

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2159

To modernize and streamline the public diplomacy capabilities of the Department of State, increase evaluation of public diplomacy programming, enhance strategic planning for the Department’s public diplomacy physical presence abroad, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 9, 2019

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

A BILL

To modernize and streamline the public diplomacy capabilities of the Department of State, increase evaluation of public diplomacy programming, enhance strategic planning for the Department’s public diplomacy physical presence abroad, and for other purposes.

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

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Public Diplomacy Mod-
5 ernization Act of 2019”.

1 **SEC. 2. AVOIDING DUPLICATION OF PROGRAMS AND EF-**
2 **FORTS.**

3 The Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Pub-
4 lic Affairs of the Department of State shall—

5 (1) identify opportunities for greater efficiency
6 of operations, including through improved coordina-
7 tion of efforts across public diplomacy bureaus and
8 offices of the Department of State; and

9 (2) maximize shared use of resources between,
10 and within, such public diplomacy bureaus and of-
11 fices in cases in which programs, facilities, or admin-
12 istrative functions are duplicative or substantially
13 overlapping.

14 **SEC. 3. IMPROVING RESEARCH AND EVALUATION OF PUB-**
15 **LIC DIPLOMACY.**

16 (a) RESEARCH AND EVALUATION ACTIVITIES.—The
17 Secretary of State, acting through the Director of Re-
18 search and Evaluation established under subsection (b),
19 shall—

20 (1) conduct regular research and evaluation of
21 public diplomacy programs and activities of the De-
22 partment of State, including through the routine use
23 of audience research, digital analytics, and impact
24 evaluations, to plan and execute such programs and
25 activities; and

1 (2) make available to Congress the findings of
2 the research and evaluations conducted under para-
3 graph (1).

4 (b) DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH AND EVALUATION.—

5 (1) APPOINTMENT.—Not later than 90 days
6 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Sec-
7 retary of State shall appoint a Director of Research
8 and Evaluation (referred to in this subsection as the
9 “Director”) in the Office of Policy, Planning, and
10 Resources for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs
11 of the Department of State.

12 (2) LIMITATION ON APPOINTMENT.—The ap-
13 pointment of the Director pursuant to paragraph (1)
14 shall not result in an increase in the overall full-time
15 equivalent positions within the Department of State.

16 (3) RESPONSIBILITIES.—The Director shall—

17 (A) coordinate and oversee the research
18 and evaluation of public diplomacy programs
19 and activities of the Department of State to—

20 (i) improve public diplomacy strate-
21 gies and tactics; and

22 (ii) ensure that such programs and
23 activities are increasing the knowledge, un-
24 derstanding, and trust of the United
25 States by relevant target audiences;

1 (B) report to the Director of Policy Plan-
2 ning of the Office of Policy, Planning, and Re-
3 sources for Public Diplomacy and Public Af-
4 fairs;

5 (C) routinely organize and oversee audi-
6 ence research, digital analytics, and impact
7 evaluations across all public diplomacy bureaus
8 and offices of the Department;

9 (D) support embassy public affairs sec-
10 tions;

11 (E) share appropriate public diplomacy re-
12 search and evaluation information within the
13 Department and with other appropriate Federal
14 departments and agencies;

15 (F) regularly design and coordinate stand-
16 ardized research questions, methodologies, and
17 procedures to ensure that public diplomacy pro-
18 grams and activities across all public diplomacy
19 bureaus and offices are designed to meet appro-
20 priate foreign policy objectives; and

21 (G) report biannually to the United States
22 Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy,
23 through the Subcommittee on Research and
24 Evaluation established pursuant to subsection

1 (f), regarding the research and evaluation of all
2 public diplomacy bureaus and offices.

3 (4) GUIDANCE AND TRAINING.—Not later than
4 one year after the appointment of the Director pur-
5 suant to paragraph (1), the Director shall develop
6 guidance and training, including curriculum for use
7 by the Foreign Service Institute, for all public diplo-
8 macy officers regarding the reading and interpreta-
9 tion of public diplomacy program and activity eval-
10 uation findings to ensure that such findings and re-
11 lated lessons learned are implemented in the plan-
12 ning and evaluation of all public diplomacy programs
13 and activities of the Department of State.

14 (c) PRIORITIZING RESEARCH AND EVALUATION.—

15 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Director of Policy Plan-
16 ning of the Office of Policy, Planning, and Re-
17 sources for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs
18 shall ensure that research and evaluation of public
19 diplomacy and activities of the Department of State,
20 as coordinated and overseen by the Director of Re-
21 search and Evaluation pursuant to subsection (b),
22 supports strategic planning and resource allocation
23 across all public diplomacy bureaus and offices of
24 the Department.

1 (2) ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES.—Amounts al-
2 located for the purposes of research and evaluation
3 of public diplomacy programs and activities pursu-
4 ant to subsection (b) shall be made available to be
5 disbursed at the direction of the Director of Re-
6 search and Evaluation among the research and eval-
7 uation staff across all public diplomacy bureaus and
8 offices of the Department of State.

9 (3) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of
10 Congress that the Department of State should
11 gradually increase its allocation of funds made avail-
12 able under the headings “EDUCATIONAL AND
13 CULTURAL EXCHANGE PROGRAMS” and
14 “DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR PROGRAMS”
15 for research and evaluation of public diplomacy pro-
16 grams and activities pursuant to subsection (b) to a
17 percentage of program funds that is commensurate
18 with Federal Government best practices.

19 (d) LIMITED EXEMPTION RELATING TO THE PAPER-
20 WORK REDUCTION ACT.—Chapter 35 of title 44, United
21 States Code (commonly known as the “Paperwork Reduc-
22 tion Act”), shall not apply to the collection of information
23 directed at any individuals conducted by, or on behalf of,
24 the Department of State for the purpose of audience re-

1 search, monitoring, and evaluations, and in connection
2 with the Department's activities conducted pursuant to—

3 (1) the United States Information and Edu-
4 cational Exchange Act of 1948 (22 U.S.C. 1431 et
5 seq.);

6 (2) the Mutual Educational and Cultural Ex-
7 change Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2451 et seq.);

8 (3) section 1287 of the National Defense Au-
9 thorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 (Public Law
10 114–328; 22 U.S.C. 2656 note); or

11 (4) the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22
12 U.S.C. 2151 et seq.).

13 (e) LIMITED EXEMPTION RELATING TO THE PRI-
14 VACY ACT.—

15 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Department of State
16 shall maintain, collect, use, and disseminate records
17 (as such term is defined in section 552a(a)(4) of
18 title 5, United States Code) for audience research,
19 digital analytics, and impact evaluation of commu-
20 nications related to public diplomacy efforts intended
21 for foreign audiences.

22 (2) CONDITIONS.—Audience research, digital
23 analytics, and impact evaluations under paragraph
24 (1) shall be—

1 (A) reasonably tailored to meet the pur-
2 poses of this subsection; and

3 (B) carried out with due regard for privacy
4 and civil liberties guidance and oversight.

5 (f) UNITED STATES ADVISORY COMMISSION ON PUB-
6 LIC DIPLOMACY.—

7 (1) SUBCOMMITTEE FOR RESEARCH AND EVAL-
8 UATION.—The United States Advisory Commission
9 on Public Diplomacy shall establish a Subcommittee
10 for Research and Evaluation to monitor and advise
11 regarding audience research, digital analytics, and
12 impact evaluations carried out by the Department of
13 State and the United States Agency for Global
14 Media.

15 (2) REPORT.—The Subcommittee for Research
16 and Evaluation established pursuant to paragraph
17 (1) shall submit to Congress an annual report, in
18 conjunction with the United States Advisory Com-
19 mission on Public Diplomacy’s Comprehensive An-
20 nual Report on the performance of the Department
21 and the United States Agency for Global Media, de-
22 scribing all actions taken by the Subcommittee pur-
23 suant to subparagraph (1) and any findings made as
24 a result of such actions.

1 **SEC. 4. PERMANENT REAUTHORIZATION OF THE UNITED**
2 **STATES ADVISORY COMMISSION ON PUBLIC**
3 **DIPLOMACY.**

4 Section 1334 of the Foreign Affairs Reform and Re-
5 structuring Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 6553) is amended—

6 (1) in the section heading, by striking “**SUN-**
7 **SET**” and inserting “**CONTINUATION**”; and

8 (2) by striking “until October 1, 2020”.

9 **SEC. 5. STREAMLINING OF SUPPORT FUNCTIONS.**

10 Section 1(b)(3) of the State Department Basic Au-
11 thorities Act of 1956 (22 U.S.C. 2651a(b)(3)) is amend-
12 ed—

13 (1) in subparagraph (D), by striking “and”
14 after the semicolon;

15 (2) in subparagraph (E), by striking the period
16 at the end and inserting “; and”; and

17 (3) by adding at the end the following new sub-
18 paragraph:

19 “(F) consolidate all human resources, per-
20 sonnel, travel, purchasing, budgetary planning
21 for public diplomacy funds, and other executive
22 support functions for all bureaus that report to
23 the Under Secretary.”.

1 **SEC. 6. GUIDANCE FOR CLOSURE OF PUBLIC DIPLOMACY**
2 **FACILITIES.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the
4 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State
5 shall adopt, and include in the Foreign Affairs Manual,
6 guidelines to collect and utilize information from each for-
7 eign post at which the construction of a new embassy com-
8 pound or new consulate compound would result in the clo-
9 sure or co-location of an American Space, American Cen-
10 ter, American Corner, or any other public diplomacy facil-
11 ity under the Secure Embassy Construction and Counter-
12 terrorism Act of 1999 (22 U.S.C. 4865 et seq.).

13 (b) REQUIREMENTS.—The guidelines required by
14 subsection (a) shall include—

15 (1) standardized notification to each chief of
16 mission describing the requirements of the Secure
17 Embassy Construction and Counterterrorism Act of
18 1999 and the impact on the mission footprint of
19 such requirements;

20 (2) an assessment and recommendations from
21 each chief of mission of potential impacts to public
22 diplomacy programming at such foreign post if any
23 public diplomacy facility referred to in subsection (a)
24 is closed or staff is co-located in accordance with
25 such Act;

1 (3) a process by which assessments and rec-
2 ommendations under paragraph (2) are considered
3 by the Secretary of State and the appropriate under
4 secretaries and assistant secretaries at the Depart-
5 ment of State; and

6 (4) notification to Congress, prior to the initi-
7 ation of new compound design, of the intent to close
8 any such public diplomacy facility or co-locate public
9 diplomacy staff in accordance with such Act.

10 (c) REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date
11 of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State shall
12 submit to the appropriate congressional committees a re-
13 port containing the guidelines required under subsection
14 (a) and any recommendations for any modifications to
15 such guidelines.

16 **SEC. 7. DEFINITIONS.**

17 In this Act:

18 (1) AUDIENCE RESEARCH.—The term “audi-
19 ence research” means research conducted at the out-
20 set of a public diplomacy program or the outset of
21 campaign planning and design regarding specific au-
22 dience segments to understand the attitudes, inter-
23 ests, knowledge, and behaviors of such audience seg-
24 ments.

1 (2) DIGITAL ANALYTICS.—The term “digital
2 analytics” means the analysis of qualitative and
3 quantitative data, accumulated in digital format, to
4 indicate the outputs and outcomes of a public diplo-
5 macy program or campaign.

6 (3) IMPACT EVALUATION.—The term “impact
7 evaluation” means an assessment of the changes in
8 the audience targeted by a public diplomacy program
9 or campaign that can be attributed to such program
10 or campaign.

11 (4) PUBLIC DIPLOMACY BUREAUS AND OF-
12 FICES.—The term “public diplomacy bureaus and
13 offices” means, with respect to the Department of
14 State—

15 (A) the Bureau of Educational and Cul-
16 tural Affairs;

17 (B) the Bureau of Public Affairs;

18 (C) the Bureau of International Informa-
19 tion Programs;

20 (D) the Office of Policy, Planning, and Re-
21 sources for Public Diplomacy and Public Af-
22 fairs;

23 (E) the Global Engagement Center; and

24 (F) the public diplomacy functions within
25 the regional and functional bureaus.

1 (5) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMIT-
2 TEES.—The term “appropriate congressional com-
3 mittees” means—

4 (A) the Committee on Foreign Affairs of
5 the House of Representatives;

6 (B) the Committee on Appropriations of
7 the House of Representatives;

8 (C) the Committee on Foreign Relations of
9 the Senate; and

10 (D) the Committee on Appropriations of
11 the Senate.

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