



February 24, 2026

To the Members of the House Armed Services Committee and the For Country Caucus,

Each year, With Honor Action endorses several pieces of bipartisan national security legislation. For the FY27 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), we ask that you consider including the following 16 provisions in your initial submissions to HASC. As we enter an election year that will undoubtedly raise the partisan temperature, this critical, consensus-driven legislation is more important than ever, and the principled veteran leadership demonstrated by the members of the For Country Caucus (4CC) is the path toward a more prosperous and secure nation.

Modernizing the Department of Defense and Revitalizing the Defense Industrial Base:

1. [H.R. 5155 / S. 2209 - Warrior Right to Repair Act of 2025](#)
2. Special consideration of key national security pieces of the Shipbuilding and Harbor Infrastructure for Prosperity and Security (SHIPS) for America Act ([H.R.3151/S.1541](#)):
 - a. [Sec. 403](#) - *Assessment of Undersea Cable Repair Contingencies*
 - b. [Sec. 512](#) - *Plan of action for use of Defense Production Act of 1950 authorities*
 - c. [Sec. 521](#) - *United States Center for Maritime Innovation*
 - d. [Sec. 616](#) - *Military to maritime transition*

Expanding Pathways and Opportunities to Service:

3. Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps ([JROTC](#))
 - a. With Honor Action supports the authorization of funding for the JROTC program at or above the FY26 congressionally-authorized level of \$353.9 million.
4. United States Naval Sea Cadet Corps ([USNSCC](#))
 - a. With Honor Action supports the authorization of funding for the USNSCC program at or above the FY26 congressionally-authorized level of \$4.3 million.
5. Civil Air Patrol ([CAP](#))
 - a. With Honor Action supports the authorization of funding for the CAP program at or above the FY26 congressionally-authorized level of \$50.3 million for aircraft and maintenance.
6. National Guard [STARBASE](#) Program
 - a. With Honor Action supports the authorization of funding for the DoD STARBASE program at or above the FY26 congressionally-authorized level of \$50 million.

Supporting Our Global Allies & Partners:

7. The establishment of a [preservation process](#) for the service records of recognized "Afghan allies" in the Department of Defense.



8. Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative ([USAI](#))
 - a. With Honor Action supports the authorization of funding for USAI at or above the FY26 authorized level of \$400 million for FY27.
9. Baltic Security Initiative ([BSI](#))
 - a. With Honor Action supports the authorization of funding for BSI at or above the FY26 authorized level of \$175 million for FY27.
10. Taiwan Security Cooperation Initiative ([TSCI](#))
 - a. With Honor Action supports the authorization of funding for TSCI at or above the FY26 authorized level of \$1 billion for FY27.

Addressing Military Quality & Ease of Life:

11. [H.R. 6383](#) - [Brandon Act Training and Protocol Act](#)
12. [H.R. 7188](#) / [S. 3654](#) - Military Occupancy Living Defense ([MOLD](#)) Act
13. [H.R. 6976](#) - [Duty Status Reform Act](#)
14. The [designation of a senior official](#) responsible for the management and oversight of all programs and activities of the Department of Defense related to the transition of members of the Armed Forces to civilian status.

Other National Security Matters:

15. [H.R. 6469](#) - Special consideration of the *Feasibility Review of Emerging Equipment for Digital Open Media (FREEDOM) Act*
16. The requirement of an intelligence [community assessment](#) on the foreign malign influence operations of the Chinese Communist Party in key regions at the expense of the United States and its allies.

Detailed descriptions of these measures can be found in [Appendix I](#), and specific legislative text may be found in [Appendix II](#) attached to this letter.

Vice President of Government Affairs, Kaylan Swartz, is available to assist your staff with any follow-up information you may need (swartz@withhonor.org).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rye Barcott".

Rye Barcott
Co-Founder & CEO
With Honor



Appendix I - Additional Information

Modernizing the Department of Defense and revitalizing the defense industrial base

With Honor Action recommends the inclusion of two pieces of legislation: the Warrior Right to Repair Act, led by Rep. Marie Glusenkamp Perez, and For Country Caucus members Reps. Jen Kiggans and Maggie Goodlander, and special consideration of key national security elements of the Shipbuilding and Harbor Infrastructure for Prosperity and Security (SHIPS) for America Act, led by With Honor Action allies Navy veteran Senator Mark Kelly and Marine Corps veteran Senator Todd Young.

Together, these two pieces of legislation propose long-needed, major reforms and investments in the service members' ability to repair their own equipment and our nation's shipbuilding capacity.

1. Warrior Right to Repair Act

The Department of Defense spends roughly 70% of its budget every year on sustainment. Service members deployed on ships or in the field are forced to either send back equipment in need of repairs or wait at length for a contractor to arrive. The Warrior Right to Repair Act would enhance servicemembers' skills by providing them with the tools and information needed to repair equipment, increase our warfighters' readiness, and reduce unnecessary military spending by avoiding high repair and maintenance fees charged by contractors.

2. Shipbuilding and Harbor Infrastructure for Prosperity and Security (SHIPS) for America Act

a. Sec. 403 - Assessment of Undersea Cable Repair Contingencies

This provision requires the government to conduct a high-level "stress test" and assessment of our ability to repair undersea cables during a national emergency or conflict. Undersea cables are critical infrastructure for our national security because they carry 99% of all transoceanic data, including internet access, global banking transactions, and military communications. By mandating this assessment, it ensures the U.S. has a plan to protect our digital economy if an adversary attempts to sabotage our physical connection to the rest of the world.

b. Sec. 512 - Plan of action for use of Defense Production Act of 1950 authorities

This provision tasks the President with submitting to Congress a report on the plan of action to utilize their authorities under the Defense Production Act (DPA) to establish or enhance domestic production capability for militarily useful, commercial maritime vessels, establish, improve, or enhance the defense shipyard industrial base and maritime port infrastructure.



c. Sec. 521 - *United States Center for Maritime Innovation*

This provision expands the existing United States Center for Maritime Innovation Program by requiring the establishment of innovation incubators to advance and accelerate R&D for technologies and manufacturing processes that will support the maritime industrial base. The incubators will be geographically dispersed and focus on clean energy and alternative fuels, ports and shoreside infrastructure, vessel design and naval architecture, shipbuilding and next-generation manufacturing, and other areas to be determined by the Maritime Security Board.

d. Sec. 616 - *Military to Maritime Transition*

This provision requires the Departments of Defense, Veterans Affairs, and Labor, the Coast Guard, and the Maritime Security Board to jointly submit a report to Congress detailing opportunities to reduce barriers to separating service members with sea service or transferable skills transitioning to jobs in the maritime industrial base. Such recommendations should utilize existing pathways, such as SkillBridge, or opportunities to incorporate the maritime industry into the Transition Assistance Program (TAP).

Expanding Pathways and Opportunities to Service

With Honor Action strongly supports legislation that expands pathways to service and increases opportunities for all young Americans to participate in various leadership programs. As the sixth anniversary of the National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service's final report, "Inspire to Serve," approaches, we urge the inclusion of the following provisions:

3. Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC)

Over half a million high school-aged students participate in the Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps across the country. This crucial course in civic education and leadership is also the first step to uniformed service for many of these participants, and With Honor Action has been proud to work over the past several years to expand opportunities for students to participate in this program. With Honor Action supports the authorization of funding for the JROTC program in alignment with the expected President's Budget Request for FY27.

4. United States Naval Sea Cadet Corps (USNSCC)

Since being chartered by Congress in 1962, the U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps has given over 180,000 young men and women aged 10-18 the opportunity to gain skills in highly relevant fields such as robotics, cyber, STEM, aviation, seamanship, navigation, law enforcement, and special forces. Sea Cadets directly boost Navy recruiting; while not a requirement, approximately 60% of Sea Cadets join the armed forces,



32% of which join the Navy. With Honor Action supports the authorization of funding for the Sea Cadet program in alignment with the expected President’s Budget Request for FY27.

5. Civil Air Patrol (CAP)

CAP is a federally chartered non-profit organization that receives funding authorization through the NDAA. The CAP is the Air Force auxiliary and is recognized as a member of the total force by Air Force doctrine. With Honor Action supports the authorization of funding for the CAP program in alignment with the expected President’s Budget Request for FY27.

6. National Guard Starbase Program

The DoD STARBASE Program is a DoD Youth Outreach Program designed to increase interest in learning and improve students' knowledge and skills in mathematics, science, and technology. The program works with schools whose students are eligible to receive Title 1 services. The curriculum utilizes hands-on instruction and activities that meet or exceed the National Standards. With Honor Action supports the authorization of funding for the DoD STARBASE program at the expected President’s Budget Request for FY27.

Supporting Our Global Allies & Partners:

With Honor Action has continuously advocated for consistent and increased support for our global allies and partners, whether they are Afghan nationals who helped us over the course of the Global War on Terror or those in an active warzone, like Ukraine. As the United States continues to navigate an increasingly complex geopolitical landscape, we urge the inclusion of the following provisions:

7. The establishment of a preservation process of the service records of recognized “Afghan allies” in the Department of Defense

With Honor Action supports a provision that would establish a process in the Department of Defense to preserve records related to the U.S. government's employment of Afghans. This provision was originally introduced such a provision as an amendment, which was included in the Manager’s Package to be considered as part of the Senate’s FY25 NDAA ([S.A. 3290 to S. 4638, Sec. 6073](#)) but was not included in the final version of the legislation.

8. Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative (USAI)

Established in the FY17 NDAA (Sec. 1250, P.L. 114-92), USAI helps build Ukraine’s capacity to defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity by providing funding for various support and defense articles, including training, equipment, logistics support, lethal weapons, unmanned aerial surveillance systems,



and cyber capabilities. With Honor Action supports the authorization of funding for USAI at \$400 million for FY27.

9. Baltic Security Initiative (BSI)

Using 10 U.S.C. Sec. 333 authorities, the Department of Defense has provided the Baltic states, Estonia, Lithuania, and Latvia, with security cooperation and capacity-building support since 2020. The FY26 NDAA (Sec. 1247, P.L. 119-60) codified the Baltic Security Initiative as standing policy, enabling long-term, strategic planning for continued security cooperation among NATO's eastern flank. With Honor Action supports the authorization of funding for BSI at \$175 million for FY27.

10. Taiwan Security Cooperation Initiative (TSCI)

Enacted in the FY25 NDAA (Sec. 1323, P.L. 118-1592), the TSCI provides assistance to Taiwan's military and central government security forces to maintain sufficient self-defense capabilities, including training, equipment, logistics support, lethal weapons, unmanned aerial surveillance systems, and cyber capabilities. With Honor Action supports the authorization of funding for TSCI at \$1 billion for FY27.

Addressing Military Quality & Ease of Life

With Honor Action strongly supports legislation that improves the quality of life for our service members and their families, like those below, led by For Country Caucus members Resp. Gil Cisneros, Jen Kiggans, and Jimmy Panetta. As the backbone of our national defense, our all-volunteer Armed Forces deserve policies that ensure the military remains an attractive and sustainable career for the next generation of service members. We urge the inclusion of the following provisions:

11. [H.R. 6383](#) - Brandon Act Training and Protocol Act

The Brandon Act was enacted in the FY22 NDAA (Sec. 70, P.L. 117-81) to allow service members to seek confidential help for mental health concerns outside their chain of command, reducing the stigma associated with seeking care. However, implementation has been piecemeal since its passage, in part due to a lack of awareness from service members and their commanding officers. The Brandon Act Training and Protocol Act directs the department to develop a strategic plan to ensure uniform training protocols for the self-initiated referral process and standardized mental health training, so that commanding officers can identify and address mental health concerns among subordinates.

12. [H.R. 7188](#) / [S. 3654](#) - Military Occupancy Living Defense (MOLD) Act

An estimated 700,000 service members and their families are impacted by hazardous conditions in privatized military housing, with mold exposure proving especially common and dangerous. Families are forced to take on the financial burden of off-base housing or subject themselves to chronic respiratory,



skin, and sinus problems, which both undermine military readiness. The MOLD Act establishes acceptable humidity levels for privatized housing, third-party inspections upon tenant turnover or upon complaints, a 24/7 hotline for complaints and hazard reporting, penalties for noncompliance (fees and/or tenant retention of BAH), and a dedicated oversight office within the department.

13. [H.R. 6976](#) - Duty Status Reform Act

For the Reserve Component of the Armed Forces, the 30 separate duty statuses that define service parameters and the authorities that govern them constitute a disparate framework that confuses service members and commanders, is difficult to administer, and fails to provide equitable benefits or to align with the needs of our Guard and Reserve units. The Duty Status Reform Act would clarify the Duty Status system by reducing the number of statuses from roughly 30 statuses under 20 titles of federal law to four duty statuses. Under the new duty status construct, service members carrying out assignments within the same category will receive the same pay and benefits package.

14. The designation of a senior official responsible for the management and oversight of all programs and activities of the Department of Defense related to the transition of members of the Armed Forces to civilian status

With Honor Action supports the inclusion of a provision that would designate an existing senior official within the Department of Defense to assume oversight and management responsibilities for programs and activities relating to service members' transition out of active duty in the Armed Forces. This provision was originally introduced by Senators Jon Ossoff and Tammy Duckworth for the FY26 NDAA, but was not included in the final version of the legislation.

Other National Security Matters

15. [H.R. 6469](#) - The FREEDOM Act

With Honor Action supports the inclusion of the FREEDOM Act, which requires the Secretary of State, in coordination with the Treasury Secretary and the FCC to submit an evaluation of emerging technologies like direct-to-cell satellite communications and drone-based platforms that could bypass the Iranian regime's frequent digital blackouts and censorship.

16. The requirement of an intelligence community assessment of foreign malign influence operations of the Chinese Communist Party in key regions at the expense of the US and its allies.

With Honor Action supports the inclusion of a provision that directs the Director of National Intelligence to conduct an intelligence assessment of the foreign activities undertaken by the Chinese Communist Party in key regions at the expense of the US and its allies, the impact of such activities on perceptions of



the US, and other national security implications of these influence activities. The bill defines “key regions” as the Indo-Pacific, Africa, Latin America, and Europe. This



Appendix II - Bill Text

1. Warrior Right to Repair Act

SEC. 2. Requirement for contractors to provide reasonable access to repair materials.

(a) In general.—Chapter 363 of title 10, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

§ 4663. Requirement for contractors to provide reasonable access to repair materials

“(a) Requirement.—The head of an agency may not enter into a contract for the procurement of goods unless the contractor agrees in writing to provide the Department of Defense fair and reasonable access to all the repair materials, including parts, tools, and information, used by the manufacturer or provider or their authorized repair providers to diagnose, maintain, or repair the goods.

“(b) Waiver authority for existing programs.—The head of an agency may waive the requirement under subsection (a) for a contract that is related to a program that began before the date of the enactment of this section upon submitting to the congressional defense committees a justification for the waiver based on an independent technical risk assessment identifying likely impacts to the program’s costs, schedule, or technical performance, including consideration and reporting of quantifiable, cost, schedule, and technical performance implications.

“(c) Definitions.—In this section:

“(1) FAIR AND REASONABLE ACCESS.—The term ‘fair and reasonable access’ means—

“(A) terms and conditions that allow the Department of Defense to provide the repair materials to an authorized contractor for the purpose of diagnosing, maintaining, or repairing the good;

“(B) provision at prices, terms, and conditions that are equivalent to the most favorable prices, terms, and conditions under which the manufacturer or an authorized reseller or distributor offers the part, tool, or information to an authorized repair provider, accounting for any discount, rebate, convenient and timely means of delivery, means of enabling fully restored and updated functionality, rights of use, or other incentive or preference the manufacturer or an authorized reseller or distributor offers to an authorized repair provider; and

“(C) if a manufacturer does not offer, directly or through an authorized reseller or distributor, the part, tool, or information to any authorized repair provider, then provision of such part, tool, or information at prices, terms, and conditions that are otherwise determined by the United States Government to be fair and reasonable in accordance with this title.

“(2) PART.—The term ‘part’ means any replacement part, either new or used, made available by or to an original equipment manufacturer (OEM) for purposes of effecting the services of maintenance or repair of digital electronic equipment manufactured by or on behalf of, sold, or otherwise supplied by the



OEM.

“(3) TOOL.—The term ‘tool’ means any software program, hardware implement, or other apparatus used for diagnosis, maintenance, or repair of digital electronic equipment, including software or other mechanisms that provision, program, or pair a part, calibrate functionality, or perform any other function required to bring the equipment back to fully functional condition.”.

(b) Report.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report on the implementation of section 4663 of title 10, United States Code, as added by this section, including a description of compliance by the Department of Defense with the requirements of such section.

SEC. 3. Requirement for contract modifications related to repair capabilities.

(a) In general.—The Secretary of Defense shall conduct a review to identify contract modifications necessary to remove intellectual property constraints that limit the ability of the Department of Defense to conduct maintenance and access the repair materials, including parts, tools, and information, used by the manufacturer or provider or their authorized repair providers to diagnose, maintain, or repair goods covered by a contract.

(b) Definitions.—In this section:

(1) PART.—The term “part” means any replacement part, either new or used, made available by or to an original equipment manufacturer (OEM) for purposes of effecting the services of maintenance or repair of digital electronic equipment manufactured by or on behalf of, sold, or otherwise supplied by the OEM.

(2) TOOL.—The term “tool” means any software program, hardware implement, or other apparatus used for diagnosis, maintenance, or repair of digital electronic equipment, including software or other mechanisms that provision, program, or pair a part, calibrate functionality, or perform any other function required to bring the equipment back to fully functional condition.

2a. Shipbuilding and Harbor Infrastructure for Prosperity and Security (SHIPS) for America Act,

Sec. 403 - Assessment of Undersea Cable Repair Contingencies

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense, in coordination with the Maritime Administrator, the Federal Communications Commission, and other relevant Federal agencies, shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress an assessment on the ability and preparedness of the USNS Zeus and the Cable Security Fleet under [chapter 532](#) of title 46, United States Code, to repair transoceanic submarine fiber optic cables that may be damaged or cut by adversaries.



(b) CONTENTS.—The assessment under subsection (a) shall include—

(1) a description of preparedness to address a situation in which the cables of partner countries in both the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans are damaged or severed at or around the same time;

(2) a determination as to how long it would take for the Cable Security Fleet, in coordination with partner countries, to repair such cables; and

(3) the options available to provide connectivity in an emergency or crisis caused by, or related to, the damaging or severing of such cables.

Sec. 512 - Plan of action for use of Defense Production Act of 1950 authorities

SEC. 512. Plan of action for use of Defense Production Act of 1950 authorities.

(a) In general.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on a plan of action for any use of authorities available under title III of the Defense Production Act of 1950 (50 U.S.C. 4531 et seq.)—

(1) to establish or enhance a domestic production capability for the construction of militarily useful, commercial maritime vessels that can be operated in foreign commerce or the domestic commerce of the United States;

(2) to establish, improve, or enhance the defense shipyard industrial base; or

(3) to establish, improve, or enhance maritime port infrastructure of the United States, including containers and ship-to-shore cranes that were built in the United States and are owned by citizens of the United States.

(b) Coordination.—The President shall develop the plan of action required by subsection (a) in consultation with—

(1) the maritime security advisor (as established by this Act);

(2) the Maritime Security Board (as established by this Act);

(3) an advisory committee established under section 708(d) of the Defense Production Act of 1950 (50 U.S.C. 4558(d)); and

(4) such stakeholders in the private sector as the President considers appropriate.

(c) Appropriate committees of Congress defined.—In this section, the term “appropriate committees of Congress” means—

(1) the Committee on Armed Services, the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate; and

(2) the Committee on Armed Services, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives.



2b. Shipbuilding and Harbor Infrastructure for Prosperity and Security (SHIPS) for America Act, Sec. 521 - United States Center for Maritime Innovation

SEC. 521. United States Center for Maritime Innovation.

(a) In general.—Section 50307(e) of title 46, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by inserting “through the establishment, management, and coordination of geographically and topically diverse maritime incubators” after “maritime transportation system”; and

(2) by striking paragraphs (2), (3), and (4), and inserting the following:

“(2) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT.—The cooperative agreement shall be with an organization or persons with substantial experience in the maritime industry, as determined by the Secretary, in consultation with the Maritime Security Board.

“(3) SELECTION.—The Center shall be—

“(A) selected through a competitive process of eligible entities, and if a private entity, a domestic entity;

“(B) based in the United States with technical expertise in emerging marine technologies and practices related to the maritime transportation system; and

“(C) located in close proximity to eligible entities with expertise in United States emerging maritime technologies and practices.

“(4) COORDINATION.—The Secretary of Transportation shall coordinate with the Maritime Security Board and other agencies critical for science, research, and regulation of emerging marine technologies for the maritime sector, including the Department of Defense, the Department of Energy, the Environmental Protection Agency, the National Science Foundation, the Coast Guard, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association, and the Marine Board of the National Academies when establishing the Center.

“(5) RESPONSIBILITIES.—The Center shall carry out the following activities:

“(A) Establish and support maritime incubators in accordance with paragraph (6).

“(B) Accelerate the adoption or integration of commercial technologies within the maritime industry to transform the capacity and capabilities of the merchant marine of the United States.

“(C) Serve as the principal liaison between the Maritime Security Board and maritime incubators.

“(D) Carry out programs, projects, and other activities to strengthen the merchant marine of the United States and the maritime industrial base.

“(E) Coordinate and harmonize the activities of other organizations and elements of the maritime industry on matters relating to commercial technologies, dual use technologies, and the innovation of such technologies.

“(F) Coordinate and advise efforts among elements of the maritime industry on matters relating to the development, procurement, and fielding of nontraditional



capabilities and connect entities developing those capabilities with the relevant incubators.

“(G) Coordinate with maritime industry stakeholders to identify operational challenges that have the potential to be addressed through the use of nontraditional capabilities, including dual-use technologies that are being developed and financed in the commercial sector.

“(H) Coordinate with maritime industry stakeholders and relevant Federal agencies to enhance the capacity and performance of seaports of the United States, including through hardening security, enhancing preparedness, and developing United States-based supply chains for port technologies and equipment.

“(I) Coordinate with other research and development programs and centers focused on modes of transportation besides maritime to develop intermodal interoperability with the maritime industry.

“(J) Develop a standard design for commercial vessels and components and features of commercial vessels to be manufactured in the United States, using mature, proven designs, which—

“(i) includes, to the maximum extent practicable, included parts, components, and material manufactured in and sourced from the United States;

“(ii) does not include any parts, components, or materials manufactured by foreign entities of concern or which are produced in foreign countries of concern (as such terms are defined in section 4 of the SHIPS for America Act of 2024); and

“(iii) includes priorities for design identified in consultation with the Secretary of the Navy, as necessary for strategic sealift, informed by requirements to sustain a wartime economy and military operations.

“(K) Lead engagement with industry, academia, labor organizations, and other nongovernmental entities to develop—

“(i) innovative, commercial, and dual-use manufacturing technologies and processes to construct, rehabilitate, or repair maritime vessels of the Armed Forces or the merchant marine of the United States;

“(ii) additional naval architecture programs at institutions of higher education in the United States and to expand existing naval architecture programs;

“(iii) next-generation propulsion technologies for the merchant marine of the United States, to include small modular reactors, low-emission propulsion technologies, and other renewable energy solutions;

“(iv) new and innovative hardware, software, and systems for remote or autonomous operations at ports, intermodal facilities, or aboard oceangoing vessels;

“(v) technology and infrastructure solutions that enhance the safe operation of oceangoing vessels to protect lives, property, and the environment;



“(vi) solutions to recruit, train, and retain a skilled workforce capable of supporting a vibrant and growing United States maritime industry; and

“(vii) the capacity of international allies and partners of the United States, with respect to manufacturing technologies and processes, to construct, rehabilitate, or repair maritime vessels.

“(L) Work with academic and private sector response training centers and Centers of Excellence for Domestic Maritime Workforce Training and Education to develop maritime strategies applicable to various segments of the United States maritime industry, including the inland, deep water, and coastal fleets.

“(M) Establish programs and initiatives to share—

“(i) shipbuilding best practices and maritime technology between vessels of the Department of Defense and commercial vessels of the United States; and

“(ii) port technology and logistics best practices between the Department of Defense and commercial port operators and port authorities within the United States.

“(N) Carry out such other activities as the Maritime Security Board determines appropriate.

“(6) ESTABLISHMENT OF MARITIME INCUBATORS.—

“(A) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Center shall, in consultation with the Maritime Security Board, seek out, identify, and support the development of and experimentation with commercial technologies that have the potential to be implemented within the maritime industry, through the establishment of a series of maritime incubators.

“(B) REFLECTION.—Each incubator shall reflect the unique nature of the region’s capabilities and academic and investor base.

“(C) SELECTION—Incubators shall be—

“(i) selected through a competitive process of eligible entities, and if a private entity, a domestic entity;

“(ii) based in the United States with technical expertise in emerging marine technologies and practices related to the maritime transportation system;

“(iii) based within a United States maritime security investment zone as defined in section 1400Z–3 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (as added by section 708 of this Act); and

“(iv) topic-specific, according to regional maritime expertise in United States emerging maritime technologies and practices, to include designated incubators focused on—

“(I) clean energy and alternative fuels;

“(II) ports and shoreside infrastructure;

“(III) vessel design and naval architecture;

“(IV) shipbuilding and next generation manufacturing; and

“(V) other areas for maritime innovation and technology, as determined by the Center in coordination with the Maritime Security Board.



“(D) INCUBATOR RESPONSIBILITIES.—Each maritime incubator shall—

“(i) serve as the principal liaison between the Center and individuals and entities that can contribute to innovation within the maritime industry, including other maritime incubators under this subsection, entrepreneurs, startups, commercial technology companies, and venture capital sources; and

“(ii) establish and support multi-stakeholder research and innovation partnerships, as described in subparagraph (G).

“(E) REPORT.—Each incubator shall submit quarterly activity and status reports to the Center.

“(F) REVIEW AND TERMINATION.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The Maritime Administrator may, in consultation with the Maritime Security Board, terminate an agreement with an eligible entity selected to lead a maritime incubator if the Administrator certifies that the eligible entity is failing to meet the requirements of this section.

“(ii) RESELECTION.—If the Administrator terminates an agreement with an eligible entity to lead a maritime incubator, the Center shall initiate a new selection process as required under subparagraph (C) to select a new eligible entity.

“(iii) REVIEW OF ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—Not later than 5 years after the establishment of maritime incubators under this paragraph, and every 5 years thereafter, the Administrator, in coordination with the Maritime Security Board, shall conduct a review of all eligible entities selected to lead a maritime incubator and confirm the entity is adequately fulfilling the requirements of this section.

“(G) MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIPS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The maritime incubators established under this subsection shall establish and support multi-stakeholder research and innovation partnerships that—

“(I) have the potential to generate technologies, processes, products, or other solutions that support the United States maritime industry;

“(II) have as an objective the technology transfer or commercialization of the work product generated by the partnership, which may include work product that incorporates intellectual property developed by the Federal Government and licensed to the partnership in accordance with clause (iii); and

“(III) incentivize and expand geographically diverse participation in graduate and undergraduate institutions of higher education, community college, and other workforce programs relevant to the maritime industry.

“(ii) SUPPORT PROVIDED.—Support provided by the maritime incubator to a multi-stakeholder research and innovation partnership under this subsection may include—

“(I) providing funding or other resources to the partnership;

“(II) participating in the partnership;

“(III) providing technical and technological advice and guidance to the partnership;



“(IV) suggesting and introducing other participants for inclusion in the partnership;

“(V) providing the partnership with insight into desired solutions for defense and security needs;

“(VI) providing access to Ready Reserve ships for testing new technologies and conducting research, as the maritime incubator determines appropriate, in coordination with the Center and the Administrator; and

“(VII) such other forms of support as the Center, in consultation with maritime incubators and Maritime Security Board, determines appropriate.

“(iii) AVAILABILITY OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY.—To the extent the Center determines appropriate, the Center, in coordination with the maritime incubators, shall seek to actively inform potential participants in multi-stakeholder research and innovation partnerships of the availability of intellectual property developed by the Federal Government that may be licensed to the partnership.

“(7) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of the SHIPS for America Act of 2024, and annually thereafter, the Center shall submit to the Maritime Security Board and the appropriate congressional committees a report on the activities, advances, outcomes, and work product of the maritime incubators and the multi-stakeholder research and innovation partnerships supported under this subsection.

“(8) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—In addition to the funding contributed under subsection (a)(4), there is authorized to be appropriated, out of the Maritime Security Trust Fund established under section 9512 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, \$50,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2025 through 2034.

“(9) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

“(A) MULTI-STAKEHOLDER RESEARCH AND INNOVATION PARTNERSHIP.—The term ‘multi-stakeholder research and innovation partnership’ means a partnership composed of any combination of 2 or more of the following:

“(i) Institutions of higher education (as defined in section 102 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002)) with research and innovation capability.

“(ii) Nonprofit organizations that provide policy, research, outreach, operations, organizational, management, testing, evaluation, technology transfer, legal, financial, or advocacy expertise.

“(iii) For-profit commercial enterprises that may be publicly or privately owned, early stage or mature, and incorporated or operating by another ownership structure.

“(iv) Centers of excellence for domestic maritime workforce training and education (established under section 51706).

“(v) Maritime labor organizations.

“(vi) Departments or agencies of the Federal Government with expertise, operations, or resources related to the objectives of the multi-stakeholder research and innovation partnership.

“(vii) State maritime academies (as defined in section 51102(4)).



“(viii) The United States Merchant Marine Academy.

“(ix) National research laboratories with expertise, operations, or resources related to the objectives of the partnership.

“(B) NONTRADITIONAL CAPABILITY.—The term ‘nontraditional capability’ means a solution to an operational challenge that can significantly leverage commercial innovation or external capital with minimal dependencies on fielded systems.

“(C) MARITIME INDUSTRY.—The term ‘maritime industry’ includes—

“(i) shipbuilders and ship repair facilities;

“(ii) ship owners;

“(iii) port operators;

“(iv) personnel of the merchant marine of the United States;

“(v) manufacturers of equipment and technology instrumental to the facilitation of maritime trade and commerce; and

“(vi) other members of the industrial base that support the Navy or the merchant marine of the United States.”.

(b) Transition.—A Center for Maritime Innovation established by the Secretary of Transportation through a cooperative agreement pursuant to section 50307 of title 46, United States Code, as of the day before the date of enactment of this Act shall—

(1) be deemed to be the United States Center for Maritime Innovation under section 50307 of title 46, United States Code, as of the date of enactment of this Act, with all the authorities granted by such section; and

(2) coordinate activities of the Center with the Maritime Security Board pursuant to subsection (e)(4) of such section, as amended by this Act.



2c. Shipbuilding and Harbor Infrastructure for Prosperity and Security (SHIPS) for America Act, Sec. 616 - *Military to maritime transition*

SEC. 616. Military to maritime transition.

(a) Recommendations required.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the Secretary of the Navy, the Secretary of the Air Force, the Secretary of the Army, the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating, the Maritime Security Board, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and the Department of Labor, shall submit a report to the appropriate committees of Congress containing—

(1) recommendations about how to increase and improve opportunities for transitioning servicemembers to secure employment in the maritime industry at sea and shoreside; and

(2) a plan to implement those recommendations.

(b) Considerations.—In carrying out subsection (a), the Secretary of Defense shall—

(1) identify barriers that servicemembers face when trying to transition to the United States maritime industry, including the merchant marines, shipbuilding, ship repair, and shipping;

(2) consider opportunities to improve, expedite, and alleviate the burdens on servicemembers transitioning to the maritime industry, including efforts to—

(A) inform transitioning servicemembers of employment opportunities in the United States maritime industry;

(B) assist transitioning servicemembers in determining how their military credentials and experience translate to credentialed civilian employment in the maritime industry;

(C) increase the establishment and uptake of accelerated or bridge programs to assist separating members of the Armed Forces in translating military credentials and experience into maritime industry credentials and employment;

(D) increase the availability and accessibility of preparatory activities under the SkillBridge program established under section 1143(e) of title 10, United States Code, in the United States maritime industry;

(E) incorporate the maritime industry in the Transition Assistance Program, as described in chapter 58 of title 10, United States Code; and

(F) enhance the activities carried out pursuant to the Military to Mariners Act of 2022 (section 11514 of division K of the James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023 (Public Law 117–263)); and

(3) specifically consider the transition of servicemembers to employment in the shipbuilding and ship repair maritime industries.

3. The establishment of a preservation process of the service records of recognized “Afghan allies” in the Department of Defense

(a) Definition of Afghan Ally.--In this section and only for the purpose of the Department of Defense records preservation processes established by this section, the term ‘Afghan ally’ means an alien who is a



citizen or national of Afghanistan, or in the case of an alien having no nationality, an alien who last habitually resided in Afghanistan, who--

(1) was--

(A) a member of--

(i) the special operations forces of the Afghanistan National Defense and Security Forces;

(ii) the Afghanistan National Army Special Operations Command;

(iii) the Afghan Air Force; or

(iv) the Special Mission Wing of Afghanistan;

(B) a female member of any other entity of the Afghanistan National Defense and Security Forces, including--

(i) a cadet or instructor at the Afghanistan National Defense University; and

(ii) a civilian employee of the Ministry of Defense or the Ministry of Interior Affairs;

(C) an individual associated with former Afghan military and police human intelligence activities, including operators and Department of Defense sources;

(D) an individual associated with former Afghan military counterintelligence, counterterrorism, or counternarcotics;

(E) an individual associated with the former Afghan Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Interior Affairs, or court system, and who was involved in the investigation, prosecution or detention of combatants or members of the Taliban or criminal networks affiliated with the Taliban;

(F) an individual employed in the former justice sector in Afghanistan as a judge, prosecutor, or investigator who was engaged in rule of law activities for which the United States provided funding or training; or

(G) a senior military officer, senior enlisted personnel, or civilian official who served on the staff of the former Ministry of Defense or the former Ministry of Interior Affairs of Afghanistan; and

(2) provided service to an entity or organization described in paragraph (1) for not less than 1 year during the period beginning on December 22, 2001, and ending on September 1, 2021, and did so in support of the United States mission in Afghanistan.

(b) Inclusions.--For purposes of this section, the Afghanistan National Defense and Security Forces includes members of the security forces under the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of Interior Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, including the Afghanistan National Army, the Afghan Air Force, the Afghanistan National Police, and any other entity designated by the Secretary of Defense as part of the Afghanistan National Defense and Security Forces during the relevant period of service of the applicant concerned.

(c) Afghan Allies Records Preservation Program.--

(1) In general.--Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall establish a process by which an individual may apply to the Secretary of Defense for classification as an Afghan ally.

(2) Application system.--The process established under paragraph (1) shall--

(A) include the development and maintenance of a secure online portal through which applicants may provide information verifying their status as Afghan allies and upload supporting documentation; and

(B) allow--



- (i) an applicant to submit his or her own application;
- (ii) a designee of an applicant to submit an application on behalf of the applicant; and
- (iii) the submission of an application regardless of where the applicant is located, provided that the applicant is outside the United States.

(3) Review process.--As soon as practicable after receiving a request for classification described in paragraph (1), the Secretary of Defense shall--

(A) review--

- (i) the service record of the applicant, if available;
- (ii) if the applicant provides a service record or other supporting documentation, any information within the internal or contractor-held records of the Department of Defense that helps verify the service record concerned, including information or an attestation provided by any current or former official of the Department of Defense who has personal knowledge of the eligibility of the applicant for such classification; and

(iii) available data holdings in the possession of the Department of Defense or any contractor of the Department of Defense, including as applicable biographic and biometric records, iris scans, fingerprints, voice biometric information, hand geometry biometrics, other identifiable information, and any other information related to the applicant, including relevant derogatory information; and

(B)(i) in a case in which the Secretary of Defense determines that the applicant is an Afghan ally without significant derogatory information, the Secretary shall preserve a complete record of such application for potential future use by the applicant or a designee of the applicant; and

(ii) include with such preserved record--

- (I) any service record concerned, if available;
- (II) if the applicant provides a service record, any information that helps verify the service record concerned; and
- (III) any biometrics for the applicant.

(4) Review process for denial of request for records preservation.--

(A) In general.--In the case of an applicant with respect to whom the Secretary of Defense denies a request for classification and records preservation based on a determination that the applicant is not an Afghan ally or based on derogatory information--

(i) the Secretary shall provide the applicant with a written notice of the denial that provides, to the maximum extent practicable, a description of the basis for the denial, including the facts and inferences, or evidentiary gaps, underlying the individual determination; and

(ii) the applicant shall be provided an opportunity to submit not more than 1 written appeal to the Secretary for each such denial.

(B) Deadline for appeal.--An appeal under clause (ii) of subparagraph (A) shall be submitted--

(i) not more than 120 days after the date on which the applicant concerned receives notice under clause (i) of that subparagraph; or

(ii) on any date thereafter, at the discretion of the Secretary of Defense.

(C) Request to reopen.--

(i) In general.--An applicant who receives a denial under subparagraph (A) may submit a request to reopen a request for classification and records preservation under the process established under paragraph



(1) so that the applicant may provide additional information, clarify existing information, or explain any unfavorable information.

(ii) Limitation.--After considering 1 such request to reopen from an applicant, the Secretary of Defense may deny subsequent requests to reopen submitted by the same applicant.

(5) Termination.--The application process under this subsection shall terminate on the date that--

(A) is not earlier than ten years after the date of the enactment of this Act; and

(B) on which the Secretary of Defense makes a determination that such termination is in the national interest of the United States.

(6) General provisions.--

(A) Prohibition on fees.--The Secretary of Defense may not charge any fee in connection with a request for a classification or records preservation under this section.

(B) Defense personnel.--Any limitation in law with respect to the number of personnel within the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the military departments, or a Defense Agency (as defined in section 101(a) of title 10, United States Code) shall not apply to personnel employed for the primary purpose of carrying out this section.

(C) Representation.--An alien applying for records preservation under this section may be represented during the application process, including at relevant interviews and examinations, by an attorney or other accredited representative. Such representation shall not be at the expense of the United States Government.

4. Brandon Act Training and Protocol Act

SEC. 2. Strategic plan to address mental health of members of the Armed Forces.

(a) PLAN.—The Secretary of Defense, in coordination with each Secretary of a military department and the Director of the Defense Health Agency, shall develop a strategic plan to address suicide by members of the Armed Forces and the mental health services provided to members.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The plan under subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) Developing and enforcing uniform protocols with respect to—

(A) the regulations prescribed for the self-initiated referral process under section 1090b(e) of title 10, United States Code, for members of the Armed Forces seeking mental health evaluations; and

(B) the provision of information, including through workplace posters, flyers, and advertisements, to ensure members are aware of such referral process.

(2) Standardized mental health training for members of the Armed Forces, including—

(A) specialized training for commanders, senior enlisted leaders, and medical personnel on identifying and addressing mental health concerns;

(B) the development of a certification process based on completion of training with documented proof of compliance;

(C) how to respond when a member initiates the referral process under section 1090b(e) of title 10, United States Code; and

(D) how to recognize signs indicating mental health distress.



5. MOLD Act

SEC. 3. Development and implementation of minimum health and safety standards for military family housing.

(a) Standards.—

(1) INITIAL GUIDANCE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall issue interim guidance for acceptable levels of relative humidity, ventilation, dampness, and water intrusion to be applied at all covered housing.

(B) EFFECT.—Interim guidance issued under subparagraph (A) shall remain in effect until final standards are published under paragraph (2).

(2) FINAL STANDARDS.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall issue final standards for acceptable levels of relative humidity, ventilation, dampness, and water intrusion to be applied at all covered housing, which shall include—

(A) acceptable levels of relative humidity indoors;

(B) required ventilation and moisture control measures;

(C) environmental inspection and testing methods; and

(D) the standard of care for mold remediation adopted under subsection (g).

(3) REPORTING AND AVAILABILITY OF TESTING.—The final standards established under paragraph (2) shall require results of environmental inspection and testing methods under subparagraph (C) of such paragraph to be reported to the Secretary of Defense and made available to tenants of affected housing units not later than 10 days after sample collection.

(b) Certification of compliance.—Not less frequently than annually, each housing office of the Department shall certify to Congress that the housing office is in compliance with health and safety standards for covered housing required under this section.

(c) Establishment of independent inspection protocol for privatized military housing.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall ensure that each installation of the Department of Defense conducts, using independent certified third-party inspectors, mold and environmental health inspections for all covered housing that is privatized military housing—

(A) upon every tenant turnover of a housing unit;

(B) upon receipt of any tenant complaint regarding safety and habitability of a housing unit; and

(C) following any remediation effort, structural repair, or response to an identified environmental hazard at a housing unit.

(2) ELEMENTS OF INSPECTIONS.—Inspections conducted under paragraph (1) shall include, at minimum—

(A) evaluation of heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems, plumbing, electrical systems, and structural integrity;



- (B) inspection for signs of water intrusion, dampness, humidity, visible or non-visible mold, microbial growth, and other indoor air quality concerns;
- (C) review of current and past work order records and completion timelines; and
- (D) review of contractor compliance with privatized military housing contract requirements and housing regulations of the Department of Defense.

(3) RECORDING AND MAINTENANCE OF RECORDS.—All findings of inspections conducted under paragraph (1) shall be—

- (A) recorded in a standardized Federal Government inspection record;
 - (B) certified by the inspector with a clear “pass” or “fail” status;
 - (C) maintained in an accessible, historical housing record for each housing unit;
- and
- (D) made available to the relevant installation commander and military housing office.

(4) DOCUMENTATION AND SUBMISSION OF RESULTS.—The commander of each installation of the Department shall—

- (A) document results of inspections conducted under paragraph (1); and
- (B) submit the results of such inspections to—
 - (i) the Secretary;
 - (ii) the Office of Inspector General of the Department of Defense; and
 - (iii) the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives.

(5) ACCESS AND TRANSPARENCY.—Inspection reports certified under paragraph (3)(B) and housing history records required under paragraph (3)(C) shall be—

- (A) provided in full to current tenants of the inspected unit;
- (B) made available upon request to any incoming tenants; and
- (C) maintained in a secure portal accessible to staff of the relevant military housing office, the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives, and military family advocacy personnel.

(6) REMEDIATION OR TENANT RELOCATION.—In the case of a housing unit failing inspection conducted under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall ensure that the unit is remediated or the tenants of such unit are relocated not later than 30 days after such failed inspection, if such tenants wish to be relocated.

(d) Complaint and response mechanism.—

(1) HOTLINE AND WEBSITE.—The Secretary shall modify the Defense Housing Feedback System, or successor system, to ensure that such system contains a tenant complaint hotline and website that is available 24 hours per day, seven days per week for reporting humidity, water damage, or other hazards in covered housing.

(2) WEBSITE INFORMATION.—The website required under paragraph (1) shall contain information on the complaints made under paragraph (1), disaggregated by installation and with any personally identifying information redacted.

(3) RESPONSE.—Each housing office for an installation of the Department shall—



- (A) respond to complaints of tenants of covered housing not later than five business days after the complaint;
- (B) track progress of such response until resolution; and
- (C) provide to tenants written confirmation of inspection findings and actions taken.

(e) Requirements for privatized military housing.—

(1) HEALTH AND SAFETY STANDARDS FOR MILITARY HOUSING.—The Secretary of each military department shall ensure that all housing project agreements and renewals for privatized military housing under the jurisdiction of the Secretary concerned entered into on or after the date of the enactment of this Act are compliant with the appropriate environmental health and safety standards established by the Department of Defense.

(2) FUTURE CONTRACT AGREEMENTS AND RENEWALS.—For all housing project agreements and renewals for privatized military housing entered into on or after the date of the enactment of this Act, and to the extent practicable for agreements in place as of such date of enactment, not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall incorporate enforceable provisions related to environmental hazard response, inspection, and tenant relocation protections which shall include—

- (A) enforceable environmental health and safety clauses; and
- (B) requirements that providers of privatized military housing bear full financial responsibility for—
 - (i) required third-party inspections;
 - (ii) maintenance;
 - (iii) mold remediation;
 - (iv) all relocation expenses for military families forced to vacate uninhabitable units;
 - (v) property loss; and
 - (vi) refunding any amounts paid through a basic allowance for housing under section 403 of title 37, United States Code, for military families forced to vacate uninhabitable units.

(f) Certification requirements for mold assessment and remediation.—The Secretary shall ensure that all maintenance personnel, contracted mold assessors, indoor environmental professionals, and mold remediators responsible for assessing or remediating mold and water damage in covered housing shall possess and maintain current certifications issued by a nationally recognized, third-party, nonprofit certifying body, which may include the following:

- (1) The Institute of Inspection Cleaning and Restoration Certification.
- (2) The National Organization of Remediators and Microbial Inspectors.
- (3) The American Council for Accredited Certification.

(g) Standard of care for mold remediation.—All mold remediation activities conducted in covered housing shall comply with the American National Standards Institute and Institute of Inspection Cleaning and Restoration Certification S520 Standard for Professional Mold Remediation, Fourth Edition, or any



subsequent edition published by the Institute of Inspection Cleaning and Restoration Certification or successor organization.

(h) Issuance of guidance.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall—

- (1) issue guidance with respect to the implementation of this section; and
- (2) provide written notification to all providers of privatized military housing regarding the requirements of this section.

(i) Quarterly reporting requirement.—

(1) DESIGNATION OF CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER.—The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Energy, Installations, and Environment shall serve as Chief Housing Officer and shall receive, review, and compile reports from military housing offices across all installations of the Department of Defense.

(2) MILITARY HOUSING OFFICE REPORTING.—Not less frequently than quarterly, each chief of a military housing office shall submit to the Chief Housing Officer designated under paragraph (1) a report that includes, at a minimum—

- (A) the number and type of tenant complaints received;
- (B) an assessment of work order volume and average completion time;
- (C) an identification of instances of unresolved or recurring maintenance issues;
- (D) an identification of environmental hazard notifications and the status of the remediation of such hazards;
- (E) a summary of compliance by contractors with requirements of the Department and any violations of those requirements;
- (F) any reports of retaliation, discrimination, displacement, or housing-related medical concerns (with personal information redacted if requested); and
- (G) a summary of command-level awareness or action on housing issues.

(3) COMPILATION AND CONGRESSIONAL SUBMISSION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Chief Housing Officer shall—

- (i) compile the reports received under paragraph (2);
- (ii) submit to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives such compiled reports not less frequently than quarterly and not less frequently than annually for the quarter or year covered by the report, as the case may be; and
- (iii) provide to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives briefings regarding each report submitted under clause (ii).

(B) BRIEFINGS.—Briefings required under subparagraph (A)(iii) shall include trend analysis, contractor performance insights, and risk flags based on installation-level conditions.

(4) DATA TRANSPARENCY AND RETENTION.—

(A) FORMAT.—The Secretary shall ensure that all reporting required under this subsection follows a standardized Federal format.



(B) **RETENTION OF INFORMATION.**—The Secretary shall ensure that all raw data, logs, and supporting documentation for reports required under this subsection are retained for a period of not less than five years.

(C) **AVAILABILITY OF DATA SETS.**—The Secretary may make available to tenant ombudsmen or Federal housing liaison offices data sets used to prepare reports under this subsection with personally identifiable information redacted.

(5) **ENFORCEMENT.**—In the case of a landlord (as defined in section 2871 of title 10, United States Code) or other private sector entity that fails to comply with any requirement established to comply with this subsection, the Secretary may—

(A) notify command leadership of the relevant installation of the Department;

(B) conduct an audit or performance review; and

(C) in the case of systemic failure to comply with any such requirement, suspend eligibility of such landlord or entity for housing-related bonuses.

(j) **Public reporting requirements.**—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives and publish on a publicly available website of the Department of Defense, with respect to covered housing—

(1) the number of mold complaints received, disaggregated by installation of the Department;

(2) the results of inspections under this section and compliance rates;

(3) remediation timelines and costs; and

(4) the number of relocations made.

(k) **Sense of Congress on health risks associated with mold.**—It is the sense of Congress that the Secretary of Defense, in collaboration with the Secretary of Health and Human Services, should evaluate the health impacts of mold exposure in military housing and consider appropriate medical responses and coverage under existing health care systems.

(l) **Definitions.**—In this section:

(1) **ACCEPTABLE LEVELS OF RELATIVE HUMIDITY.**—The term “acceptable levels of relative humidity”, with respect to an area, means an area with humidity levels that are less than 50 percent.

(2) **COVERED HOUSING.**—The term “covered housing” means any military family housing owned, leased, or managed by the Department of Defense, including privatized military housing.

(3) **ENVIRONMENTAL INSPECTION AND TESTING METHODS.**—The term “environmental inspection and testing methods” means detailed visual inspection substantiated by mold testing measures that include air sampling, tape lifts, swabs, and carpet samples, and official laboratory analysis of such samples.

(4) **MOLD.**—The term “mold” means any form of multicellular fungi found in water-damaged indoor environments and building materials, including cladosporium, penicillium, alternaria, aspergillus, fusarium, chaetomium, trichoderma, memnoniella, mucor, stachybotrys chartarum, streptomyces, and epicoccum.



(5) PRIVATIZED MILITARY HOUSING.—The term “privatized military housing” means military housing under subchapter IV of chapter 169 of title 10, United States Code.

6. Duty Status Reform Act

To amend laws relating to duty performed by members of the reserve components of the Armed Forces, and for other purposes.

Full text for this bill can be found on congress.gov.

7. The designation of a senior official responsible for the management and oversight of all programs and activities of the Department of Defense related to the transition of members of the Armed Forces to civilian status

SEC. 2. DESIGNATION OF SENIOR OFFICIAL FOR MILITARY

TO CIVILIAN TRANSITION AND RESERVE AFFAIRS.

(a) DESIGNATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness shall designate a senior official of the Department of Defense to oversee policy and programs related to the transition of members of the Armed Forces from active duty to—

- (A) civilian life; or
- (B) reserve components.

(2) QUALIFICATIONS.—The official designated under paragraph (1) shall be designated from among individuals with—

- (A) extensive experience with veterans services; and
- (B) knowledge of the transition from active duty to—
 - (i) civilian life; and
 - (ii) reserve components.

(b) ROLE, RESPONSIBILITY, AND AUTHORITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, shall prescribe the roles, responsibilities, and authorities of the official designated under subsection (a)(1).

(2) ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND AUTHORITIES REQUIRED.—The roles, responsibilities, and authorities prescribed pursuant to paragraph (1) shall include, with respect to the transition of members of the Armed Forces and their families from active duty to civilian life and reserve components—

- (A) serving as the principal advisor to the Secretary of Defense, the Deputy Secretary of Defense, and the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness on policies, operations, and programs and activities relating to the transition of members;



(B) assisting the Secretary of Defense, the Deputy Secretary of Defense, and the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness with policies, operations, and programs and activities relating to the transition of members;

(C) working, in coordination with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Secretary of Labor, and the Secretary of Education, to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of all activities relating to the transition of members;

(D) serving as the chief transition officer of the Department of Defense, with the mission of coordinating and overseeing the effectiveness of transition programs of the Department of Defense and ensuring all members of the Armed Forces are well equipped for civilian life or the reserve components, as the case may be;

(E) overseeing the Military-Civilian Transition Office and the implementation of transition programs across the Department of Defense;

(F) conducting a review and assessment of all transition programs and services offered by the Department of Defense, including the Transition Assistance Program and Skillbridge Program, and proposing legislative or administrative action—

(i) to improve the efficacy and efficiency of the programs; and

(ii) to ensure compliance with all legal requirements related to transition assistance; and

(G) working with Federal agencies, State and local governments, and nongovernmental organizations to improve the delivery of transition support services.

(c) BRIEFING ON DESIGNATION AND IMPLEMENTATION.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall provide a briefing to the congressional defense committees (as defined in section 101 of title 10, United States Code) on—

(1) the status of the designation of the official under subsection (a); and

(2) the implementation of the roles, responsibilities, and authorities of the official under subsection (b).

8. The FREEDOM Act

SECTION 1. Short title.

This Act may be cited as the “Feasibility Review of Emerging Equipment for Digital Open Media Act” or the “FREEDOM Act”.

SEC. 2. Report on internet freedom in Iran.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of the Act, the Secretary of State, in consultation with the Federal Communications Commission and the Department of the Treasury, shall prepare and submit to the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate a report that updates and supplements the report required under section 5124 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2025 ([Public Law 118–159](#)).



(b) **ADDITIONAL MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED.**—Updates to the strategy required in section 5124 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2025 ([Public Law 118–159](#)), shall also include the following:

(1) An assessment of the feasibility of using direct-to-cell wireless communications technologies to expand internet access for the people of Iran, including technical, regulatory, and security considerations.

(2) An analysis of how drone-based platforms, signal jamming technologies, and related countermeasures could impact the feasibility, security, economics, and resilience of such direct-to-cell wireless communications.

(3) A survey of terrestrial and non-terrestrial telecommunications service providers currently active in Iran, including—

(A) whether such providers are state-owned or state-controlled;

(B) the extent of foreign participation or investment in such providers; and

(C) the implications of such ownership and control for communications freedom and censorship.

(4) Any other relevant information to assess the opportunities and risks associated with terrestrial and non-terrestrial communications technologies in Iran.

(c) **FORM.**—The report required by subsection (a) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

9. The requirement of an intelligence community assessment foreign malign influence operations of the Chinese Communist Party in key regions at the expense of the US and its allies.

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Combating Chinese Communist Party Influence Act”.

SEC. 2. INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT ON FOREIGN MALIGN INFLUENCE ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN BY THE CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY.

(a) **INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT.**—

(1) **REQUIREMENT.**—The Director of National Intelligence, in consultation with other heads of elements of the intelligence community, and acting through the National Intelligence Council, shall produce an intelligence community assessment that addresses foreign malign influence activities undertaken by the Chinese Communist Party during the three-year period beginning January 1, 2023.

(2) **MATTERS INCLUDED.**—The assessment under paragraph (1) shall address, with respect to the period covered by the report, the following:

(A) Foreign malign influence activities undertaken by the Chinese Communist Party in key regions at the expense of the United States and allies of the United States.



(B) The effect of such foreign malign influence activities by the Chinese Communist Party on United States alliances and on perceptions of the United States in key regions.

(C) The effect of increased foreign malign influence activities by the Chinese Communist Party.

(D) The effect of foreign malign influence activities by the Chinese Communist Party on global and localized financial systems in key regions.

(E) Trends in foreign malign influence activity by the Chinese Communist Party in key regions.

(F) Any other national security implications of increased foreign malign influence activities by the Chinese Communist Party that affect interests of the United States and allies of the United States, as determined relevant by the Director.

(b) REPORTS.—

(1) INITIAL REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Director of National Intelligence shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report containing the initial findings of the intelligence community assessment under subsection (a).

(2) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Director of National Intelligence shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees the intelligence community assessment under subsection (a).

(3) FORM OF REPORTS.—The reports under paragraphs (1) and (2) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may contain a classified annex.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this Act:

(1) The term “appropriate congressional committees” means the following:

(A) The Select Committee on Intelligence, the Committee on Armed Services, the Committee on Foreign Relations, and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate.

(B) The Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, the Committee on Armed Services, the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee on Homeland Security, and the Select Committee on the Strategic Competition Between the United States and the Chinese Communist Party of the House of Representatives.

(2) The term “foreign malign influence” has the meaning given that term in section 119C(f) of the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 3059(f)).