

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 9206

To amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to require a Department of Homeland Security-wide policy for public communications, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 8, 2026

Mr. THANEDAR (for himself and Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Homeland Security

A BILL

To amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to require a Department of Homeland Security-wide policy for public communications, 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 “Department of Home-
5 land Security Communications, Accuracy, Neutrality, Dis-
6 closure, Oversight, and Review Act” or the “DHS CAN-
7 DOR Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. DHS PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS POLICY.**

2 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle H of title VIII of the
3 Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 451 et seq.)
4 is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

5 **“SEC. 890E. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS POLICY.**

6 “(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the
7 date of the enactment of this section, the Secretary shall
8 issue a Department-wide policy for the purpose of ensur-
9 ing Department personnel engaged in public-facing com-
10 munication improve information quality by maximizing ac-
11 curacy, utility, objectivity, and integrity. Such policy shall
12 establish standards for all public-facing materials to—

13 “(1) be accurate, objective, and reliable;

14 “(2) avoid misleading, partisan, unauthorized,
15 speculative, or unsupported statements;

16 “(3) support rapid correction or clarification if
17 the Department disseminates inaccurate or incom-
18 plete information; and

19 “(4) undergo review procedures for the legal
20 compliance with the requirements specified in sub-
21 section (b).

22 “(b) LEGAL REQUIREMENTS SPECIFIED.—The legal
23 requirements specified in this subsection are the following:

24 “(1) Section 515 of the Consolidated Appro-
25 priations Act, 2001 (Public Law 106–554) (com-
26 monly referred to as the ‘Data Quality Act’ or the

1 ‘Information Quality Act’) and any other relevant
2 Federal data integrity requirement.

3 “(2) Sections 7321 through 7326 of title 5,
4 United States Code (commonly referred to as the
5 ‘Hatch Act’), and part 734 of title 5, Code of Fed-
6 eral Regulations.

7 “(3) Sections 552 and 552a of title 5, United
8 States Code.

9 “(4) Civil rights and civil liberties protections.

10 “(5) Applicable ethics rules.

11 “(c) COMPONENT PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS POLI-
12 CIES.—Not earlier than 30 days after the Secretary issues
13 the Department-wide policy pursuant to subsection (a),
14 the heads of Department components may develop compo-
15 nent specific policies that align with such Department-
16 wide policy. Such heads shall submit to the Office of Pub-
17 lic Affairs and the Office of the General Counsel such com-
18 ponent policies for review and certification of such align-
19 ment. Such heads may issue such component specific poli-
20 cies after receiving from each of such Offices confirmation
21 of such alignment.

22 “(d) USE OF PERSONAL SOCIAL MEDIA AC-
23 COUNTS.—When referencing Department activities on per-
24 sonal accounts, Department personnel—

25 “(1) may not—

1 “(A) represent personal views as Depart-
2 ment positions;

3 “(B) disclose non-public information; or

4 “(C) misuse official titles, insignia, or in-
5 ternal information; and

6 “(2) shall avoid presenting personal social
7 media posts as official communications from the De-
8 partment.

9 “(e) AUTHORIZATION AND OVERSIGHT.—

10 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Assistant Secretary for
11 the Office of Public Affairs of the Department shall
12 serve as the oversight authority for all Department
13 use of social media for public communication, includ-
14 ing Department component accounts. All such ac-
15 counts shall satisfy the following criteria:

16 “(A) Be established only on platforms ap-
17 proved by the Department.

18 “(B) Be established for official, mission re-
19 lated purposes.

20 “(C) Be operated by a designated account
21 manager responsible for the account’s security
22 and activity.

23 “(D) Be—

24 “(i) approved for use by the Assistant
25 Secretary for the Office of Public Affairs,

1 the Chief Information Officer, and the
2 General Counsel before launch; and

3 “(ii) archived upon closure.

4 “(2) CONTENT WORKFLOW AND PUBLICATION
5 PROCESS.—The Office of Public Affairs, in conjunc-
6 tion with the Office of the General Counsel, shall es-
7 tablish procedures to ensure that, before publication,
8 social media posts satisfy the requirements of this
9 section.

10 “(f) PUBLICATION.—The Assistant Secretary for the
11 Office of Public Affairs shall maintain a list of all current
12 Department social media accounts, including office and
13 Department component social media accounts, on a public-
14 facing website of the Department.

15 “(g) RECORDS MANAGEMENT.—Records retention
16 and disposition schedules for official social media accounts
17 shall adhere to all Department and National Archives and
18 Records Administration requirements.

19 “(h) TRAINING.—

20 “(1) ANNUAL TRAINING.—All Department per-
21 sonnel shall receive annual training, as well as a
22 post-training assessment, to verify understanding of
23 key concepts on the acceptable uses of personal and
24 official social media accounts, including relating to
25 the following:

1 “(A) Mass communication principles.

2 “(B) Applicable ethics rules.

3 “(C) Applicable laws and regulations, in-
4 cluding the legal requirements specified in sub-
5 section (b).

6 “(D) Department-wide policy.

7 “(E) Department component-specific poli-
8 cies, if applicable.

9 “(2) NEW EMPLOYEE TRAINING.—All Depart-
10 ment personnel engaged in public-facing communica-
11 tions or responsible for managing official social
12 media accounts shall complete social media and pub-
13 lic communications training within 30 days of
14 onboarding and before engaging in any such commu-
15 nications.

16 “(3) COMPONENT TRAINING REQUIREMENTS.—
17 The head of each Department component shall track
18 and monitor the completion of required Department
19 and any component social media training by all em-
20 ployees of such component, and report to the Assist-
21 ant Secretary for the Office of Public Affairs com-
22 pletion rates of such training. The head of any com-
23 ponent with a component specific training shall sub-
24 mit to the Assistant Secretary up-to-date copies of
25 such component’s social media training curriculum.

1 “(i) INCIDENT REPORTING AND ENFORCEMENT.—

2 The head of each Department component shall establish
3 a process for timely reporting, review, and remediation of
4 suspected misuse of official or personal social media ac-
5 counts. Failure to comply with the requirements of this
6 section shall constitute a violation of Department policy
7 for purposes of personnel accountability, including discipli-
8 nary action.

9 “(j) INSPECTOR GENERAL REVIEW.—

10 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year
11 after the date of the enactment of this section, the
12 Inspector General of the Department shall—

13 “(A) submit to the Committee on Home-
14 land Security of the House of Representatives
15 and the Committee on Homeland Security and
16 Governmental Affairs of the Senate an audit of
17 the Department’s compliance with the require-
18 ments specified in this section; and

19 “(B) issue, as appropriate, recommenda-
20 tions to the Secretary to improve the quality,
21 utility, objectivity, and integrity of public-facing
22 materials disseminated by the public affairs of-
23 fices of the Department.

24 “(2) PERIODIC MONITORING.—The Office of
25 the Inspector General shall conduct periodic audits

1 of official social media accounts and submit to Con-
2 gress an annual report summarizing compliance,
3 misuse incidents, corrective actions, and trends
4 under this section.

5 “(k) DEFINITIONS.—

6 “(1) PUBLIC FACING MATERIAL.—The term
7 ‘public-facing material’—

8 “(A) includes any—

9 “(i) written, audio, or video products,
10 including a press release, a speech, talking
11 points, a fact sheet, testimony, a letter, a
12 report, a billboard, and a broadcast, that is
13 posted on social media or otherwise distrib-
14 uted to the press for the purposes of in-
15 forming the general public; and

16 “(ii) content authored, shared, or oth-
17 erwise disseminated by Department per-
18 sonnel in a manner reasonably perceived as
19 representing the Department, including
20 posts, comments, likes, shares, and other
21 forms of digital engagement undertaken
22 through official social media accounts; and

23 “(B) does not include—

24 “(i) any regulatory publication;

1 “(ii) any agency guidance document;

2 or

3 “(iii) any product that satisfies the
4 definition of ‘agency action’ (as such term
5 is defined in section 551(13) of title 5,
6 United States Code).

7 “(2) SOCIAL MEDIA.—The term ‘social
8 media’—

9 “(A) means the sphere of websites, appli-
10 cations, and web-based tools that connect users
11 to engage in dialogue, share information and
12 media, collaborate, and interact; and

13 “(B) includes many different forms, in-
14 cluding web-based communities and hosted
15 services, social networking sites, video and
16 photo sharing sites, blogs, virtual worlds, social
17 bookmarking, broadcast or pushtext messaging
18 services, and other emerging technologies.”.

19 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents
20 in section 1(b) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 is
21 amended by inserting after the item relating to section
22 890D the following new item:

“Sec. 890E. Public communications policy.”.

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