

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 491

To establish the position of Director of Foreign Assistance in the Department of State, and for other purposes

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 6 (legislative day, FEBRUARY 5), 2025

Mr. KAINE (for himself, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. COONS, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. WELCH, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. SANDERS, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. BENNET, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. SCHIFF) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

A BILL

To establish the position of Director of Foreign Assistance in the Department of State, and for other purposes

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

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Foreign Assistance Ac-
5 countability and Oversight Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

7 It is the sense of Congress that—

1 (1) the strategic delivery of foreign assistance is
2 critical to supporting the United States’ interests
3 around the world;

4 (2) foreign assistance furthers United States’
5 national security priorities, advances United States’
6 values, and ensures the United States is the partner
7 of choice for areas such as defense procurement and
8 economic investment in cutting edge scientific re-
9 search;

10 (3) the administration of foreign assistance pro-
11 gramming should be—

12 (A) managed by a qualified, competent De-
13 partment of State official; and

14 (B) subject to strict congressional over-
15 sight pursuant to its constitutionally authorized
16 power of the purse; and

17 (4) section 1413 of the Foreign Affairs Reform
18 and Restructuring Act of 1998 (Division G of Public
19 Law 105–277; 22 U.S.C. 6563) codified into law the
20 status of the United States Agency for International
21 Development as an “independent establishment”
22 outside of the Department of State.

1 **SEC. 3. DIRECTOR OF FOREIGN ASSISTANCE AT THE DE-**
 2 **PARTMENT OF STATE.**

3 Section 1 of the State Department Basic Authorities
 4 Act of 1956 (22 U.S.C. 2651a) is amended by adding at
 5 the end the following:

6 “(p) DIRECTOR OF FOREIGN ASSISTANCE.—

7 “(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

8 “(A) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COM-
 9 MITTEES.—The term ‘appropriate congressional
 10 committees’ means—

11 “(i) the Committee on Foreign Rela-
 12 tions of the Senate;

13 “(ii) the Committee on Appropriations
 14 of the Senate;

15 “(iii) the Committee on Foreign Af-
 16 fairs of the House of Representatives; and

17 “(iv) the Committee on Appropria-
 18 tions of the House of Representatives.

19 “(B) PERSONNEL DECISION.—The term
 20 ‘personnel decision’ means any decision relating
 21 to promotions, transfers, demotions, or dismis-
 22 sals.

23 “(2) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established in
 24 the Department of State, a Director of Foreign As-
 25 sistance (referred to in this subsection as the ‘Direc-
 26 tor’), who—

1 “(A) shall report directly to the Deputy
2 Secretary of State for Management and Re-
3 sources; and

4 “(B) should not hold another position in
5 the United States Government while holding the
6 position of Director.

7 “(3) DUTIES.—The Director shall—

8 “(A) optimize the impact of foreign assist-
9 ance by—

10 “(i) strategically aligning foreign as-
11 sistance resources to the Secretary of
12 State’s overarching foreign policy goals;

13 “(ii) measuring effectiveness; and

14 “(iii) promoting evidence-based poli-
15 cies, including budget formulation, jus-
16 tification, and execution mechanisms;

17 “(B) serve as a resource for the Secretary
18 of State, the Deputy Secretary of State, the
19 Under Secretaries of State, the Administrator
20 of the United States Agency for International
21 Development, and the heads of other Federal
22 departments and agencies that implement
23 United States foreign assistance programs to
24 support the development of policies, plans, and

1 programs to achieve national security, foreign
2 policy, and development goals;

3 “(C) perform results-oriented functions re-
4 lated to United States foreign assistance, in-
5 cluding—

6 “(i) leading an integrated budget,
7 strategic planning, and performance proc-
8 ess as part of integrated interagency pro-
9 gram planning to amplify foreign assist-
10 ance;

11 “(ii) promoting monitoring and eval-
12 uation;

13 “(iii) increasing transparency;

14 “(iv) facilitating data analysis, infor-
15 mation management, and reporting; and

16 “(v) developing foreign assistance
17 policies through research and partnerships;

18 “(D) support interagency collaboration on
19 foreign assistance programs and policies of
20 other Federal agencies and entities, including
21 the Millennium Challenge Corporation, the
22 United States International Development Fi-
23 nance Corporation, the Department of the
24 Treasury, the United States Trade and Devel-

opment Agency, the Export-Import Bank of the United States, and the Peace Corps;

“(E) create and direct, as part of integrated interagency program planning to amplify foreign assistance, consolidated policy, strategic, and program plans, the operational budget, program evaluation and results reporting from bureaus and offices within the Department of State and the United States Agency for International Development.

“(4) APPOINTMENT; CONFIRMATION.—

“(A) APPOINTMENT.—The Director shall be appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate.

“(B) ACTING DIRECTOR.—No individual may serve as Director in an acting capacity or otherwise assume the responsibilities of the Director for more than 90 days without being confirmed to such position by the Senate.

“(5) PERSONNEL DECISIONS.—Any adverse personnel decision made by the Director, or affecting the Director or any staff member reporting to the Director, including demotions, suspensions, furloughs and reductions in force, shall require the ap-

1 proval of the Deputy Secretary of State for Manage-
2 ment and Resources.”.

3 **SEC. 4. TIMELY OBLIGATION OF APPROPRIATED FUNDS.**

4 All funds appropriated by Congress to the Depart-
5 ment of State or to the United States Agency for Inter-
6 national Development, or that are otherwise under the di-
7 rection of the Director of Foreign Assistance, shall be
8 made available to be obligated not later than 90 days after
9 the date of the enactment of the related appropriations
10 Act.

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