

116TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. R. 7106

To require the Department of Defense to maintain a basic social sciences research program.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 4, 2020

Mr. LIPINSKI (for himself, Mr. MCKINLEY, and Mr. LANGEVIN) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services

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## A BILL

To require the Department of Defense to maintain a basic social sciences research program.

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 “Social Sciences Protect  
5 Our Nation Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) The 2017 National Academies of Sciences,  
9 Engineering and Medicine report on The Value of  
10 Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences to Na-

1        tional Priorities asserts “Having a fundamental un-  
2        derstanding of how people and societies behave, why  
3        they respond the way they do, what they find impor-  
4        tant, what they believe or value, and what and how  
5        they think about others is critical for the country’s  
6        well-being in today’s global environment.”.

7            (2) There is a national need for investing in di-  
8        verse basic research social science, and facilitating  
9        transition of those findings to inform national de-  
10       fense priorities and actions.

11           (3) In 2008, while giving a speech entitled “Na-  
12       tional Security: What New Expertise is Needed?”,  
13       Secretary of Defense Robert Gates stated “Too  
14       many mistakes have been made over the years be-  
15       cause our government and military did not under-  
16       stand—or even seek to understand—the countries or  
17       cultures we were dealing with.”.

18           (4) In response, the Department of Defense ini-  
19       tiated a basic social science research program to im-  
20       prove basic understanding of the social, cultural, be-  
21       havioral, and political forces that shape regions of  
22       the world of strategic importance to the United  
23       States.

24           (5) The National Academy of Sciences found in  
25       their 2019 evaluation of the Department of Defense

1 defense-wide basic social sciences program that “de-  
2 spite facing challenges with establishing a stable,  
3 well-functioning organizational structure as well as  
4 resource limitations, the program has made impor-  
5 tant contributions” and that the program has suc-  
6 cessfully strengthened ties between the Department  
7 and the social science community.

8 (6) Maintaining a basic social sciences research  
9 program provides the Department of Defense critical  
10 access to expertise to inform cultural understanding,  
11 support technological edge, counter adversarial social  
12 interventions, and understand drivers to strengthen  
13 alliances and attract new partners.

14 (7) Continued investment in basic social science  
15 research is particularly crucial at a time when peer  
16 and near-peer adversaries are increasingly employing  
17 elements of malign influence, disinformation, and  
18 predatory economics in concert with technological  
19 capabilities.

20 **SEC. 3. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE SOCIAL SCIENCES.**

21 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Defense shall  
22 maintain a defense-wide basic research program with an  
23 emphasis on diverse social sciences.

1 (b) The Secretary of Defense shall include in the an-  
2 nual budget submission of the President under section  
3 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code—

4 (1) a dedicated budget line item for defense-  
5 wide basic social science research; and

6 (2) basic research funds from each of the serv-  
7 ices dedicated to social science research.

8 (c) REPORT.—Within 90 days after the date of enact-  
9 ment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall report  
10 to the House Armed Services Committee and the Senate  
11 Armed Services Committee on the organizational structure  
12 of the defense-wide basic social science research program.  
13 The report shall include—

14 (1) the responsibilities of the Under Secretary  
15 of Defense for Research and Engineering in collabo-  
16 ration with the Under Secretary of Defense for Pol-  
17 icy in joint oversight of the program;

18 (2) the role of each of the services in coordi-  
19 nating with the program; and

20 (3) efforts to align the program with the De-  
21 partment's Science and Technology roadmaps and  
22 the National Defense Strategy.

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