

religious freedom, there is more economic freedom, more women's empowerment, more political stability, more freedom of speech, and less terrorism.

More than ever before, vigorous U.S. leadership and diplomacy are needed to address religious freedom violations globally. It is clear that our national security will depend on the protection and advancement of this fundamental freedom.

The Frank Wolf International Religious Freedom Act will upgrade the tools and used by the Administration to improve U.S. religious freedom diplomacy efforts globally; better trained and equipped diplomats to counter extremism; address anti-Semitism and religious persecution, and mitigate sectarian conflict.

The bill does this by:

Requiring that the Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom report directly to the Secretary of State.

Elevating the position of the Ambassador within the Federal Government: Gives the Ambassador responsibilities to coordinate religious freedom policy throughout the government; develop training curriculum for all Foreign Service officers; and administer grants to promote religious freedom policy globally.

Requiring training in international religious freedom for all Foreign Service Officers: Requires development of curriculum and training for all incoming Foreign Service Officers and for Deputy Chiefs of Mission and Ambassadors going out to new posts. The curriculum used by the State Department will be made available to the U.S. Military and other relevant government agencies.

Creating an "Entity of Particular Concern" Designation for Non-State Actors: Gives the Secretary of State authority to designate as "entities of particular concern" in recognition of the fact that in the 21st century some of the most egregious religious freedom violations are committed by non-state actors.

Requiring more frequent Presidential actions to counter severe religious freedom violations globally: Requires annual Country of Particular Concern (CPC) designations. Limits the number of sanctions waivers (except in cases of the national interest) and requires more frequent reporting on countries where sanction waivers are used.

Creating a comprehensive Religious Prisoner's List: Lists of religious prisoners would be made available upon request from Members of Congress.

Increasing congressional oversight of State Department actions against individual religious freedom violators through the creation of a "Designated Persons List." The list will include individuals who have been denied a visa or sanctioned because of their involvement in severe violations of religious freedom. Congress will receive frequent and regular updates on the list.

Requiring the State Department to create a "Special Watch List" of countries that tolerate severe violations of religious freedom but which may fail to meet the CPC threshold.

Sets Congressional Expectations for Staffing of the IRF Office and Expansion of Religious Freedom Program Grants: Requires "appropriate staff" for the IRF office and seeks office staffing at FY 16 levels. Urges the State Department to request "sufficient funding for vigorous promotion" of international religious freedom policy.

The bill is named after former Congressman Frank Wolf, a tireless champion for the rights

of the poor and the persecuted globally. 18 years ago, he had the foresight to make advancing the right to religious freedom a high U.S. foreign policy priority. It is largely because of his efforts that religious freedom is taken seriously as a foreign policy issue. I had the distinct honor and pleasure of working with him for over thirty years. This bill is a fitting tribute to his work and service to our great nation.

I want to thank Rep. ANNA ESHOO for her partnership on this legislation and her advocacy on behalf of religious minorities in the Middle East and the cause of all those oppressed for the beliefs they hold.

I also want to thank Senator MARCO RUBIO for his commitment to the cause of human rights and international religious freedom and for his assistance in getting this bill passed in the Senate.

As with many pieces of bipartisan legislation, this bill would not have gotten this far without the assistance of many individuals and groups invested in its passage. I want to thank Senators BOB CORKER, and BEN CARDIN, for assisting with the bill's amendment and passage on the Senate side. Congressman ED ROYCE and ELIOT ENGEL and their staff for helping to move this bill on a bipartisan basis through the House. Also, I want to recognize the contribution David Saperstein, the Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom, who's worked to strengthen the bill and assure its passage. Finally, I want to recognize and thank the many staff members, in the House and Senate, who have worked hard for this bill's passage over the past two years including, Scott Flipse, Elyse Anderson, Mary Noonan, Hannah Murphy, Caleb McCarry, Jaime Fly, Doug Anderson, Piero Tozzi, Sajit Gandhi, and Janice Kaguyutan.

International religious freedom is not a partisan or party issue. The freedom to practice a religion without persecution is a precious right for everyone, of whatever race, sex, status, or location on earth. This human right is enshrined in our own founding documents, in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and is a bedrock principle of open and democratic societies for centuries.

We Americans understand the importance of religious liberty. It is the First Freedom on which our nation was founded. We should be united in defending it, standing up for those who suffer grievously for its absence, and for the noble and essential cause of protecting our own country. I urge passage of this bill without objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the original request of the gentleman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to submit statements or extraneous materials for the RECORD on the Senate amendment to H.R. 1150.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

UNITED STATES-CARIBBEAN STRATEGIC ENGAGEMENT ACT OF 2016

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the bill (H.R. 4939) to increase engagement with the governments of the Caribbean region, the Caribbean diaspora community in the United States, and the private sector and civil society in both the United States and the Caribbean, and for other purposes, with the Senate amendment thereto, and concur in the Senate amendment.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the Senate amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Senate amendment:

Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "United States-Caribbean Strategic Engagement Act of 2016".

SEC. 2. STATEMENT OF POLICY.

Congress declares that it is the policy of the United States to increase engagement with the governments of the Caribbean region and with civil society, including the private sector, in both the United States and the Caribbean, in a concerted effort to—

- (1) enhance diplomatic relations between the United States and the Caribbean region;*
- (2) increase economic cooperation between the United States and the Caribbean region;*
- (3) support regional economic, political, and security integration efforts in the Caribbean region;*
- (4) encourage enduring economic development and increased regional economic diversification and global competitiveness;*
- (5) reduce levels of crime and violence, curb the trafficking of illicit drugs, strengthen the rule of law, and improve citizen security;*
- (6) improve energy security by increasing access to diverse, reliable, and affordable power;*
- (7) advance cooperation on democracy and human rights at multilateral fora;*
- (8) continue support for public health advances and cooperation on health concerns and threats to the Caribbean region; and*
- (9) expand Internet access throughout the region, especially to countries lacking the appropriate infrastructure.*

SEC. 3. STRATEGY.

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State, in coordination with the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a multi-year strategy for United States engagement to support the efforts of interested nations in the Caribbean region that—

- (1) identifies Department of State and USAID priorities, in coordination with other executive branch agencies, for United States policy towards the Caribbean region;*
- (2) outlines an approach to partner with governments of the Caribbean region to improve citizen security, reduce the trafficking of illicit drugs, strengthen the rule of law, and improve the effectiveness and longevity of the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative;*
- (3) establishes a comprehensive, integrated, multi-year strategy to encourage efforts of the Caribbean region to implement regional and national strategies that improve energy security, by increasing access to all available sources of energy, including by taking advantage of the indigenous energy sources of the Caribbean and the ongoing energy revolution in the United States;*

(4) outlines an approach to improve diplomatic engagement with the governments of the Caribbean region, including with respect to human rights and democracy;

(5) Describes how the United States can develop an approach to supporting Caribbean countries in efforts they are willing to undertake with their own resources to diversify their economies;

(6) describes ways to ensure the active participation of citizens of the Caribbean in existing program and initiatives administered by the Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs; and

(7) reflects the input of other executive branch agencies, as appropriate.

SEC. 4. BRIEFINGS.

The Secretary of State shall offer to the appropriate congressional committees annual briefings that review Department of State efforts to implement the strategy for United States engagement with the Caribbean region in accordance with section 3.

SEC. 5. PROGRESS REPORT.

Not later than 2 years after the submission of the strategy required under section 3, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on progress made toward implementing the strategy.

SEC. 6. REPORTING COST OFFSET.

Section 601(c)(4) of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (22 U.S.C. 4001(c)(4)) is amended by striking "the following:" and all that follows through "(B) A workforce plan" and inserting "a workforce plan".

SEC. 7. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) **APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.**—The term "appropriate congressional committees" means the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate.

(2) **CARIBBEAN REGION.**—The term "Caribbean region" means the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative beneficiary countries.

(3) **SECURITY ASSISTANCE.**—The term "security assistance" has the meaning given such term in section 502B(d)(2) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2304(d)(2)).

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey (during the reading). Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to dispense with the reading of the amendment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the original request of the gentleman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND GOVERNMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF NORWAY NUCLEAR ENERGY ACT

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the bill (S. 8) to provide for the approval of the Agreement for Cooperation Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Kingdom of Norway Concerning Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 8

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. APPROVAL OF AGREEMENT FOR COOPERATION BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF NORWAY CONCERNING PEACEFUL USES OF NUCLEAR ENERGY.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Notwithstanding the provisions for congressional consideration of a proposed agreement for cooperation in subsection d. of section 123 of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 (42 U.S.C. 2153), the Agreement for Cooperation Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Kingdom of Norway Concerning Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy, done at Washington June 11, 2016, may be brought into effect on or after the date of the enactment of this Act, as if all the requirements in such section for consideration of such agreement had been satisfied, subject to subsection (b).

(b) **APPLICABILITY OF ATOMIC ENERGY ACT OF 1954 AND OTHER PROVISIONS OF LAW.**—Upon entering into effect, the agreement referred to in subsection (a) shall be subject to the provisions of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 (42 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.) and any other applicable United States law as if such agreement had come into effect in accordance with the requirements of section 123 of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 (42 U.S.C. 2153).

The bill was ordered to be read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ESSENTIAL TRANSPORTATION WORKER IDENTIFICATION CREDENTIAL ASSESSMENT ACT

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the bill (H.R. 710) to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to prepare a comprehensive security assessment of the transportation security card program, and for other purposes, with the Senate amendment thereto, and concur in the Senate amendment.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the Senate amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Senate amendment:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. TRANSPORTATION WORKER IDENTIFICATION CREDENTIAL SECURITY CARD PROGRAM IMPROVEMENTS AND ASSESSMENT.

(a) **CREDENTIAL IMPROVEMENTS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall commence actions, consistent with section 70105 of title 46, United States Code, to improve the Transportation Security Administration's process for vetting individuals with access to secure areas of vessels and maritime facilities.

(2) **REQUIRED ACTIONS.**—The actions described under paragraph (1) shall include—

(A) conducting a comprehensive risk analysis of security threat assessment procedures, including—

(i) identifying those procedures that need additional internal controls; and

(ii) identifying best practices for quality assurance at every stage of the security threat assessment;

(B) implementing the additional internal controls and best practices identified under subparagraph (A);

(C) improving fraud detection techniques, such as—

(i) by establishing benchmarks and a process for electronic document validation;

(ii) by requiring annual training for Trusted Agents; and

(iii) by reviewing any security threat assessment-related information provided by Trusted Agents and incorporating any new threat information into updated guidance under subparagraph (D);

(D) updating the guidance provided to Trusted Agents regarding the vetting process and related regulations;

(E) finalizing a manual for Trusted Agents and adjudicators on the vetting process; and

(F) establishing quality controls to ensure consistent procedures to review adjudication decisions and terrorism vetting decisions.

(3) **REPORT.**—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Inspector General of the Department of Homeland Security shall submit a report to Congress that evaluates the implementation of the actions described in paragraph (1).

(b) **COMPREHENSIVE SECURITY ASSESSMENT OF THE TRANSPORTATION SECURITY CARD PROGRAM.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall commission an assessment of the effectiveness of the transportation security card program (referred to in this section as "Program") required under section 70105 of title 46, United States Code, at enhancing security and reducing security risks for facilities and vessels regulated under chapter 701 of that title.

(2) **LOCATION.**—The assessment commissioned under paragraph (1) shall be conducted by a research organization with significant experience in port or maritime security, such as—

(A) a national laboratory;

(B) a university-based center within the Science and Technology Directorate's centers of excellence network; or

(C) a qualified federally-funded research and development center.

(3) **CONTENTS.**—The assessment commissioned under paragraph (1) shall—

(A) review the credentialing process by determining—

(i) the appropriateness of vetting standards;

(ii) whether the fee structure adequately reflects the current costs of vetting;

(iii) whether there is unnecessary redundancy or duplication with other Federal- or State-issued transportation security credentials; and

(iv) the appropriateness of having varied Federal and State threat assessments and access controls;

(B) review the process for renewing applications for Transportation Worker Identification Credentials, including the number of days it takes to review application, appeal, and waiver requests for additional information; and

(C) review the security value of the Program by—

(i) evaluating the extent to which the Program, as implemented, addresses known or likely security risks in the maritime and port environments;

(ii) evaluating the potential for a non-biometric credential alternative;

(iii) identifying the technology, business process, and operational impacts of the use of the transportation security card and transportation security card readers in the maritime and port environments;

(iv) assessing the costs and benefits of the Program, as implemented; and