.

16           (2) Providing accurate, objective, and com-  
17           prehensive information, with the understanding that  
18           these three values provide credibility among global  
19           news audiences.

20           (3) Presenting the official policies of the United  
21           States, and related discussions and opinions about  
22           those policies, clearly and effectively.

23           (4) Representing the whole of the United  
24           States, and shall accordingly work to produce pro-  
25           gramming and content that presents a balanced and

1 comprehensive projection of the diversity of thought  
2 and institutions of the United States.

3 **SEC. 123. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE VOICE OF**  
4 **AMERICA.**

5 The Voice of America shall have the following duties  
6 and responsibilities:

7 (1) Producing accurate, objective, and com-  
8 prehensive news and related programming that is  
9 consistent with and promotes the broad foreign poli-  
10 cies of the United States.

11 (2) Producing news and related programming  
12 and content that accurately represents the diversity  
13 of thoughts and institutions of the United States as  
14 a whole.

15 (3) Presenting the law and policies of the  
16 United States clearly and effectively.

17 (4) Promoting the civil and responsible ex-  
18 change of information and differences of opinion re-  
19 garding policies, issues, and current events.

20 (5) Making all of its produced news and related  
21 programming and content available to the Freedom  
22 News Network for use and distribution.

23 (6) Producing or otherwise allowing editorials,  
24 commentary, and programming, in consultation with  
25 the Department of State, that present the official

1 views of the United States Government and its offi-  
2 cials.

3 (7) Maximizing foreign national information ac-  
4 cess through both the use of existing broadcasting  
5 tools and resources and the development and dis-  
6 semination of circumvention technology.

7 (8) Providing training and technical support for  
8 independent indigenous media and journalist enter-  
9 prises in order to facilitate or enhance independent  
10 media environments and outlets abroad.

11 (9) Reaching identified foreign audiences in  
12 local languages and dialects when possible.

13 (10) Being capable of providing a broadcasting  
14 surge capacity under circumstances where overseas  
15 disasters, crises, or other events require increased or  
16 heightened international public diplomacy engage-  
17 ment.

18 **SEC. 124. LIMITATION ON VOICE OF AMERICA NEWS, PRO-**  
19 **GRAMMING, AND CONTENT; TEMPORARY EX-**  
20 **CEPTION FOR SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA; EXCEP-**  
21 **TION FOR BROADCASTING TO CUBA.**

22 (a) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subsections  
23 (b) and (c), the Voice of America shall be limited to pro-  
24 viding reporting in accordance with its public diplomacy  
25 mandate on United States and international news and in-



1 formation, and producing related original programming  
2 and content, including coverage of United States foreign  
3 policy, international organizations, and international eco-  
4 nomic developments.

5 (b) TEMPORARY EXCEPTION FOR SUB-SAHARAN AF-  
6 RICA.—The Voice of America may provide original report-  
7 ing on regional and local developments in sub-Saharan Af-  
8 rica in accordance with the mission of the Freedom News  
9 Network specified in section 212 until such time as the  
10 Freedom News Network begins broadcasts to sub-Saharan  
11 Africa at which time the Voice of America shall revert  
12 back to the principles specified in section 122.

13 (c) EXCEPTION FOR BROADCASTING TO CUBA.—  
14 Radio Marti and Television Marti, which constitute the  
15 Office of Cuba Broadcasting, shall continue programming  
16 and content production consistent with the mission and  
17 activities as described in the Radio Broadcasting to Cuba  
18 Act (Public Law 98–111) and the Television Broadcasting  
19 to Cuba Act (Public Law 101–246), and continue existing  
20 within the Voice of America of the United States Inter-  
21 national Communications Agency.

22 **SEC. 125. DIRECTOR OF VOICE OF AMERICA.**

23 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There shall be a Director of  
24 the Voice of America, who shall be responsible for exe-

1 cutting the duties and responsibilities of the Voice of Amer-  
2 ica described in subsection (b).

3 (b) DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.—The Director  
4 of the Voice of America shall, subject to the final approval  
5 of the Chief Executive Officer of the United States Inter-  
6 national Communications Agency carry out the following  
7 duties and responsibilities:

8 (1) Determine the organizational structure of,  
9 and personnel allocation or relocation within, the  
10 Voice of America, subject to section 105.

11 (2) Make recommendations to the Chief Execu-  
12 tive Officer of the United States International Com-  
13 munications Agency regarding the production, devel-  
14 opment, and termination of Voice of America news  
15 programming and content.

16 (3) Make recommendations to the Chief Execu-  
17 tive Officer of the United States International Com-  
18 munications Agency about the establishment, termi-  
19 nation, prioritization, and adjustments of language  
20 services utilized by the Voice of America to reach its  
21 international audience.

22 (4) Allocate funding and material resources  
23 under the jurisdiction of the Voice of America for  
24 the furtherance of the other duties and responsibil-  
25 ities established under this subsection.

1           (5) Oversee the daily operations of the Voice of  
2 America, including programming content.

3           (c) APPOINTMENT AND QUALIFICATIONS OF DIREC-  
4 TOR.—

5           (1) IN GENERAL.—The position of Director of  
6 the Voice of America shall be filled by a person who  
7 shall serve at the pleasure of the Chief Executive Of-  
8 ficer of the United States International Communica-  
9 tions Agency.

10          (2) ELIGIBILITY.—To be eligible to be ap-  
11 pointed Director of the Voice of America, a person  
12 shall have at least two of the following qualifications:

13           (A) Prior, extensive experience managing  
14 or operating a private-sector media or journalist  
15 enterprise.

16           (B) Prior, extensive experience managing  
17 or operating a large organization.

18           (C) Prior, extensive experience engaged in  
19 mass media or journalist program development,  
20 including the development of circumvention  
21 technologies.

22           (D) Prior, extensive experience engaged in  
23 international journalism or other related activi-  
24 ties, including the training of international jour-

1           nalists and the promotion of democratic institu-  
2           tional reforms abroad.

3           (3) COMPENSATION.—Any Director who is  
4           hired after the date of the enactment of this Act  
5           shall be entitled to receive compensation at a rate  
6           equal to the annual rate of basic pay for level III of  
7           the Executive Schedule under section 5315 of title  
8           5, United States Code.

## 9           **Subtitle C—General Provisions**

### 10       **SEC. 131. FEDERAL AGENCY COORDINATION IN SUPPORT** 11                               **OF UNITED STATES PUBLIC DIPLOMACY.**

12           (a) IN GENERAL.—The Board of the United States  
13       International Communications Agency and the Freedom  
14       News Network shall conduct periodic, unclassified con-  
15       sultations with the Department of State, the United  
16       States Agency for International Development, the Depart-  
17       ment of Defense, and the Office of the Director of Na-  
18       tional Intelligence, for the purpose of assessing the fol-  
19       lowing:

20           (1) Progress toward democratization, the devel-  
21       opment of free and independent media outlets, and  
22       the free flow of information in countries that receive  
23       programming and content from the United States  
24       International Communications Agency and the Free-  
25       dom News Network.

1           (2) Foreign languages that have increased or  
2 decreased in strategic importance, and the factors  
3 supporting such assessments.

4           (3) Any other international developments, in-  
5 cluding developments with regional or country-spe-  
6 cific significance, that might be of value in assisting  
7 the United States International Communications  
8 Agency and the Freedom News Network in the de-  
9 velopment of their programming and content.

10       (b) GUIDANCE.—The Board of the United States  
11 International Communications Agency shall use the un-  
12 classified consultations required under subsection (a) as  
13 guidance for its distribution and calibration of Federal re-  
14 sources in support of United States public diplomacy.

15 **SEC. 132. FEDERAL AGENCY ASSISTANCE AND COORDINA-**  
16 **TION WITH THE UNITED STATES INTER-**  
17 **NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS AGENCY AND**  
18 **THE FREEDOM NEWS NETWORK DURING**  
19 **INTERNATIONAL BROADCAST SURGES.**

20       (a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to a formal request from  
21 the Chair of the Board of the United States International  
22 Communications Agency, Federal agency heads shall as-  
23 sist and coordinate with the Agency to facilitate a tem-  
24 porary broadcasting surge or enhance transmission capac-

1 ity for such a temporary broadcasting surge for the Agen-  
2 cy, the Freedom News Network, or both.

3 (b) ACTIONS.—In accordance with subsection (a),  
4 Federal agency heads shall assist or coordinate with the  
5 United States International Communications Agency by—

6 (1) supplying or facilitating access to, or use  
7 of—

8 (A) United States Government-owned  
9 transmission capacity, including the use of  
10 transmission facilities, equipment, resources,  
11 and personnel; and

12 (B) other non-transmission-related United  
13 States Government-owned facilities, equipment,  
14 resources, and personnel;

15 (2) communicating and coordinating with for-  
16 eign host governments on behalf of, or in conjunc-  
17 tion with, the Agency or the Freedom News Net-  
18 work;

19 (3) providing, or assisting in the obtaining of,  
20 in-country security services for the safety and pro-  
21 tection of Agency or Freedom News Network per-  
22 sonnel; and

23 (4) providing or facilitating access to any other  
24 United States Government-owned resources.

1 (c) PROHIBITION.—Notwithstanding any other provi-  
2 sion of law, neither Federal agency heads nor their agen-  
3 cies shall receive any reimbursement or compensatory ap-  
4 propriations for complying with implementing this section.

5 **SEC. 133. FREEDOM NEWS NETWORK RIGHT OF FIRST RE-**  
6 **FUSAL IN INSTANCES OF FEDERAL DISPOSAL**  
7 **OF RADIO OR TELEVISION BROADCAST**  
8 **TRANSMISSION FACILITIES OR EQUIPMENT.**

9 (a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provi-  
10 sion of law, it shall be the policy of the United States  
11 International Communications Agency to, in the event it  
12 intends to dispose of any radio or television broadcast  
13 transmission facilities or equipment, provide the Freedom  
14 News Network with the right of first refusal with respect  
15 to the acquisition of such facilities and equipment.

16 (b) TRANSFER AND DISPOSAL.—Pursuant to sub-  
17 section (a)—

18 (1) in the event the Freedom News Network is  
19 willing to accept the facilities and equipment re-  
20 ferred to in such subsection, the United States  
21 International Communications Agency shall transfer  
22 to the Freedom News Network such facilities and  
23 equipment at no cost to the Freedom News Net-  
24 work; or

1           (2) in the event the Freedom News Network  
2           opts to not accept such facilities and equipment, the  
3           United States International Communications Agency  
4           may sell such facilities and equipment at market  
5           price, and retain any revenue from such sales.

6           (c) RULES REGARDING CERTAIN FUNDS.—Pursuant  
7           to subsections (b) and (c), any revenues that the United  
8           States International Communications Agency shall derive  
9           from such sales—

10           (1) shall not negatively impact subsequent ap-  
11           propriations to the Agency; and

12           (2) shall be used entirely for the purposes or re-  
13           search, development, and deployment of innovative  
14           broadcasting or circumvention technology.

15   **SEC. 134. REPEAL OF THE UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL**  
16                           **BROADCASTING ACT OF 1994.**

17           The United States International Broadcasting Act of  
18           1994 (22 U.S.C. 6201 et seq.; title III of Public Law 103–  
19           236) is repealed.

20   **SEC. 135. EFFECTIVE DATE.**

21           This title shall take effect on the date that is 180  
22           days after the date of the enactment of this Act.



1    **TITLE II—THE FREEDOM NEWS**  
2                                   **NETWORK**

3    **SEC. 201. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

4           It is the sense of Congress that RFE/RL, Incorporated, Radio Free Asia, and the Middle East Broadcasting Network share a common mission with distinct geographic foci, and should therefore be merged into a single organization, with distinct marketing brands to provide the news and related programming and content in countries where free media are not established.

11                   **Subtitle A—Consolidation of**  
12                   **Existing Grantee Organizations**

13    **SEC. 211. FORMATION OF THE FREEDOM NEWS NETWORK**  
14                                   **FROM EXISTING GRANTEES.**

15           (a) IN GENERAL.—When the conditions specified in  
16 section 110 are satisfied, the Freedom News Network,  
17 comprised of the consolidation of RFE/RL Incorporated,  
18 Radio Free Asia, and the Middle East Broadcasting Network, shall exist to carry out all international broadcasting  
19 activities supported by the United States Government, in  
20 accordance with sections 212 and 213.

22           (b) MAINTENANCE OF THE EXISTING INDIVIDUAL  
23 GRANTEE BRANDS.—RFE/RL, Incorporated, Radio Free  
24 Asia, and the Middle East Broadcasting Network shall re-  
25 main brand names under which news and related pro-

1 gramming and content may be disseminated by the Free-  
2 dom News Network. Additional brands may be created as  
3 necessary.

4 **SEC. 212. MISSION OF THE FREEDOM NEWS NETWORK.**

5 The Freedom News Network established under sec-  
6 tion 211 shall—

7 (1) provide uncensored local and regional news  
8 and analysis to people in societies where a robust,  
9 indigenous, independent, and free media does not  
10 exist;

11 (2) strengthen civil societies by projecting  
12 democratic values and promoting equality and the  
13 rights of the individual;

14 (3) help countries improve their indigenous ca-  
15 pacity to enhance media professionalism and inde-  
16 pendence, and develop partnerships with local media  
17 outlets, as appropriate; and

18 (4) promote access to uncensored sources of in-  
19 formation, especially via the internet, and use all ef-  
20 fective and efficient mediums of communication to  
21 reach target audiences.

22 **SEC. 213. STANDARDS AND PRINCIPLES OF THE FREEDOM**  
23 **NEWS NETWORK.**

24 The broadcasting of the Freedom News Network  
25 shall—

1           (1) be consistent with the broad foreign policy  
2 objectives of the United States;

3           (2) be consistent with the international tele-  
4 communications policies and treaty obligations of the  
5 United States;

6           (3) be conducted in accordance with the highest  
7 professional standards of broadcast journalism;

8           (4) be based on reliable information about its  
9 potential audience;

10          (5) be designed so as to effectively reach a sig-  
11 nificant audience; and

12          (6) prioritize programming to populations in  
13 countries without independent indigenous media out-  
14 lets.

## 15           **Subtitle B—Organization of the** 16           **Freedom News Network**

### 17   **SEC. 221. GOVERNANCE OF THE FREEDOM NEWS NET-** 18           **WORK.**

19           (a) BOARD OF THE FREEDOM NEWS NETWORK.—  
20 A board shall oversee the Freedom News Network and  
21 consist of nine individuals with a demonstrated back-  
22 ground in media or the promotion of democracy and expe-  
23 rience in measuring media impact.

24           (b) COMPOSITION OF FIRST BOARD OF THE FREE-  
25 DOM NEWS NETWORK.—Not later than 90 days after the

1 date of the enactment of this Act, the Chairs and Ranking  
2 Members of the appropriate congressional committees  
3 shall identify and appoint candidates for the first board  
4 of the Freedom News Network, direct the appointment of  
5 board members, and select the first chair of the board of  
6 the Freedom News Network as follows:

7           (1) Two individuals shall be appointed by the  
8           Chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the  
9           House of Representatives.

10           (2) Two individuals shall be appointed by the  
11           Ranking Member of the Committee on Foreign Af-  
12           fairs of the House of Representatives.

13           (3) Two individuals shall be appointed by the  
14           Chair of the Committee on Foreign Relations of the  
15           Senate.

16           (4) Two individuals shall be appointed by the  
17           Ranking Member of the Committee on Foreign Rela-  
18           tions of the Senate.

19           (5) One individual shall be appointed by con-  
20           sensus of the Chairs and Ranking Members of the  
21           Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Rep-  
22           resentatives and the Committee on Foreign Rela-  
23           tions of the Senate.

24           (c) OPERATIONS OF THE FIRST BOARD OF THE  
25 FREEDOM NEWS NETWORK.—

1           (1) IN GENERAL.—The board members of the  
2 first board of the Freedom News Network shall de-  
3 termine the bylaws, select the Chief Executive Offi-  
4 cer of the Freedom News Network, and file articles  
5 of incorporation under the corporate name “Free-  
6 dom News Network”. The first board of the Free-  
7 dom News Network may change the organization’s  
8 name in accordance with such bylaws.

9           (2) TERM LIMITS.—The board members of the  
10 first board of the Freedom News Network may not  
11 serve more than a three-year term, and shall be re-  
12 placed in accordance with the bylaws referred to in  
13 paragraph (1) and the succession process described  
14 in paragraph (3).

15           (3) SUCCESSION OF BOARD MEMBERS.—The  
16 board members of the first board of the Freedom  
17 News Network and all subsequent boards shall fill  
18 vacancies on the board due to death, resignation, re-  
19 moval, or term expiration through an election proc-  
20 ess described in the bylaws referred to in paragraph  
21 (1) and in accordance with the principle of a “self-  
22 replenishing” body.

23           (d) COMPENSATION OF BOARD AND OFFICERS OF  
24 THE FREEDOM NEWS NETWORK.—Members of the board  
25 of the Freedom News Network may not receive any fee,

1 salary, or remuneration of any kind for their service as  
2 members, except that such members may be reimbursed  
3 for reasonable expenses, such as board-related travel, in-  
4 curred with approval of the board upon presentation of  
5 vouchers. No officers of the Freedom News Network, other  
6 than the Chief Executive Officer, shall be eligible to re-  
7 ceive compensation at a rate in excess of the annual rate  
8 of basic pay for level II on the Executive Schedule under  
9 section 5315 of title 5, United States Code.

10 (e) ABOLISHMENT OF EXISTING BOARDS.—The  
11 boards of directors of RFE/RL, Incorporated, Radio Free  
12 Asia, and the Middle East Broadcasting Network in exist-  
13 ence on the day before the date of the enactment of this  
14 Act shall be abolished on the date of the first official meet-  
15 ing of the first board of the Freedom News Network.

16 (f) CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER.—The Chief Execu-  
17 tive Officer of the Freedom News Network shall serve at  
18 the pleasure of the board of the Freedom News Network,  
19 and be responsible for the day-to-day management and op-  
20 erations of the Freedom News Network, including the se-  
21 lection of individuals for management positions. The board  
22 of the Freedom News Network may add to the duties and  
23 responsibilities of the Chief Executive Officer as the board  
24 determines appropriate, and such additional duties and re-

1 sponsibilities shall be codified in the bylaws of the Free-  
2 dom News Network.

3 (g) PLAN FOR CONSOLIDATION OF EXISTING INDI-  
4 VIDUAL GRANTEES.—

5 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days  
6 after the date of the first official meeting of the first  
7 board of the Freedom News Network, the chair of  
8 the board of the Freedom News Network shall sub-  
9 mit a report to, and consult with, the appropriate  
10 congressional committees on the plan to consolidate  
11 RFE/RL, Incorporated, Radio Free Asia, and the  
12 Middle East Broadcasting Network into a single  
13 non-Federal grantee organization.

14 (2) COMPONENTS.—The consolidation plan re-  
15 ferred to in paragraph (1) shall include the following  
16 components:

17 (A) The location and distribution of em-  
18 ployees, including administrative, managerial,  
19 and technical staff, of the Freedom News Net-  
20 work that will be located within and outside the  
21 metropolitan area of Washington, DC.

22 (B) An organizational chart identifying the  
23 managerial and supervisory lines of authority  
24 among all employees of the Freedom News Net-  
25 work.

1           (3) TIME FOR IMPLEMENTATION.—Not later  
2 than three years after the date of the enactment of  
3 this Act, the chair of the board of the Freedom  
4 News Network shall fully implement the consolida-  
5 tion plan referred to in paragraph (1) after consulta-  
6 tion with the appropriate congressional committees.

7           (4) REPORT.—Not later than five years after  
8 the date on which initial funding is provided for the  
9 purpose of operating the Freedom News Network,  
10 the chair of the board of the Freedom News Net-  
11 work shall submit to the appropriate congressional  
12 committees a report that details the following:

13                   (A) Whether the Freedom News Network  
14 is technically sound and cost-effective.

15                   (B) Whether the Freedom News Network  
16 consistently meets the standards for quality and  
17 impact established by this title.

18                   (C) Whether the Freedom News Network  
19 is receiving a sufficient audience to warrant its  
20 continued operation.

21                   (D) The extent to which the Freedom  
22 News Network's programming and content is  
23 already being received by the target audience  
24 from other credible indigenous or external  
25 sources.



1                   (E) The extent to which the foreign policy  
2                   and national security interests of the United  
3                   States are being served by maintaining oper-  
4                   ations of the Freedom News Network.

5 **SEC. 222. BUDGET OF THE FREEDOM NEWS NETWORK.**

6           (a) IN GENERAL.—The annual budget of the Free-  
7           dom News Network shall consist of the following:

8                   (1) A grant described in section 110, consisting  
9                   of the total grants to RFE/RL, Incorporated, Radio  
10                  Free Asia, and the Middle East Broadcasting Net-  
11                  work before the date of the enactment of this Act.

12                  (2) Any grants or transfers from other Federal  
13                  agencies.

14                  (3) Other funds described in subsection (b).

15           (b) OTHER SOURCES OF FUNDING.—The Freedom  
16           News Network may, to the extent authorized by its board  
17           and in accordance with applicable laws and the mission  
18           of the Freedom News Network under section 212 and eli-  
19           gible broadcast areas under section 6, collect and utilize  
20           non-Federal funds, except that the Freedom News Net-  
21           work may not accept funds from the following:

22                   (1) Any foreign governments or foreign govern-  
23                   ment officials.

1           (2) Any agents, representatives, or surrogates  
2 of any foreign government or foreign government of-  
3 ficial.

4           (3) Any foreign-owned corporations or any sub-  
5 sidiaries of any foreign-owned corporation, regard-  
6 less of whether such subsidiary is foreign-owned.

7           (4) Any foreign national or individual who is  
8 not either a citizen or a legal permanent resident of  
9 the United States.

10       (c) ANNUAL STRATEGIC PLAN OF THE FREEDOM  
11 NEWS NETWORK.—The Freedom News Network shall  
12 submit to the appropriate congressional committees and  
13 the United States International Communications Agency  
14 an annual strategic plan to satisfy the requirements speci-  
15 fied in section 110. Each such strategic plan shall outline  
16 the following:

17           (1) The strategic goals and objectives of the  
18 Freedom News Network for the upcoming fiscal  
19 year.

20           (2) The alignment of the Freedom News Net-  
21 work's resources with the strategic goals and objec-  
22 tives referred to in subparagraph (A).

23           (3) Clear benchmarks that establish the  
24 progress made towards achieving the strategic goals  
25 and objectives referred to in subparagraph (A).

1           (4) A plan to monitor and evaluate the success  
2 of the Freedom News Network's broadcasting ef-  
3 forts.

4           (5) A reflective analysis on the activities on the  
5 past fiscal year.

6           (6) Any changes to facility leases, contracts, or  
7 ownership that would result in the relocation of staff  
8 or personnel.

9           (d) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Con-  
10 gress that administrative and managerial costs for oper-  
11 ation of the Freedom News Network should be kept to  
12 a minimum and, to the maximum extent feasible, should  
13 not exceed the costs that would have been incurred if  
14 RFE/RL, Incorporated, Radio Free Asia, and the Middle  
15 East Broadcasting Network had been operated as inde-  
16 pendent grantees or as a Federal entity within the Voice  
17 of America.

18 **SEC. 223. ASSISTANCE FROM OTHER GOVERNMENT AGEN-**

19 **CIES.**

20           (a) SURPLUS PROPERTIES.—In order to assist the  
21 Freedom News Network in carrying out the provisions of  
22 this title, any agency or instrumentality of the United  
23 States may sell, loan, lease, or grant property (including  
24 interests therein) to the Freedom News Network as nec-  
25 essary.

1 (b) FACILITIES AND BROADCASTING INFRASTRUC-  
2 TURE.—The United States International Communications  
3 Agency and the Freedom News Network shall negotiate  
4 an International Cooperative Administrative Support  
5 Service (ICASS) agreement or memorandum of under-  
6 standing permitting the continued use of technological in-  
7 frastructure for broadcasting and information dissemina-  
8 tion, except that the Freedom News Network may choose  
9 to procure such services through negotiated contracts with  
10 private-sector providers.

11 **SEC. 224. REPORTS BY THE OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR**

12 **GENERAL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE;**

13 **AUDITS BY GAO.**

14 (a) IG REPORTS.—

15 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than September  
16 30 of each year, the Inspector General of the De-  
17 partment of State and the Foreign Service shall sub-  
18 mit to the appropriate congressional committees a  
19 report on management practices of the Freedom  
20 News Network, including a financial report on unob-  
21 ligated balances.

22 (2) CONTINUATION OF AUTHORITY.—Notwith-  
23 standing any other provision of law, the Inspector  
24 General of the Department of State and the Foreign  
25 Service is authorized to exercise the authorities of

1 the Inspector General Act of 1978 with respect to  
2 the Freedom News Network.

3 (b) GAO AUDITS.—

4 (1) IN GENERAL.—Financial transactions of the  
5 Freedom News Network, as such relate to functions  
6 carried out under this Act, may be audited by the  
7 Government Accountability Office in accordance with  
8 such principles and procedures and under such rules  
9 and regulations as may be prescribed by the Com-  
10 troller General of the United States. Any such audit  
11 shall be conducted at the place or places where ac-  
12 counts of the Freedom News Network are normally  
13 kept.

14 (2) ACCESS.—Representatives of the Govern-  
15 ment Accountability Office shall have access to all  
16 books, accounts, records, reports, files, papers, and  
17 property belonging to or in use by the Freedom  
18 News Network pertaining to the financial trans-  
19 actions referred to in paragraph (1) and necessary  
20 to facilitate an audit in accordance with such para-  
21 graph. All such books, accounts, records, reports,  
22 files, papers, and property of the Freedom News  
23 Network shall remain in the possession and custody  
24 of the Freedom News Network.

1 **SEC. 225. AMENDMENTS TO THE UNITED STATES INFORMA-**  
2 **TION AND EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGE ACT OF**  
3 **1948.**

4 The United States Information and Educational Ex-  
5 change Act of 1948 is amended—

6 (1) in title V (22 U.S.C. 1461 et seq.), by strik-  
7 ing “Broadcasting Board of Governors” and insert-  
8 ing “United States International Communications  
9 Agency” each place it appears;

10 (2) by amending paragraph (1) of section  
11 501(b) (22 U.S.C. 1461(b)) to read as follows:

12 “(b)(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), the Sec-  
13 retary and the United States International Communica-  
14 tions Agency may, upon request and reimbursement of the  
15 reasonable costs incurred in fulfilling such a request, make  
16 available, in the United States, motion pictures, films,  
17 video, audio, and other materials disseminated abroad  
18 pursuant to this Act. Any reimbursement pursuant to this  
19 paragraph shall be credited to the applicable appropriation  
20 account of the Department of State or the United States  
21 International Communications Agency, as appropriate.  
22 The Secretary and the United States International Com-  
23 munications Agency shall issue necessary regulations.”;

24 (3) by repealing sections 504 and 505 (22  
25 U.S.C. 1464 and 1464a);

1           (4) by redesignating section 506 (22 U.S.C.  
2           1464b) as section 504;

3           (5) in section 504, as so redesignated, in sub-  
4           section (c), in the matter preceding paragraph (1)—

5                   (A) by striking “Broadcasting Board of  
6                   Governors” and inserting “United States Inter-  
7                   national Communications Agency”; and

8                   (B) by striking “Board” each place it ap-  
9                   pears and inserting “Agency”;

10          (6) in clause (iii) of section 604(d)(1)(A) (22  
11          U.S.C. 1469(d)(1)(A)), by striking “Broadcasting  
12          Board of Governors” and inserting “United States  
13          International Communications Agency”;

14          (7) in paragraph (3) of section 801 (22 U.S.C.  
15          1471), by striking “Director of the United States  
16          Information Agency” and inserting “Chief Executive  
17          Officer of the United States International Commu-  
18          nications Agency”;

19          (8) in subsection (b) of section 802 (22 U.S.C.  
20          1472)—

21                   (A) in paragraph (1)(B), by striking “Di-  
22                   rector of the United States Information Agen-  
23                   cy” and inserting “Chief Executive Officer of  
24                   the United States International Communica-  
25                   tions Agency”; and

1 (B) in paragraph (4)(A), by striking  
2 “Broadcasting Board of Governors” and insert-  
3 ing “United States International Communica-  
4 tions Agency”;

5 (9) in paragraph (1) of section 804 (22 U.S.C.  
6 1474), by striking “Director of the United States  
7 Information Agency” and inserting “Chief Executive  
8 Officer of the United States International Commu-  
9 nications Agency”;

10 (10) in section 810(b) (22 U.S.C. 1475e(b))—

11 (A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1),  
12 by striking “United States Information Agen-  
13 cy” and inserting “United States International  
14 Communications Agency”; and

15 (B) in paragraph (4), by striking “Inter-  
16 national Broadcasting Bureau” and inserting  
17 “United States International Communications  
18 Agency”; and

19 (11) in subsection (a) of section 1001 (22  
20 U.S.C. 1442), by striking “Director of the United  
21 States Information Agency” and inserting “Chief  
22 Executive Officer of the United States International  
23 Communications Agency”.

○