

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 7106

To require the Department of Defense to maintain a basic social sciences research program.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 4, 2020

Mr. LIPINSKI (for himself, Mr. MCKINLEY, and Mr. LANGEVIN) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services

A BILL

To require the Department of Defense to maintain a basic social sciences research program.

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 “Social Sciences Protect
5 Our Nation Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) The 2017 National Academies of Sciences,
9 Engineering and Medicine report on The Value of
10 Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences to Na-

1 tional Priorities asserts “Having a fundamental un-
2 derstanding of how people and societies behave, why
3 they respond the way they do, what they find impor-
4 tant, what they believe or value, and what and how
5 they think about others is critical for the country’s
6 well-being in today’s global environment.”.

7 (2) There is a national need for investing in di-
8 verse basic research social science, and facilitating
9 transition of those findings to inform national de-
10 fence priorities and actions.

11 (3) In 2008, while giving a speech entitled “Na-
12 tional Security: What New Expertise is Needed?”,
13 Secretary of Defense Robert Gates stated “Too
14 many mistakes have been made over the years be-
15 cause our government and military did not under-
16 stand—or even seek to understand—the countries or
17 cultures we were dealing with.”.

18 (4) In response, the Department of Defense ini-
19 tiated a basic social science research program to im-
20 prove basic understanding of the social, cultural, be-
21 havioral, and political forces that shape regions of
22 the world of strategic importance to the United
23 States.

24 (5) The National Academy of Sciences found in
25 their 2019 evaluation of the Department of Defense

1 defense-wide basic social sciences program that “de-
2 spite facing challenges with establishing a stable,
3 well-functioning organizational structure as well as
4 resource limitations, the program has made impor-
5 tant contributions” and that the program has suc-
6 cessfully strengthened ties between the Department
7 and the social science community.

8 (6) Maintaining a basic social sciences research
9 program provides the Department of Defense critical
10 access to expertise to inform cultural understanding,
11 support technological edge, counter adversarial social
12 interventions, and understand drivers to strengthen
13 alliances and attract new partners.

14 (7) Continued investment in basic social science
15 research is particularly crucial at a time when peer
16 and near-peer adversaries are increasingly employing
17 elements of malign influence, disinformation, and
18 predatory economics in concert with technological
19 capabilities.

20 **SEC. 3. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE SOCIAL SCIENCES.**

21 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Defense shall
22 maintain a defense-wide basic research program with an
23 emphasis on diverse social sciences.

1 (b) The Secretary of Defense shall include in the an-
2 nual budget submission of the President under section
3 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code—

4 (1) a dedicated budget line item for defense-
5 wide basic social science research; and

6 (2) basic research funds from each of the serv-
7 ices dedicated to social science research.

8 (c) REPORT.—Within 90 days after the date of enact-
9 ment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall report
10 to the House Armed Services Committee and the Senate
11 Armed Services Committee on the organizational structure
12 of the defense-wide basic social science research program.
13 The report shall include—

14 (1) the responsibilities of the Under Secretary
15 of Defense for Research and Engineering in collabo-
16 ration with the Under Secretary of Defense for Pol-
17 icy in joint oversight of the program;

18 (2) the role of each of the services in coordi-
19 nating with the program; and

20 (3) efforts to align the program with the De-
21 partment's Science and Technology roadmaps and
22 the National Defense Strategy.

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