

112TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 4289

To enhance the disclosure of information on official foreign travel of Members and employees of Congress, to impose additional restrictions on such travel, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 28, 2012

Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on House Administration

A BILL

To enhance the disclosure of information on official foreign travel of Members and employees of Congress, to impose additional restrictions on such travel, 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 “Transparency and Ac-
5 countability in Congressional Travel Act of 2012”.

1 **SEC. 2. ENHANCED DISCLOSURE OF MEMBER AND STAFF**
2 **TRAVEL.**

3 (a) REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR OFFICIAL FOR-
4 EIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES.—

5 (1) STATEMENT REQUIRED PRIOR TO UNDER-
6 TAKING TRAVEL.—A Member or employee of Con-
7 gress may not undertake any official foreign travel
8 unless, not later than 14 days prior to the date on
9 which the travel begins, the Member or employee
10 prepares and submits to the Clerk of the House of
11 Representatives (in the case of a Member or em-
12 ployee of the House) or the Secretary of the Senate
13 (in the case of a Senator or employee of the Senate)
14 a statement containing the following information:

15 (A) The name and position of the Member
16 or employee involved, and (in the case of an em-
17 ployee) the employing office.

18 (B) The office authorizing the travel.

19 (C) A statement of worthiness regarding
20 the purpose of the travel, including a descrip-
21 tion of how the travel relates to the Member's
22 or employee's official duties.

23 (D) A tentative itinerary for each day of
24 the travel, including a list of the foreign nations
25 and the locations within each such nation the
26 Member or employee intends to visit and any

1 individuals with whom the Member or employee
2 intends to meet.

3 (E) The names of any other individuals
4 who are accompanying the Member or employee
5 during the travel, without regard to whether
6 such individuals are Members or employees of
7 the House.

8 (F) The amount of per diem the Member
9 or employee requested to be provided for the
10 travel, and whether the amount is greater than
11 the standard per diem provided under chapter
12 57 of title 5, United States Code.

13 (G) A statement as to whether the aircraft
14 to be used for transportation for the travel is
15 commercial, chartered, private, or military), and
16 (in the case of commercial aircraft) whether the
17 seating is coach, business class, or first class.

18 (H) The Member's or employee's best esti-
19 mate of the costs of the travel, itemized by the
20 costs of transportation, meals, and lodging.

21 (I) If any portion of the cost of the travel
22 will be paid using appropriated funds other
23 than funds of the House of Representatives or
24 Senate (including funds of the Department of

1 Defense or the Department of State), the name
2 of the office which is the source of such funds.

3 (2) STATEMENT REQUIRED AFTER COMPLETION
4 OF TRAVEL.—Not later than 14 days after com-
5 pleting any official foreign travel, the Member or
6 employee who undertook the travel shall prepare and
7 submit to the Clerk of the House of Representatives
8 (in the case of a Member or employee of the House)
9 or the Secretary of the Senate (in the case of a Sen-
10 ator or employee of the Senate) a statement con-
11 taining the following information:

12 (A) The name and position of the Member
13 or employee involved, and (in the case of an em-
14 ployee) the employing office.

15 (B) The office authorizing the travel.

16 (C) A statement detailing the value, wor-
17 thiness, and educational benefit to the Member
18 or employee of the travel.

19 (D) The actual itinerary for the travel, in-
20 cluding a comprehensive statement of travel
21 times, foreign nations visited and the locations
22 visited in each such nation, meetings, and other
23 activities carried out during the travel.

24 (E) The names of any other individuals
25 who did accompany the Member or employee

1 during the travel, without regard to whether
2 such individuals are Members or employees of
3 the House.

4 (F) How much (if any) per diem was pro-
5 vided for the travel and how much (if any) of
6 such per diem was unspent.

7 (G) A statement as to whether the aircraft
8 used for transportation for the travel was com-
9 mercial, chartered, private, or military), and (in
10 the case of commercial aircraft) whether the
11 seating was coach, business class, or first class.

12 (H) The actual cost of the travel, itemized
13 by the costs of—

14 (i) transportation (including the iden-
15 tification of the providers of the transpor-
16 tation);

17 (ii) lodging (including the identifica-
18 tion of the providers of the lodging); and

19 (iii) meals (including the identification
20 of the providers of the meals).

21 (I) If any portion of the cost of the travel
22 was paid (or will be paid) using appropriated
23 funds other than funds of the House of Rep-
24 resentatives or Senate (including funds of the
25 Department of Defense or the Department of

1 State), the name of the office which is the
2 source of such funds and the amount of the
3 payment which is (or which will be) attributable
4 to such office.

5 (3) EXCEPTION FOR CLASSIFIED INFORMA-
6 TION.—A Member or employee may exclude from a
7 statement prepared under this subsection any infor-
8 mation which is classified, so long as the Member in-
9 cludes documentation in support of the exclusion in
10 the statement prepared under this subsection.

11 (4) USE OF ELECTRONIC FILING.—To the
12 greatest extent practicable, a Member or employee
13 shall submit the statements required under this sec-
14 tion in both paper and electronic form.

15 (b) DETERMINATION AND DISCLOSURE OF COSTS IN-
16 CURRED BY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE OR SECRETARY OF
17 STATE.—In the case of official foreign travel of a Member
18 or employee of Congress for which any of the costs are
19 to be paid by funds of the Department of Defense or the
20 Department of State, the Secretary of Defense or the Sec-
21 retary of State (as the case may be) shall, not later than
22 10 days after completion of the travel involved, provide
23 the Member or employee with a written statement con-
24 taining the following information:

1 (1) The cost incurred with respect to the Mem-
2 ber or employee, itemized by the cost of transpor-
3 tation, lodging, and meals.

4 (2) A statement as to whether the aircraft used
5 for transportation for the travel was commercial,
6 chartered, private, or military), and (in the case of
7 commercial aircraft) whether the seating was coach,
8 business class, or first class.

9 (3) Such other information as the Member or
10 employee may request in order to enable the Member
11 or employee to prepare and submit the statement re-
12 quired under subsection (a)(2).

13 (c) INTERNET POSTING OF REPORTS.—Upon receiv-
14 ing a statement under subsection (a) with respect to offi-
15 cial foreign travel of a Member or employee of Congress,
16 the Clerk of the House of Representatives or the Secretary
17 of the Senate (as the case may be) shall post the statement
18 on the Clerk’s or Secretary’s official public Internet site
19 in a searchable, sortable, and downloadable manner.

20 **SEC. 3. OTHER RESTRICTIONS ON OFFICIAL FOREIGN**
21 **TRAVEL OF MEMBERS AND STAFF.**

22 (a) PROHIBITING VACATION STOPOVERS DURING
23 TRAVEL.—A Member or employee of Congress may not
24 undertake a vacation stopover for annual leave at any
25 point during official foreign travel.

1 (b) RESTRICTIONS ON TRAVEL BY EMPLOYEES.—

2 (1) TRAVEL BY EMPLOYEES OF MEMBERS.—An
3 employee of Congress whose employing office is the
4 office of a Member of Congress may not undertake
5 any official foreign travel unless—

6 (A) the authorizing office for the travel is
7 the office of the Member;

8 (B) the travel is undertaken by the em-
9 ployee to accompany the Member on the Mem-
10 ber's own official foreign travel; and

11 (C) no other employee of the office accom-
12 panies the Member on such travel.

13 (2) TRAVEL BY EMPLOYEES OF COMMITTEES.—
14 An employee of Congress whose employing office is
15 the office of a committee of the House of Represent-
16 atives or Senate (including a joint committee) may
17 not undertake any official foreign travel unless—

18 (A) the authorizing office for the travel is
19 the office of the committee;

20 (B) the travel is undertaken by the em-
21 ployee to accompany a Member who serves on
22 the committee on the Member's own official for-
23 eign travel; and

24 (C) the number of employees accom-
25 panying the Members of the committee on such

1 travel does not exceed the number of Members
2 of the committee who are participating in such
3 travel.

4 (3) EXCEPTION FOR CERTAIN TRAVEL.—This
5 subsection does not apply with respect to travel to
6 a military installation or travel to a theater of oper-
7 ations of the Armed Forces.

8 (c) REQUIRING EFFORTS TO REDUCE EXPENSES;
9 RETURN OF UNSPENT PER DIEM.—Each Member and
10 employee of Congress who undertakes official foreign trav-
11 el shall—

12 (1) take such actions as may be necessary to re-
13 duce the costs incurred for such travel; and

14 (2) return any per diem provided to the Mem-
15 ber or employee which remains unexpended as of the
16 conclusion of the travel.

17 (d) NO EFFECT ON OTHER AUTHORIZATION RE-
18 QUIREMENTS.—Nothing in this section shall be construed
19 to affect any requirement under the Rules of the House
20 of Representatives, the Standing Rules of the Senate, or
21 any law that a Member, officer, or employee of Congress
22 obtain authorization for official foreign travel prior to un-
23 dertaking such travel.

24 (e) REGULATIONS.—This section shall be carried out
25 in accordance with regulations promulgated—

1 (1) by the Committee on House Administration
2 of the House of Representatives, with respect to
3 Members and employees of the House of Representa-
4 tives; or

5 (2) by the Committee on Rules and Administra-
6 tion of the Senate, with respect to Senators and em-
7 ployees of the Senate.

8 **SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.**

9 In this Act, the following definitions apply:

10 (1) The term “authorizing office” means, with
11 respect to a Member or employee of Congress, the
12 office which is authorized under law or the Rules of
13 the House of Representatives or the Standing Rules
14 of the Senate to approve the use of appropriated
15 funds, including official funds of the Senate or
16 House of Representatives, for official travel outside
17 of the United States by the Member or employee.

18 (2) The term “employee of Congress” means an
19 individual whose salary is disbursed by the Chief Ad-
20 ministrative Officer of the House of Representatives
21 or the Secretary of the Senate.

22 (3) The term “Member of Congress” means a
23 Senator or a Representative in, or Delegate or Resi-
24 dent Commissioner to, the Congress.

1 (4) The term “official foreign travel” means
2 any travel outside of the United States for which the
3 costs (including the costs of transportation, lodging,
4 meals, and related expenses) may be covered by ap-
5 propriated funds, including official funds of the Sen-
6 ate or House of Representatives, under law or the
7 Rules of the House of Representatives or the Stand-
8 ing Rules of the Senate, or by funds provided under
9 section 502(b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954
10 (22 U.S.C. 1754(b)).

11 **SEC. 5. EFFECTIVE DATE.**

12 This Act shall apply with respect to official foreign
13 travel undertaken after the expiration of the 90-day period
14 which begins on the date of the enactment of this Act.

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