



March 27, 2026

To With Honor Senate Allies and Members of the Senate Armed Services Committee,

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 20 provisions in your submissions. 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 leadership demonstrated by the veteran and public service leaders that make up With Honor's Senate Allies 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. The establishment of a [United States - Ukraine Working Group on Unmanned Systems](#).
9. 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:

10. [H.R. 6383](#) - [Brandon Act Training and Protocol Act](#)
11. [H.R. 7188](#) / [S. 3654](#) - Military Occupancy Living Defense ([MOLD](#)) Act
12. [H.R. 6976](#) - [Duty Status Reform Act](#)
13. 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.
14. The expansion of resources to [address childcare shortages](#) on Department of Defense installations.

Countering Foreign Malign Influence:

15. [H.R. 6469](#) - Feasibility Review of Emerging Equipment for Digital Open Media ([FREEDOM](#)) Act
16. [H.R. 7969](#) - [Combatting Chinese Communist Party Influence Act](#)
17. Authorization for the Secretaries of Defense and State to support the national security forces of partner countries and actors to [counter Russian influence and destabilizing activities](#).

Other National Security Matters:

18. The establishment of an [Advisory Council on Fiscal Capacity to Meet National Security Requirements](#).
19. The modification of the annual report on the military and security developments involving the People's Republic of China to include an [assessment of progress toward artificial general intelligence](#).
20. Amending the responsibilities of the Chief Digital Artificial Intelligence Officer within the Department of Defense, to include [addressing threats posed by artificial general intelligence](#).



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 "RBI".

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 four 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 at or above FY26 authorized levels.

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 at or above FY26 authorized levels.



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 at or above FY26 authorized levels.

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 or above FY26 authorized levels.

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 four provisions:

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

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, would establish a process in the Department of Defense to preserve records related to the U.S. government's employment of Afghans.

8. The establishment of a United States - Ukraine Working Group on Unmanned Systems

The Armed Forces of Ukraine have been rapidly innovating on the frontlines since Russia’s full-scale invasion, adapting defense technology to meet the needs of the battlefield. This working group between the United States and Ukraine would facilitate collaboration and information sharing in the field of unmanned systems, with the goal of helping both countries more effectively develop, produce, and employ unmanned systems and related technologies.



9. 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 has advocated for commonsense legislation that improves the quality of life for our service members and their families, like those below, led by For Country Caucus members Reps. Gil Cisneros, Jen Kiggans, and Jimmy Panetta and Senate ally Sen. Joni Ernst. 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 five provisions:

10. [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.

11. [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.

12. [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.

13. 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.

The transition from active duty is a critical point in a service member's life, and a major factor in later success. 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, and 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.

14. The expansion of resources to address shortages of childcare on Department of Defense installations.

Accessible and affordable childcare is a critical component of military readiness, as it allows service members to focus fully on their duties without the distraction of unstable care arrangements for their children. Furthermore, it serves as a vital tool for force retention and family stability, directly influencing a household's financial security and a service member's decision to continue their military career. This provision would address shortages of childcare on Department of Defense installations by expanding the pool of potential applicants, including AmeriCorps volunteers trained in education, streamlining the hiring process, authorizing job-sharing among multiple hires, and creating a department-wide Child Care Readiness Data System.

Countering Foreign Malign Influence

With Honor Action has worked alongside our Congressional allies, including For Country Caucus member Rep. Derek Tran's Combatting Chinese Community Party Influence Act, to combat foreign malign influence operations around the world. Threats from adversaries in the information domain risk discrediting American commitments and alliances abroad, and turning allies away from democracy, and towards autocracy. In an age of intensified foreign malign influence operations, we urge your consideration of the three following provision:

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

Authoritarian regimes thrive when freedom of communication and information are stifled. The FREEDOM Act requires the Secretary of State, in coordination with the Secretary of the Treasury and the Federal Communications Commission, 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. [H.R. 7969](#) - Combatting Chinese Communist Party Influence Act

The Chinese Communist Party is attempting to expand its reach around the world, using influence operations to promote lies and false narratives aimed at undercutting American credibility. The Combatting CCP Influence Act 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 U.S. and its allies, the impact of such activities on perceptions of the U.S., and other national security implications of these influence activities. The bill defines “key regions” as the Indo-Pacific, Africa, Latin America, and Europe.

17. Authorization for the Secretaries of Defense and State to support the national security forces of partner countries and actors to counter Russian influence and destabilizing activities.

Russia’s use of disinformation and influence operations have been repeatedly noted in the Intelligence Community’s Annual Threat Assessments, particularly in the cyber domain, as a persistent threat to the U.S.. This authorization enables the Secretaries of State and Defense to engage international partners to collectively combat destabilizing Russian influence operations and respond to disinformation that undermines global security.

Other National Security Matters

With Honor has worked to tackle pressing national security issues, working to forge solutions for cutting edge problems facing the nation. As the scope of national security widens, nontraditional threats will proliferate and pose enduring threats to the safety of Americans, at home and abroad. With Honor urges consideration for the following three provisions:

18. The establishment of an Advisory Council on Fiscal Capacity to Meet National Security Requirements

Since FY24, federal net interest payments have outpaced defense spending, potentially creating an impediment to financing our national defense or response to crises, and forcing policymakers to pull back defense resources. This provision would establish an independent council within the Legislative Branch to analyze the long-term fiscal constraints affecting the Department’s ability to sustain a defense posture, as a percent of GDP, equivalent to that proposed in the President’s FY27 Budget Request.



19. The modification of the annual report on the military and security developments involving the People’s Republic of China to include an assessment of progress toward artificial general intelligence.

Passed as part of the FY2000 NDAA, the Military and Security Developments Involving the People’s Republic of China (PRC), known as the China Military Power Report (CMPR) has been an annual report providing estimates, forecasts, and analysis of the PRC’s military and security developments over the course of the previous year. This provision would modify the CMPR to include the implications of the PRC’s development of artificial general intelligence on the strategic competition between the United States and China and its impact on national security.

20. Amendments to the responsibilities of the Chief Digital Artificial Intelligence Officer within the Department, to include addressing threats posed by artificial general intelligence.

The U.S. is a global leader in emerging technology and artificial intelligence. As other nations seek to integrate these technologies into their arsenal, this provision would amend the responsibilities of the Chief Digital Artificial Intelligence Officer to coordinate efforts across the Department to develop, mature, and transition artificial intelligence technologies into operational use, and to prepare the Department for the national security implications of highly advanced artificial intelligence.



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. United States - Ukraine Working Group on Unmanned Systems

(a) Establishment. –

(1) In General. -- Not later than 60 days after the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall establish a working group to facilitate collaboration and information sharing between the United States and Ukraine in the field of unmanned systems, with the goal of helping both countries more effectively develop, produce, and employ unmanned systems and related technologies.

(2) Designation. -- The working group established under paragraph (1) shall be known as the “U.S.-Ukraine Working Group on Unmanned Systems” (referred to in this section as the “Working Group”).

(3) Objective. -- The Working Group shall –

(A) facilitate information sharing related to unmanned systems in the context of the ongoing Ukraine conflict and codify lessons learned that could inform future U.S. or Ukrainian decisions pertaining to–

(i) the fielding of unmanned systems and capabilities to counter unmanned systems; and

(ii) force structure and tactics pertaining to unmanned systems; and

(B) Promote cooperation between U.S. and Ukrainian industry to develop and produce unmanned systems, capabilities to counter unmanned systems, and other related technologies.

(b) Activities. -- The Working Group shall carry out the following –

(1) analyze Ukraine’s extensive battlefield experience using unmanned systems, including Western-made ones, as well as countering Russian-operated unmanned systems, air defense systems, and electronic warfare systems;

(2) identify, codify, and disseminate lessons learned from the Russia-Ukraine conflict that can inform U.S. and Ukrainian decisions pertaining to the development, production, and battlefield employment of, and potential force-structure adaptations related to, unmanned systems and related technologies;

(3) identify weaknesses or gaps in current Western capabilities related to unmanned systems, including by analyzing the performance of Western unmanned aerial systems against Russian electronic warfare capabilities, and disseminate this information to relevant U.S. defense-industrial enterprises, as appropriate;

(4) promote connections and collaboration between the defense-industrial bases and academic institutions of the United States, Ukraine, and allied and partnered countries, including by identifying and furthering opportunities for joint U.S.-Ukrainian development and production of unmanned systems and related capabilities, as Appropriate;

(5) identify specific impediments or obstacles to Ukrainian access to Western technology or components related to unmanned systems and propose specific steps to reduce or eliminate those impediments and obstacles, as appropriate; and



- (6) identify other potential ways for the United States to support Ukrainian indigenous development and production of low-cost unmanned systems and related capabilities, including first-person view drones.
- (c) Composition. -- The Secretary of Defense shall invite representatives to participate in the working group, including —
- (1) representatives from the Government of Ukraine, to include representatives of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, the Ukrainian Ministry of Defense, the Ukrainian Ministry of Digital Transformation, and the Ukrainian Ministry of Strategic Industries;
 - (2) representatives from the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy;
 - (3) representatives from the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment;
 - (4) representatives from the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security;
 - (5) representatives from the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering;
 - (6) representatives from the Joint Counter-small Unmanned Aircraft Systems Office;
 - (7) representatives from each branch of the United States Armed Forces;
 - (8) representatives from each of the combatant commands;
 - (9) representatives from the Defense Innovation Unit;
 - (10) representatives from the U.S. defense-industrial base;
 - (11) representatives from the Ukrainian defense-industrial base;
 - (12) representatives from the industrial bases of allies and partners, including Israel;
 - (13) representatives from academic institutions; and
 - (14) other representatives as the Secretary deems appropriate.
- (d) Chair.-- the Secretary of Defense, or the designee of the Secretary, shall serve as the chair of the working group.
- (e) Working Group Meetings. -- The first meeting shall be held within 30 days of the establishment of the working group, and at minimum quarterly thereafter.
- (f) Reports to Congress.-- The Secretary of Defense shall submit regular reports to the congressional defense committees detailing the working group's progress --
- (1) Frequency. -- The first report shall be submitted within 30 days of the first working group meeting and every 180 days thereafter.
 - (2) Content. -- Each report shall include –
 - (A) a summary of the working group's activities for the period covered by the report;
 - (B) an overview of lessons learned to enhance the military use of unmanned systems and improve the development and fielding of cutting-edge low-cost unmanned technologies by the United States and its allies and partners;
 - (C) recommendations for further legislative or executive action to enhance unmanned systems cooperation between the United States and Ukraine; and
 - (D) recommendations to strengthen and improve the unmanned system manufacturing capacity of the United States and its allies and partners.



(g) Sunset. -- The working group shall terminate on December 21, 2026.



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](https://www.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 expansion of resources to address shortages of childcare on Department of Defense installations.

SEC. SHORT TITLE.

This subtitle may be cited as the “Helping Ensure Reliable Opportunities in Child Care for Military Families Act” or the “HERO Child Care for Military Families Act”.

SEC. DEFINITIONS.

In this subtitle, the terms “child care employee”, “family home day care”, and “military child development center” have the meanings given those terms in section 1800 of title 10, United States code.

SEC. EXPANSION OF ELIGIBLE CHILD CARE PROVIDERS FOR DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE PROGRAMS.

(a) Removal of Prior Service Requirement.—Section 1798(b) of title 10, United States Code, is amended—

- (1) in paragraph (1), by striking the semicolon and inserting “; and”;
- (2) by striking paragraph (2); and
- (3) by redesignating paragraph (3) as paragraph (2).

(b) National Service Volunteers.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Defense may seek to enter into an interagency partnership with a Federal agency with the ability to place individuals described in paragraph (2) in military child development centers in accordance with national service laws and with all the benefits accorded to such individuals under those laws.

(2) INDIVIDUALS DESCRIBED.—An individual described in this paragraph is a participant, including a volunteer or national senior volunteer, under the national service laws who is trained in education services and is in compliance with hiring requirements for military child development centers.

(3) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection, the terms “participant” and “national service laws” have the meanings given those terms in section 101 of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12511).

SEC. PRECLEARANCE OF CHILD CARE EMPLOYEES AT MILITARY CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTERS.

(a) In General.—Not later than June 1, 2027, the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness shall prescribe regulations, including by revising DOD Instruction 1402.05 (Background Checks on Individuals in Child Care Services Programs), to provide for preclearance of individuals applying to be child care employees at military child development centers.

(b) Elements.—In prescribing regulations under subsection (a), the Under Secretary shall—

- (1) specify a length of time, not to exceed 12 months, for the preclearance of an individual to be valid for purposes of employment; and
- (2) require annual reverification for a child care employee who received preclearance to be conducted not later than one year after the date of the preclearance of the individual.

(c) Rules of Construction.—Nothing in this section shall be construed—



(1) to limit the ability of the Department of Defense to conduct, in accordance with regulations and policies of the Department, additional or more current or recent background checks on individuals who have received preclearance; or

(2) to require the Department—

(A) to hire an individual who received preclearance; or

(B) to provide any appeal or right of action to an individual who received preclearance and was not selected by the Department for an open position as a child care employee.

(d) Preclearance Defined.—In this section, the term “preclearance”, with respect to an individual, means the individual obtains a background check, including a fingerprint check by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and a State Criminal History Repository check, and a health screening to be a child care employee at a military child development center, without regard to whether there is an open job for a child care employee at the time of the background check and screening are conducted.

SEC. AUTHORIZATION OF JOB-SHARING ARRANGEMENTS FOR CHILD CARE EMPLOYEES.

(a) Authority.—Consistent with chapter 34 of title 5, United States Code, and policies of the Department of Defense permitting part-time employment and job-sharing arrangements for civilian personnel, the Secretary of Defense may authorize the use of voluntary job-sharing arrangements for child care employees in military child development centers.

(b) Purposes.—The Secretary may authorize job-sharing arrangements under this section—

(1) to expand the pool of qualified child care employees available to meet the needs of military families;

(2) to accommodate individuals unable to work full-time schedules as a result of caregiving, education, or other personal circumstances;

(3) to reduce staffing vacancies and workforce turnover; and

(4) to support continuity and reliability of child care services for military families.

(c) Job-sharing Defined.—In this section, the term “job-sharing arrangement” means a work arrangement under which the duties and responsibilities of a single full-time child care employee position are shared by two part-time child care employees, each serving not fewer than 20 hours per week.

SEC. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE CHILD CARE READINESS DATA SYSTEM.

(a) Establishment.—The Secretary of Defense shall establish and maintain a unified, Department-wide Child Care Readiness Data System (in this section referred to as the “System”) to assess, monitor, and manage child care capacity and child care workforce readiness across the Department of Defense.

(b) Required Data Elements.—The System shall include information on, at a minimum, the following:

(1) Child care capacity and utilization, disaggregated by military installation and region.

(2) Child care workforce staffing levels, vacancies, turnover rates, and compensation ranges.

(3) Child care waitlists, disaggregated by—

(A) families with no access to child care;

(B) families using temporary child care or child care located off a military installation;

and

(C) families requiring child care during nontraditional hours.

(4) Demand for child care by age cohort, with specific identification of children under age 5.

(5) Utilization and attrition data for fee assistance programs.



- (6) Geographic areas with persistent unmet child care needs.
- (c) Standardization and Updates.—The Secretary shall—
- (1) standardize the collection of data on child care across the military departments; and
 - (2) update the information in the System not less frequently than every 90 days.
- (d) Regulations.—The Secretary may prescribe such regulations as are necessary to carry out this section, including regulations to ensure the System is maintained to protect personally identifying information (PII) of service members and dependents from being revealed in any report or analysis drawn from the System.
- (e) Rules of Construction.—Nothing in this section shall be construed—
- (1) to limit or exempt the protection of personally identifiable information (PII) for service members and dependents, as laid out in Office of Management and Budget (OMB) memorandums, DOD rules and regulations on privacy, and the Privacy Act of 1974.
- (f) Briefings Required.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Secretary of Defense shall brief the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives on—
- (1) findings derived from the System;
 - (2) actions taken to address any gaps in child care availability identified through the System; and
 - (3) recommendations for legislative or regulatory authorities or funding required to reduce the unmet need for child care.

SEC. LIMITED ACCESS TO CERTAIN BENEFITS FOR CHILD CARE EMPLOYEES.

- (a) In General.—The Secretary of Defense may authorize child care employees working in military child development centers to receive limited access to benefits described in subsection (b) if the Secretary determines such access is necessary to support recruitment and retention of child care employees and continuity of child care services.
- (b) Benefits Described.—The benefits that may be provided to a child care employee under subsection (a) are the following:
- (1) Credentials to access a military installation to the extent necessary for the employee to provide child care services.
 - (2) Commissary and exchange privileges, on days on which the employee is providing child care services on a military installation, on the same basis as civilian employees of the Department of Defense under Directive-type Memorandum 21–003.
 - (3) Use of MWR retail facilities, including fitness centers, if the Secretary determines that authorizing such use will support the stability of the child care workforce.
 - (4) Tuition assistance and referral bonuses under terms and conditions comparable to similar workforce recruitment and retention programs authorized for other civilian and contractor workforces of the Department of Defense.
 - (5) Such other limited benefits as the Secretary determines appropriate.
- (c) Limitations on Benefits.—
- (1) **BENEFITS NON-TRANSFERABLE.**—A child care employee who receives a benefit under subsection (a) may not transfer the benefit to any other person.



(2) **BENEFITS REVOCABLE.**—The Secretary may revoke a benefit provided to a child care employee under subsection (a) at any time.

(d) **Implementation.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall issue guidance to implement this section.

(e) **MWR Retail Facility Defined.**—In this section, the term “MWR retail facility” has the meaning given that term in section 1063 of title 10, United States Code.

SEC. REPORT ON CHILD CARE WAITLISTS.

(a) **In General.**—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report on waitlists for child care across the Department of Defense.

(b) **Elements.**—The report required by subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) A description of steps being taken to centralize systems and collect data on waitlists for child care across the Department of Defense.

(2) A description of data that the Department has on child care waitlists.

(3) A description of steps being taken by the Department to resolve discrepancies or misleading information in the data, such as children being counted on multiple waitlists simultaneously and inclusion of children who are receiving child care services but are on waitlists for purposes of obtaining alternative child care.

(4) An analysis of what proportion of waitlist spots represent unmet need for child care as opposed to duplicate entries.

(5) A plan for improving data collection on child care waitlists.

(c) **Rules of Construction.**—Nothing in this section shall be construed—

(1) to limit or exempt the protection of personally identifiable information (PII) for service members and dependents, as laid out in Office of Management and Budget (OMB) memorandums, DOD rules and regulations on privacy, and the Privacy Act of 1974.

SEC. REPORT ON RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY AND READINESS.

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report that analyzes the relationship between child care availability and each of the following:

(1) Military readiness and training participation.

(2) Retention and separation decisions.

(3) Families in which two parents are members of the Armed Forces.

(4) High operational-tempo units.

(5) Workforce participation of military spouses.



9. 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.



10. Combatting Chinese Communist Party Influence Act

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)).



11. Authorization for the Secretaries of Defense and State to support the national security forces of partner countries and actors to counter Russian influence and destabilizing activities.

Sec. XXX. Authorization of Activities to Counter Russia

The Secretary of Defense, with the concurrence of the Secretary of State and the head of any other relevant Federal department or agency, may provide training, equipment, and institutional support to the national security forces of partner countries and actors to build capacity to counter malign Russian influence and destabilizing activities.

(1) Eligibility for funding to initiate or facilitate cooperative research, development, testing, or evaluation projects with the Department of Defense, with priority given to projects in the areas of-

- (A) Enhancing capabilities in intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance;
- (B) Countering disinformation and conduct information operations; and
- (C) Improving border, coastal, and internal security.

(2) Eligibility to enter into agreements with the Department of Defense for cooperative bilateral or multilateral provision of training to build capacity in the areas of-

- (1) Civil-military cooperation and regional coordination;
- (2) Integrated air and missile defense;
- (3) Interoperability with U.S. forces and NATO partners;
- (4) Joint exercises and military planning;
- (5) Cyber defense and resilience infrastructure;
- (6) Counter-disinformation and strategic communications programs; and
- (7) Civil defense and rapid response capabilities;

(b) Assistance--All assistance provided under this section shall be provided pursuant to 10 USC 333.

(c) Sunset. The authority provided under this section shall expire three years after the date of enactment of this Act.



12. Advisory Council on Fiscal Capacity to Meet National Security Requirements

SEC. XX. ASSESSMENT OF FISCAL CAPACITY TO MEET NATIONAL DEFENSE REQUIREMENTS.

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the national debt of the United States constitutes a primary threat to long-term national security, and that the Department of Defense cannot successfully execute the National Defense Strategy without a realistic assessment of the nation’s fiscal capacity to fund such a strategy.

(b) Establishment.—

(1) In general.—There is hereby established an independent advisory panel in the legislative branch to be known as the “Advisory Council on Fiscal Capacity to Meet National Security Requirements” (in this section referred to as the “Advisory Council”). (2) Date of establishment.—The Advisory Council shall be established not later 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(c) Membership.—

(1) Number and appointment.—The Advisory Council shall be composed of 14 civilian individuals not employed by the Federal Government who are recognized experts and have relevant professional experience in one or more of the following: (A) Matters relating to public finance.

(B) Budgeting for national defense. (C) Macroeconomic forecasting. (D) Treasury debt markets.

(2) Members.—The members shall be appointed as follows: (A) The Secretary of Defense shall appoint one member. (B) The Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall appoint one member. (C) The Majority Leader and the Minority Leader of the Senate shall each appoint one member. (D) The Speaker of the House of Representatives and the Minority Leader shall each appoint one member. (E) The Chair and the Ranking Member of the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate shall each appoint one member. (F) The Chair and the Ranking Member of the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives shall each appoint one member. (G) The Chair and the Ranking Member of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate shall each appoint one member. (H) The Chair and the Ranking Member of the Committee on the Budget of the House of Representatives shall each appoint one member.

(3) Deadline for appointment.—Not later than 30 days after the date described in subsection (b)(2), members shall be appointed to the Advisory Council.

(4) Expiration of appointment authority.—The authority to make appointments under this subsection shall expire on the date described in subsection (b)(2), and the number of members of the Advisory Council shall be reduced by the number equal to the number of appointments so not made.



- (d) Chair and Vice Chair.— The Advisory Council shall elect a Chair and Vice Chair from among its members.
- (e) Period of Appointment and Vacancies.—Members shall be appointed for the term of the Advisory Council. A vacancy in the Advisory Council shall not affect its powers and shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment was made.
- (f) REPORT REQUIRED.— No later than 210 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the advisory council shall submit to the Secretary of Defense, the Congressional Defense Committees, and the Committees on the Budget of the House and Senate, a report on the long-term fiscal constraints impacting the Department’s ability to sustain a defense posture equivalent, as a percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to that proposed in the President’s Budget Request for Fiscal Year 2027, and corresponding recommendations to address those restraints.
- (g) ELEMENTS.—The report required by subsection (f) shall include the following:
- (1) An analysis of the impact of federal deficits on the Department's "Fiscal Space"—defined as the available budgetary resources for defense after accounting for mandatory spending, nondefense discretionary spending, and interest on the debt.
 - (2) A 30-year simulation of defense spending maintained at the levels as a percent of GDP as proposed by the President’s Budget Request for Fiscal Year 2027, identifying the specific levels of revenue growth or non-defense spending reductions required to reach and maintain a stable debt-to-GDP ratio.
 - (3) An evaluation of how high debt-to-GDP ratios impact the Federal government’s ability to access credit and surge funding for defense spending during a period of industrial mobilization for a major contingency.
 - (4) An assessment of the anticipated growth in the supply of Treasury marketable securities that is expected over the short-, medium-, and long-term, and the risks the US should anticipate from potential changes in demand, including from international buyers (private and public).
 - (5) An empirical summary of economic literature regarding the correlation between high sovereign debt and the ability of countries to finance adequate national defense capabilities.
 - (6) An estimate of the "Sovereign Debt Tipping Point" at which the Department of Defense would likely be forced to terminate major acquisition programs, and the subsequent impact on the solvency of the Tier 2 and Tier 3 defense supply chain.
- (h) COMPOSITION OF ANALYSIS TEAM.—In preparing the report required under subsection (f), the advisory council shall rely upon the following resources:
- (1) The Office of the Undersecretary of Defense (Comptroller);
 - (2) The Director of Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation (CAPE), who shall serve as the lead official for macroeconomic modeling;



- (3) The Office of Global Investment and Economic Security (GIES), which shall assess the risk to the defense industrial base and the potential for increased foreign adversarial investment resulting from domestic fiscal instability; and
- (4) Any other Office or official across the federal government deemed necessary by the Chair.

(i) Government Cooperation.— (1) Cooperation.—In carrying out its duties, the Advisory Council shall receive the full and timely cooperation of the Secretary of Defense and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget in providing the Advisory Council with analysis, briefings, and other information necessary for the fulfillment of its responsibilities.

(2) Liaison.—The Secretary shall designate at least one officer or employee of the Department of Defense to serve as a liaison between the Department and the Council.

(3) Detailees authorized.—The Secretary may provide, and the Advisory Council may accept and employ, personnel detailed from the Department of Defense, without reimbursement.

(j) Staff.—

(1) Status as federal employees.—Notwithstanding the requirements of section 2105 of title 5, United States Code, including the required supervision under subsection (a)(3) of such section, the members of the Advisory Council shall be deemed to be Federal employees.

(2) Executive director.—The Advisory Council shall appoint and fix the rate of basic pay for an Executive Director in accordance with section 3161(d) of title 5, United States Code.

(3) Pay.—The Executive Director, with the approval of the Advisory Council, may appoint and fix the rate of basic pay for additional personnel as staff of the Advisory Council in accordance with section 3161(d) of title 5, United States Code.

(k) Personal Services.—

(1) Authority to procure.—The Advisory Council may— (A) procure the services of experts or consultants (or of organizations of experts or consultants) in accordance with the provisions of section 3109 of title 5, United States Code; and (B) pay in connection with such services the travel expenses of experts or consultants, including transportation and per diem in lieu of subsistence, while such experts or consultants are traveling from their homes or places of business to duty stations. (2) Maximum daily pay rates.—The daily rate paid an expert or consultant procured pursuant to paragraph (1) may not exceed the daily rate paid a person occupying a position at level IV of the Executive Schedule under section 5315 of title 5, United States Code.

(l) Authority to Accept Gifts.—The Advisory Council may accept, use, and dispose of gifts or donations of services, goods, and property from non-Federal entities for the purposes of aiding and facilitating the work of the Advisory Council. The authority in this subsection does not extend to gifts of money. Gifts accepted under this authority shall be documented, and conflicts of interest or the appearance of conflicts



of interest shall be avoided. Subject to the authority in this section, Advisory Council members shall otherwise comply with rules set forth by the Select Committee on Ethics of the Senate and the Committee on Ethics of the House of Representatives governing Senate and House employees.

(m) Legislative Advisory Committee.—The Advisory Council shall operate as a legislative advisory committee and shall not be subject to the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Public Law 92-463; 5 U.S.C. App) or section 552b, United States Code (commonly known as the Government in the Sunshine Act).

(n) Contracting Authority.—The Advisory Council may acquire administrative supplies and equipment for Advisory Council use to the extent funds are available.

(n) Use of Government Information.—The Advisory Council may secure directly from any department or agency of the Federal Government such information as the Advisory Council considers necessary to carry out its duties. Upon such request of the chair of the Advisory Council, the head of such department or agency shall furnish such information to the Advisory Council.

(o) Postal Services.—The Advisory Council may use the United States mail in the same manner and under the same conditions as departments and agencies of the United States.

(p) Space for Use of Advisory Council.—Not later than 30 days after the establishment date of the Advisory Council, the Administrator of General Services, in consultation with the Advisory Council, shall identify and make available suitable excess space within the Federal space inventory to house the operations of the Advisory Council. If the Administrator is not able to make such suitable excess space available within such 30-day period, the Advisory Council may lease space to the extent the funds are available.

(q) Removal of Members.—A member may be removed from the Advisory Council for cause by the individual serving in the position responsible for the original appointment of such member under subsection (b)(1), provided that notice has first been provided to such member of the cause for removal and voted and agreed upon by three quarters of the members serving. A vacancy created by the removal of a member under this subsection shall not affect the powers of the Advisory Council, and shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment was made.

(r) Termination.—The Advisory Council shall terminate 180 days after the date on which it submits the final report required by subsection (f)(2).



13. The modification of the annual report on the military and security developments involving the People’s Republic of China to include an assessment of progress toward artificial general intelligence.

SEC. ____ . MODIFICATION OF ANNUAL REPORT ON MILITARY AND SECURITY DEVELOPMENTS INVOLVING THE PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC OF CHINA TO INCLUDE ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS TOWARD ARTIFICIAL GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

(a) In General.—Subsection (b) of section 1202 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000 (Public Law 106–65; 10 U.S.C. 113 note), as amended, is further amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(11)(A) A comprehensive assessment of the progress of the People’s Republic of China toward developing artificial general intelligence (AGI) and the implications of such development for strategic competition between the United States and the People’s Republic of China. In monitoring the progress of the People’s Republic of China toward artificial general intelligence, the assessment shall address the following:

“(B) The most relevant government, commercial, and academic entities in the People’s Republic of China responsible for producing artificial general intelligence.

“(C) The most relevant researchers in the People’s Republic of China producing research or other insights that accelerate progress toward artificial general intelligence.

“(D) The most relevant infrastructure projects, such as efforts to construct advanced data centers or computing clusters, being planned or carried out that could accelerate the progress of the People’s Republic of China toward artificial general intelligence.

“(E) The most relevant energy centers or projects associated with either artificial general intelligence development or data centers used for advanced artificial intelligence development in the People’s Republic of China, and an assessment of methods that could be used to identify large increases in energy consumption indicative of potential artificial general intelligence development.

“(F) The most relevant methods that can be used to detect advanced artificial intelligence projects of the People’s Republic of China and an assessment of the efficacy and limitations of such methods.

“(G) The most relevant methods that can be used to disrupt advanced artificial intelligence projects of the People’s Republic of China and an assessment of the efficacy and limitations of such methods.

“(H) An assessment of efforts originating from the People’s Republic of China to acquire technology and information from entities operating within the United States or other nations to advance progress toward artificial general intelligence and other highly advanced artificial intelligence, including, but not limited to, efforts to acquire—

“(i) advanced semiconductors;

“(ii) model weights;

“(iii) research findings; and

“(iv) insights relating to training or inference.



“(I) An assessment of the overall efforts of the People’s Republic of China to achieve artificial general intelligence and other highly advanced artificial intelligence, including—

“(i) overall progress toward such systems;

“(ii) relative progress compared to United States entities;

“(iii) the effectiveness of the strategy of the Chinese Communist Party to develop or acquire such systems; and

“(iv) efforts to prevent loss of control from such systems.

“(J) An assessment of the security capabilities of leading United States artificial intelligence developers, with a focus on their ability to protect advanced artificial intelligence systems, model weights, and key insights from the People’s Republic of China and other highly-resourced adversaries.”.

(b) Definition.—Section 1202 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000 (Public Law 106–65; 10 U.S.C. 113 note), as amended, is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(e) Definition of Artificial General Intelligence.—In this section, the term ‘artificial general intelligence’ means an artificial intelligence system that—

“(1) performs at or above the level of a human in most cognitive tasks of economic value;

or

“(2) is so designated by the Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the Director of National Intelligence, based on its potential to substantially alter the strategic balance between the United States and the People’s Republic of China.”.

(c) Effective Date.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act and shall apply with respect to reports required to be submitted under section 1202 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000 (Public Law 106–65; 10 U.S.C. 113 note) after such date of enactment.



14. Amendments to the responsibilities of the Chief Digital Artificial Intelligence Officer within the Department, to include addressing threats posed by artificial general intelligence.

SEC. ____ AMENDMENTS TO DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES TO ADDRESS ARTIFICIAL GENERAL INTELLIGENCE AND ADVANCED ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE THREATS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 238 of the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019 (Public Law 115–232; 10 U.S.C. note prec. 4061) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) by amending paragraph (1) to read as follows:

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Defense shall maintain within the Department of Defense a set of activities, led by the Chief Digital and Artificial Intelligence Officer (in this section referred to as the ‘CDAO’), to coordinate the efforts of the Department to develop, mature, and transition artificial intelligence technologies into operational use, and to prepare the Department for the national security implications of artificial general intelligence and other forms of highly advanced artificial intelligence.”;

(B) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(3) ARTIFICIAL GENERAL INTELLIGENCE PREPAREDNESS.—The set of activities established under paragraph (1) shall include a dedicated initiative (referred to in this section as the ‘AGI Preparedness Initiative’) to—

“(A) study and prepare for the national security implications of artificial general intelligence;

“(B) analyze strategic competition with the People’s Republic of China and other adversaries with respect to artificial general intelligence and highly advanced artificial intelligence; and

“(C) develop countermeasures against adversary artificial intelligence-enabled military capabilities.”;

(2) in subsection (c)—

(A) by adding at the end of paragraph (2) the following new subparagraphs:

“(J) review relevant industry, scientific, and classified documents describing artificial general intelligence and other forms of highly advanced artificial intelligence, including the preparedness frameworks, scaling policies, and risk management frameworks of advanced artificial intelligence developers;



“(K) develop and maintain an internal set of definitions for the Department that characterizes tiers of artificial general intelligence to inform intelligence collection requirements, program and procurement requirements, and national strategy around advanced artificial intelligence competition, with emphasis on describing the capabilities of artificial intelligence systems with the most significant impacts for national security and strategic competition, including chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear capabilities, advanced cyber capabilities, model autonomy, strategic deception, advanced research and development capabilities in military domains, and advanced research and development capabilities for producing increasingly powerful artificial intelligence;

“(L) develop and conduct unclassified and classified scenario exercises, wargames, tabletop exercises, and other similar efforts to understand how artificial general intelligence and advanced artificial intelligence capabilities could present acute national security risks or crises, pose risks to existing Department operational plans, or create strategic opportunities for the United States;

“(M) develop preparedness plans detailing governmental response strategies to scenarios described in subparagraph (L), including detailed information describing how the Department would coordinate with relevant United States entities, including advanced artificial intelligence developers, compute cluster providers, and relevant government officials, in the event of an acute national security risk or crisis;

“(N) identify potential gaps in the Department’s authorities, relationships, personnel, or other factors that could affect the Department’s ability to address scenarios described in subparagraph (L) or execute plans described in subparagraph (M);

“(O) develop a detailed approach to limit the proliferation of artificial general intelligence and other highly advanced artificial intelligence systems by defining artificial intelligence systems with critical capabilities that would pose a grave national security threat if acquired or stolen by adversaries, reviewing and potentially drawing from approaches derived from Department of Energy practices for handling Restricted Data and Formerly Restricted Data, as well as approaches for handling other national security information;

“(P) assess the value of creating a centralized, highly secure, Department-led project to develop artificial general intelligence or other highly advanced artificial intelligence in a secure environment, including examination of the chain-of-command, size and location of such project, resources and personnel required, cyber and physical security protocols, counterintelligence and anti-espionage measures against the People’s Republic of China and other foreign adversaries, contingency and emergency response plans, and geopolitical considerations;

“(Q) prepare strategies to protect the weights of advanced artificial intelligence systems, core insights required to develop or deploy advanced artificial intelligence systems, and other sensitive technical information from highly resourced adversaries, including nation-states;”;

(B) by adding at the end the following new paragraphs:



“(4) ADVERSARY ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE ANALYSIS.—

“(A) The CDAO shall establish a dedicated analytical cell to continuously monitor, assess, and report on the progress of the People’s Republic of China and other adversaries designated by the Secretary in developing artificial general intelligence and advanced artificial intelligence capabilities for military and intelligence applications.

“(B) Such analytical cell shall—

“(i) coordinate with the Defense Intelligence Agency, the National Security Agency, the Central Intelligence Agency, and other elements of the intelligence community to ensure timely access to classified reporting on adversary artificial intelligence development programs;

“(ii) produce not less frequently than annually classified assessments of adversary artificial intelligence military capabilities, including identified applications in autonomous weapons systems, command and control, intelligence analysis, cyber operations, electronic warfare, and information operations;

“(iii) develop and maintain a classified database of identified People’s Republic of China artificial intelligence military programs, key personnel, institutional relationships, supply chain dependencies, and assessed capability timelines;

“(iv) assess the effectiveness of existing U.S. technology control and denial measures in constraining adversary artificial intelligence capabilities and recommend modifications as needed, in coordination with other relevant interagency bodies;

“(v) develop specific countermeasure recommendations and identify vulnerabilities in adversary artificial intelligence systems that could be exploited to maintain United States military advantage; and

“(vi) identify strategies for improving strategic competition relating to advanced artificial intelligence, including strategies to ensure United States leadership in global artificial intelligence competition and strategies to avoid or mitigate national security threats from such competition.

“(C) The analytical cell required by this paragraph shall include personnel with demonstrated expertise in People’s Republic of China military modernization, technical artificial intelligence competence, and intelligence analysis.

“(5) COUNTERMEASURE DEVELOPMENT.—The CDAO shall, in coordination with the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering and the Director of the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, develop and maintain a classified program of research and development focused on countermeasures against adversary artificial intelligence-enabled military capabilities, including autonomous weapons systems, artificial intelligence-directed



cyber operations, artificial intelligence-enhanced intelligence collection, and artificial intelligence-enabled command and control systems.

“(6) WORKFORCE REQUIREMENTS.—

“(A) Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this paragraph, the CDAO shall develop and submit to the congressional defense committees minimum qualification standards for personnel assigned to artificial general intelligence preparedness functions under this section, including requirements for technical expertise in machine learning, neural network architectures, computational infrastructure, and artificial intelligence safety and alignment research.

“(B) The CDAO shall establish a competitive hiring authority, consistent with section 1599f of title 10, United States Code, to recruit and retain individuals with demonstrated expertise in advanced artificial intelligence research and development from private industry, academia, and national laboratories.

“(C) Not less than 50 percent of the technical staff assigned to artificial general intelligence preparedness functions under this section shall possess graduate-level education or equivalent professional experience in artificial intelligence, machine learning, computer science, or a directly related field.

“(D) The Secretary shall establish an exchange program with leading artificial intelligence research laboratories and companies to provide personnel assigned to functions under this section with rotational assignments of not less than 90 days to maintain current technical expertise.

“(E) Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this paragraph, and annually thereafter, the CDAO shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report on the status of workforce recruitment and retention for functions under this section, including the number of billets authorized and filled, attrition rates, average tenure, and an assessment of the competitiveness of Department compensation relative to the private sector for comparable artificial intelligence positions.

“(7) SENIOR LEADER ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE EDUCATION.—

“(A) The CDAO, in coordination with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, shall develop and implement a artificial intelligence education program for all general and flag officers, members of the Senior Executive Service within the Department, and combatant command staff principals.

“(B) Such program shall include but is not limited to—

“(i) technical foundations of current artificial intelligence capabilities and limitations;



“(ii) the current state and projected trajectory of artificial general intelligence development;

“(iii) adversary artificial intelligence military capabilities and doctrine, with emphasis on People’s Republic of China programs;

“(iv) artificial intelligence-enabled operational concepts and their implications for force design and employment; and

“(v) artificial intelligence safety, alignment, and control challenges relevant to military applications.

“(8) OPERATIONAL INTEGRATION.—The CDAO shall, in coordination with the Joint Staff and the combatant commands, develop a plan to integrate artificial general intelligence preparedness findings into joint operational planning processes, including updates to contingency plans, campaign plans, and global force management allocation plans, not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this paragraph.”;

(3) by amending subsection (e) to read as follows:

“(e) REPORTS, BRIEFINGS, AND ACCOUNTABILITY.—

“(1) INITIAL REPORT AND BRIEFING.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this subsection, the Secretary of Defense shall—

“(A) submit to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives a report detailing—

“(i) the organizational structure, staffing requirements, and initial objectives of the AGI Preparedness Initiative described in subsection (a)(3);

“(ii) a comprehensive assessment of the performance of the CDAO in executing the duties established under this section since the date of the original enactment of this section, including an identification of specific deficiencies in organizational structure, personnel qualifications, interagency coordination, and operational impact; and

“(iii) the initial objectives and milestones for the duties added by the amendments made by section ___ of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2027; and

“(B) provide to such Committees a briefing on the matters set forth in the report.

“(2) PERIODIC REPORTS AND BRIEFINGS.—Not later than 180 days after the submission of the initial report under paragraph (1), and annually thereafter, the Secretary of Defense shall—



“(A) submit to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives a report on the activities carried out under this section since the date of the last report under this paragraph, including—

“(i) any findings, assessments, and recommendations with respect to the national security implications of artificial general intelligence and advanced artificial intelligence;

“(ii) the progress of the CDAO against each benchmark established under paragraph (3); and

“(iii) a classified annex containing specific assessments of People’s Republic of China artificial intelligence military capabilities, the effectiveness of current export control measures with respect to adversary artificial intelligence development, and identified countermeasure priorities; and

“(B) provide to such Committees a briefing on the matters set forth in the report.

“(3) PERFORMANCE METRICS AND ACCOUNTABILITY.—

“(A) Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this paragraph, the CDAO shall submit to the congressional defense committees a set of measurable performance benchmarks and milestones for each duty described in subsection (c).

“(B) Each report required under paragraph (2) shall include a detailed assessment of progress against each benchmark established under subparagraph (A), including specific explanations for any benchmarks not met and corrective actions planned.

“(4) POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS.—The CDAO shall provide policy recommendations to the Secretary of Defense, the President, and Congress relating to the national security implications of artificial general intelligence and advanced artificial intelligence, including recommendations for legislative action.”;

(4) by amending subsection (f) to read as follows:

“(f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) The term ‘artificial intelligence’ has the meaning given such term in subsection (g).

“(2) The term ‘artificial general intelligence’ means artificial intelligence systems that match or exceed human expert performance across a wide variety of domains, including chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear applications, cyber offense, model autonomy, persuasion, research and development, and self-improvement.

“(3) The term ‘CDAO’ means the Chief Digital and Artificial Intelligence Officer of the Department of Defense, or such successor official as the Secretary of Defense may designate.”;



(5) by adding at the end the following new subsections:

“(h) INTERAGENCY COORDINATION ON EXPORT CONTROLS AND TECHNOLOGY PROTECTION.—The CDAO shall coordinate with the Bureau of Industry and Security of the Department of Commerce, the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States, the Department of Energy, and other relevant interagency bodies to—

“(1) assess the effectiveness of technology control measures in constraining adversary access to artificial intelligence capabilities;

“(2) recommend modifications to export control lists, end-use restrictions, and investment screening criteria as needed to address emerging artificial intelligence-related threats; and

“(3) ensure that classification guidance developed under subsection (c)(2)(G) is updated to address artificial general intelligence and advanced artificial intelligence systems.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The heading of section 238 of the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019 (Public Law 115–232; 10 U.S.C. note prec. 4061) is amended by striking “JOINT ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, AND TRANSITION ACTIVITIES” and inserting “DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND ARTIFICIAL GENERAL INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES”.

(c) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section or the amendments made by this section shall be construed to limit or otherwise affect any authority of the Secretary of Defense or the Chief Digital and Artificial Intelligence Officer under section 238 of the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019 (Public Law 115–232; 10 U.S.C. note prec. 4061), as in effect on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act.