

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 5233

To modernize the Peace Corps by enhancing efficiency and foreign policy alignment, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 9, 2025

Mr. HUIZENGA introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

A BILL

To modernize the Peace Corps by enhancing efficiency and foreign policy alignment, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Peace Corps Mod-
5 ernization Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. LIMITATION ON OVERHEAD SPENDING.**

7 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Director of the Peace Corps
8 shall take such steps as may be necessary ensure that—

9 (1) not more than 15 percent of the total
10 amount appropriated for any fiscal year for the pro-

1 grams, projects, and activities of the Peace Corps is
2 allocated for administrative or other, non-volunteer,
3 overhead expenses; and

4 (2) the remaining 85 percent of the budget is
5 directed toward volunteers, including for recruit-
6 ment, training, and support.

7 (b) SAVINGS.—To the extent that the annual alloca-
8 tion requirements under subsection (a) result in additional
9 amounts being directed towards the purposes described in
10 subsection (a)(2), the Director shall ensure that such addi-
11 tional amounts are used to increase the number of Peace
12 Corps volunteers deployed worldwide.

13 **SEC. 3. ALIGNMENT WITH FOREIGN POLICY PRIORITIES.**

14 (a) PRIORITIZATION BY SECRETARY OF STATE.—
15 Pursuant to section 4(c)(3) of the Peace Corps Act (22
16 U.S.C. 2503(c)(3)), the Secretary of State shall set coun-
17 try priorities for the deployment of Peace Corps volunteers
18 in a manner that ensures alignment with United States
19 strategic interests, including countering authoritarian in-
20 fluence, promoting stability, and supporting allies.

21 (b) NOTIFICATION.—In addition to any other notifi-
22 cation requirements applicable with respect to such a de-
23 termination, the Director of the Peace Corps shall submit
24 to Congress a notification before the entry into effect of
25 any determination to undertake the first Peace Corps pro-

1 gram in a new country or terminate all Peace Corps pro-
2 grams in any country.

3 (c) STRATEGIC PLAN.—The Director of the Peace
4 Corps shall establish a Peace Corps Strategic Plan, which
5 shall be aligned, in coordination with the Under Secretary
6 of State for Public Diplomacy, with the Integrated Coun-
7 try Strategies of the Department of State.

8 (d) PACIFIC ISLAND COUNTRY EXPANSION.—

9 (1) REQUIREMENT FOR PRESENCE.—Notwith-
10 standing subsections (a) and (b), the Director of the
11 Peace Corps shall ensure that programs of the Peace
12 Corps operate in at least five Pacific Island coun-
13 tries, including Palau, the Federated States of Mi-
14 cronesia, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

15 (2) REPORT ON EXPANSION.—Not later than
16 90 days after the enactment of this Act, the Sec-
17 retary of State and Director of the Peace Corps
18 shall brief the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the
19 House of Representatives and the Committee on
20 Foreign Relations of the Senate on the expansion of
21 Peace Corps operations in Pacific Island countries
22 as required by paragraph (1), detailing—

23 (A) which such countries have expressed
24 interest in Peace Corps presence;

25 (B) any barriers to such expansion;

1 (C) the resources needed to expand; and

2 (D) opportunities to coordinate with the
3 Department of Defense, Department of State,
4 or other agencies to overcome challenges to
5 such expansion.

6 **SEC. 4. COORDINATION WITH EMBASSIES.**

7 (a) EMBASSY OVERSIGHT.—The Director of the
8 Peace Corps, in coordination with relevant Ambassadors
9 and chiefs of mission, shall take such steps as may be nec-
10 essary to ensure that United States embassies (or other
11 equivalent diplomatic or consular posts, as appropriate)
12 support and integrate country-level Peace Corps oper-
13 ations.

14 (b) WITHDRAWAL OF SUPPORT.—Upon receiving no-
15 tice of a determination by the Secretary of State that a
16 regional bureau or an embassy has withdrawn support for
17 the program of the Peace Corps in a country, the Director
18 of the Peace Corps shall pause such program and submit
19 to Congress a notification of both such determination and
20 such pause.

21 **SEC. 5. OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY.**

22 The Inspector General of the Peace Corps shall co-
23 ordinate with the Inspector General of the Department of
24 State on all oversight activities relating to volunteers.

1 **SEC. 6. FOREIGN SERVICE PATHWAY.**

2 Not later than 180 days after the date of the enact-
3 ment of this Act, the Secretary of State, acting through
4 the Director General of the Foreign Service, shall establish
5 through regulation a mechanism to provide streamlined
6 vetting and consideration of applications for appointment
7 to the Foreign Service of returning and former Peace
8 Corps volunteers. Such mechanism shall establish a path-
9 way exclusively for such volunteers that—

10 (1) creates mentorship opportunities through
11 programs pairing such applicants with current For-
12 eign Service officers;

13 (2) recognizes Peace Corps service as qualifying
14 experience in the form of bonus evaluation points in
15 the Qualifications Evaluation Panel and Oral As-
16 sessment, in a manner equivalent to the veterans ap-
17 pointment preference under section 301(c) of the
18 Foreign Service Act of 1980 (22 U.S.C. 3941(c));
19 and

20 (3) in addition to the recognition under para-
21 graph (2)(B), for any such volunteer appointed to a
22 career appointment in the Foreign Service, treating
23 the term of service to the Peace Corps as service in
24 the Foreign Service for purposes of all benefits (in-
25 cluding retirement benefits) provided to members of
26 the Foreign Service or term-of-service requirements

- 1 relating to pay or benefits, such as the 9-year service
- 2 requirement before reaching eligibility for mid-level
- 3 appointments.

