

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1684

To establish a position of Science Laureate of the United States, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

AUGUST 1, 2017

Ms. HIRONO introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

A BILL

To establish a position of Science Laureate of the United States, 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 “Science Laureates of
5 the United States Act of 2017”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND RECOGNITION.**

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

8 (1) Scientific research and advancement has
9 driven success in the United States and global suc-
10 cess for centuries.

1 (2) Scientific research has saved, improved, and
2 extended lives, increased the standard of living, ex-
3 panded economic opportunity, and advanced human
4 understanding.

5 (3) Such research holds the promise of con-
6 tinuing this progress, protecting the environment,
7 creating jobs, growing the economy through innova-
8 tive ideas and discoveries, and generally advancing
9 all mankind.

10 (4) People in the United States can benefit
11 when scientific research is conducted and commu-
12 nicated in a transparent manner to better inform
13 citizens about the nature and status of such re-
14 search.

15 (5) Scientific education is a critical element of
16 preparing our Nation and our citizens for a tech-
17 nology-intensive future and ensuring that the United
18 States remains the world leader in innovation and
19 high-tech success.

20 (6) A spokesperson who can embody, dem-
21 onstrate, and articulate the importance and excite-
22 ment of scientific research and education will help
23 improve the current and future state of science to
24 the benefit of all people in the United States.

1 (b) CONGRESSIONAL RECOGNITION.—Congress rec-
 2 ognizes that science contributes to the economic prosperity
 3 and general welfare of the United States, and that increas-
 4 ing the public’s awareness about the sciences will increase
 5 such benefits. Congress also recognizes that scientists who
 6 are both accomplished in their fields and who foster the
 7 public’s interest in science do a special service to the
 8 United States.

9 **SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT OF SCIENCE LAUREATES OF THE**
 10 **UNITED STATES.**

11 (a) POSITION ESTABLISHED.—The National Science
 12 Foundation shall establish the position of Science Lau-
 13 reate of the United States to honor the service of sci-
 14 entists.

15 (b) APPOINTMENT BY NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDA-
 16 TION.—The Science Laureate of the United States shall
 17 be appointed by the National Science Foundation from
 18 among individuals nominated under subsection (c).

19 (c) NOMINATIONS BY NATIONAL ACADEMY OF
 20 SCIENCES.—

21 (1) AGREEMENT.—The National Science Foun-
 22 dation shall seek to enter into an agreement with the
 23 National Academy of Sciences to perform the serv-
 24 ices covered by this subsection.

25 (2) NOMINATION.—

1 (A) IN GENERAL.—Under an agreement
2 between the National Science Foundation and
3 the National Academy of Sciences under this
4 subsection, the National Academy of Sciences
5 shall, not less frequently than once each year
6 and except as provided in subparagraph (D),
7 nominate three individuals to serve as the
8 Science Laureate.

9 (B) BASIS.—Nomination under subpara-
10 graph (A) shall be on the basis of merit, par-
11 ticularly the ability of an individual to—

12 (i) foster and enhance public aware-
13 ness and interest in science; and

14 (ii) provide ongoing significant sci-
15 entific contributions.

16 (C) VARIETY OF SCIENTIFIC DIS-
17 CIPLINES.—In nominating individuals under
18 subparagraph (A), the National Academy of
19 Sciences shall strive to nominate individuals, in
20 different years, from different scientific dis-
21 ciplines, including biology, physics, geosciences,
22 astronomy, mathematics, chemistry, and other
23 science disciplines.

24 (D) EXCEPTION.—The National Academy
25 of Sciences shall not make any nominations

1 under this paragraph for a year if the National
2 Science Foundation notifies the National Acad-
3 emy of Sciences that such nominations are un-
4 necessary because the National Science Foun-
5 dation intends to extend the term of the current
6 Science Laureate pursuant to subsection (f).

7 (d) DUTIES.—

8 (1) IN GENERAL.—Each Science Laureate shall
9 engage the public, from time to time, to increase the
10 public’s awareness about science.

11 (2) CONTINUATION OF SCIENTIFIC WORK.—A
12 Science Laureate is encouraged to continue the
13 Science Laureate’s scientific work.

14 (3) FACILITATION OF DUTIES.—The National
15 Science Foundation shall facilitate the duties of a
16 Science Laureate and the Science Laureate may ac-
17 cept assistance from the National Academy of
18 Sciences in carrying out such duties.

19 (e) LIMITATION.—The Science Laureate position
20 shall not have the effect of duplicating or superseding the
21 role of the President’s Science Advisor.

22 (f) TERM.—Each Science Laureate shall serve a 1-
23 year term and may be reappointed by the National Science
24 Foundation for additional terms as the National Science
25 Foundation considers appropriate.

1 (g) COMPENSATION; REIMBURSEMENT.—

2 (1) COMPENSATION.—Notwithstanding any
3 other provision of law, a Science Laureate shall
4 serve without pay and shall not be considered to be
5 a Federal employee based on such individual's ap-
6 pointment as a Science Laureate.

7 (2) REIMBURSEMENT FOR TRAVEL.—The Na-
8 tional Science Foundation may provide a Science
9 Laureate with reimbursement for travel expenses in-
10 curred while performing duties as a Science Lau-
11 reate, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, in
12 accordance with applicable provisions in the same
13 manner as persons employed intermittently in the
14 Government service are allowed expenses under sec-
15 tion 5703 of title 5, United States Code.

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