

116TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# S. 1293

To expand employment opportunities for spouses of Foreign Service officers.

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 2, 2019

Mr. VAN HOLLEN (for himself and Mr. SULLIVAN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

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## A BILL

To expand employment opportunities for spouses of Foreign Service officers.

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 “Foreign Service Fami-  
5 lies Act of 2019”.

6 **SEC. 2. TELECOMMUTING OPPORTUNITIES.**

7 (a) UPDATED PLAN.—Not later than 90 days after  
8 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of  
9 State shall revise Chapter 2360 of Volume 3 of the For-  
10 eign Affairs Manual to include an updated plan for pro-  
11 viding telecommuting opportunities for spouses of Foreign

1 Service officers who are stationed overseas. The Secretary  
2 of State may revise the Personnel Operations Handbook  
3 and the International Cooperative Administrative Support  
4 Services Handbook to reflect the updated plan.

5 (b) ELEMENTS.—The updated plan developed under  
6 subsection (a) shall include—

7 (1) arranging telecommuting options with Fed-  
8 eral agencies for spouses already employed at agen-  
9 cies as civilian employees before moving overseas;  
10 and

11 (2) encouraging Federal contractors to make  
12 telecommuting opportunities available to qualified el-  
13 igible spouses.

14 **SEC. 3. EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS FOR**  
15 **SPOUSES OF FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICERS.**

16 Section 706(b)(1) of the Foreign Service Act of 1980  
17 (22 U.S.C. 4026(b)(1)) is amended—

18 (1) by striking “The Secretary may” and in-  
19 serting “The Secretary shall”;

20 (2) in subparagraph (B), by striking “and” at  
21 the end;

22 (3) by redesignating subparagraph (C) as sub-  
23 paragraph (D); and

24 (4) by inserting after subparagraph (B) the fol-  
25 lowing:

1           “(C) establishing a program for assisting  
2 spouses of Foreign Service officers to access  
3 employment and education opportunities, which  
4 shall be modeled after the programs authorized  
5 under sections 1784 and 1784a of title 10,  
6 United States Code, and based on regulations  
7 modeled after those prescribed pursuant to sub-  
8 section (b) of such section 1784; and”.

9 **SEC. 4. REPORTING ON FOREIGN SERVICE FAMILY RE-**  
10 **SERVE CORPS.**

11       (a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 120 days after the  
12 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State  
13 shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees  
14 a report on the status of implementation of the Foreign  
15 Service Family Reserve Corps.

16       (b) **ELEMENTS.**—The report required under sub-  
17 section (a) shall include the following elements:

18           (1) A description of the status of implementa-  
19 tion of the Foreign Service Family Reserve Corps  
20 (FSFRC).

21           (2) An assessment of the extent to which imple-  
22 mentation was impacted by the Department of State  
23 hiring freeze and a detailed explanation of the effect  
24 of any such impacts.

1           (3) A description of the status of implementa-  
2           tion of a hiring preference for the FSFRC.

3           (4) A detailed accounting of any individuals eli-  
4           gible for membership in the FSFRC who were un-  
5           able to begin working at a new location as a result  
6           of being unable to transfer their security clearance,  
7           including an assessment of whether they would have  
8           been able to port their clearance as a member of the  
9           FSFRC if the program had been fully implemented.

10          (5) An estimate of the number of individuals  
11          who are eligible to join the FSFRC worldwide and  
12          which of the three categories, as detailed in the  
13          Under Secretary for Management's guidance dated  
14          May 3, 2016, under which those individuals would  
15          enroll.

16          (6) An estimate of the number of individuals  
17          who are enrolled in the FSFRC worldwide and  
18          which of the three categories, as detailed in the  
19          Under Secretary for Management's guidance dated  
20          May 3, 2016, under which those individuals enrolled.

21          (7) An estimate of the number of individuals  
22          who were enrolled in each phase of the implementa-  
23          tion of the FSFRC as detailed in guidance issued by  
24          the Under Secretary for Management of the Depart-  
25          ment of State.

1           (8) An estimate of the number of individuals  
2           enrolled in the FSFRC who have successfully trans-  
3           ferred a security clearance to a new post since im-  
4           plementation of the program began.

5           (9) An estimate of the number of individuals  
6           enrolled in the FSFRC who have been unable to suc-  
7           cessfully transfer a security clearance to a new post  
8           since implementation of the program began.

9           (10) An estimate of the number of individuals  
10          who have declined in writing to apply to the  
11          FSFRC.

12          (c) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DE-  
13          FINED.—In this section, the term “appropriate congres-  
14          sional committees” means—

15                 (1) the Committee on Foreign Relations and  
16                 the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate; and

17                 (2) the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the  
18                 Committee on Appropriations of the House of Rep-  
19                 resentatives.

1 **SEC. 5. TREATMENT OF FAMILY MEMBERS OF FOREIGN**  
2 **SERVICE OFFICERS SEEKING POSITIONS CUS-**  
3 **TOMARILY FILLED BY FOREIGN SERVICE OF-**  
4 **FICERS OR FOREIGN NATIONAL EMPLOYEES.**

5 Section 311 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (22  
6 U.S.C. 3951) is amended by adding at the end the fol-  
7 lowing:

8 “(e) The Secretary shall hold a family member of a  
9 government employee described in subsection (a) seeking  
10 employment in a position described in that subsection to  
11 employment standards not higher than the employment  
12 standards applicable to Foreign Service officers, Foreign  
13 Service personnel, or foreign national employees seeking  
14 the same position.”.

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