

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1273

To amend the Peace Corps Act by providing better support for current and returned volunteers, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 1, 2023

Mr. GARAMENDI (for himself, Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana, Mr. MEEKS, and Mrs. RADEWAGEN) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

A BILL

To amend the Peace Corps Act by providing better support for current and returned volunteers, 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 Reauthor-
5 ization Act of 2023”.

6 **SEC. 2. FUNDING FOR THE PEACE CORPS; INTEGRATION OF**
7 **INFORMATION AGE VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNI-**
8 **TIES.**

9 Section 3 of the Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2502)
10 is amended—

1 (1) in subsection (b)(2), by striking “that fiscal
2 year and the subsequent fiscal year” and inserting
3 “obligation until the last day of the subsequent fis-
4 cal year”; and

5 (2) by redesignating subsection (h) as sub-
6 section (e).

7 **SEC. 3. READJUSTMENT ALLOWANCES FOR VOLUNTEERS**
8 **AND VOLUNTEER LEADERS.**

9 Section 5 of the Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2504)
10 is amended—

11 (1) in subsection (b), by striking “insure their
12 health” and inserting “ensure their safety, their
13 health, and”;

14 (2) in subsection (c)—

15 (A) by striking “\$125” and inserting
16 “\$375”;

17 (B) by striking “his” each place such term
18 appears and inserting “the volunteer’s”; and

19 (C) by striking “he” and inserting “the
20 volunteer”;

21 (3) by redesignating subsection (e) as sub-
22 section (d);

23 (4) by inserting after subsection (d), as redesign-
24 nated, the following:

1 “(e) The Director shall consult with health experts
2 outside of the Peace Corps, including experts licensed in
3 the field of mental health, and follow guidance by the Cen-
4 ters for Disease Control and Prevention regarding the pre-
5 scription of medications to volunteers.”;

6 (5) in subsection (h), by striking “he” and in-
7 serting “the President”;

8 (6) in subsection (n)(2)—

9 (A) by striking “subsection (e)” each place
10 such term appears and inserting “subsection
11 (d)”;

12 (B) by striking “he” and inserting “the
13 President”;

14 (7) in subsection (o), by striking “his” each
15 place such term appears and inserting “the volun-
16 teer’s”.

17 **SEC. 4. RESTORATION OF VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**
18 **FOR MAJOR DISRUPTIONS TO VOLUNTEER**
19 **SERVICE.**

20 (a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 5 of the Peace Corps Act
21 (22 U.S.C. 2504), as amended by section 3 of this Act,
22 is further amended by adding at the end the following:

23 “(q) **DISRUPTION OF SERVICE PROTOCOLS.**—

24 “(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Director shall establish
25 processes for the safe return to service of returning

1 Peace Corps volunteers whose service is interrupted
2 due to mandatory evacuations of volunteers due to
3 catastrophic events or global emergencies of unknow-
4 able duration, which processes shall include—

5 “(A) the establishment of monitoring and
6 communications systems, protocols, safety
7 measures, policies, and metrics for determining
8 the appropriate approaches for restoring volun-
9 teer opportunities for evacuated returned volun-
10 teers whose service is interrupted by a cata-
11 strophic event or global emergency; and

12 “(B) streamlining, to the fullest extent
13 practicable, application requirements for the re-
14 turn to service of such volunteers.

15 “(2) RETURN TO SERVICE.—Beginning on the
16 date on which any volunteer described in paragraph
17 (1) returns to service, the Director shall strive to af-
18 ford evacuated volunteers, to the fullest extent prac-
19 ticable, the opportunity—

20 “(A) to return to their previous country of
21 service, except for Peace Corps missions in
22 China; and

23 “(B) to continue their service in the most
24 needed sectors within the country in which they
25 had been serving immediately before their evac-

1 uation due to a catastrophic event or global
2 emergency, except for Peace Corps missions in
3 China.”.

4 (b) **MEDICAL PERSONNEL.**—Section 5A(b) of the
5 Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2504a(b)) is amended, in the
6 matter preceding paragraph (1), by inserting “, mental
7 health professionals” after “medical officers”.

8 (c) **VOLUNTEER LEADERS.**—Section 6 of the Peace
9 Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2505) is amended—

10 (1) in paragraph (1), by striking “\$125” and
11 inserting “\$375”; and

12 (2) in paragraph (3), by striking “he” and in-
13 serting “the President”.

14 **SEC. 5. HEALTH CARE CONTINUATION FOR PEACE CORPS**
15 **VOLUNTEERS.**

16 Section 5(d) of the Peace Corps Act, as redesignated
17 by section 3(3) of this Act, is amended to read as follows:

18 “(d)(1) Volunteers shall receive such health care dur-
19 ing their service as the Director considers necessary or ap-
20 propriate, including, if necessary, services under section
21 8B.

22 “(2) Applicants for enrollment shall receive such
23 health examinations preparatory to their service, and ap-
24 plicants for enrollment who have accepted an invitation
25 to begin a period of training under section 8(a) shall re-

1 ceive, preparatory to their service, such immunization,
2 dental care, and information regarding prescription op-
3 tions and potential interactions, as may be necessary and
4 appropriate and in accordance with subsection (F).

5 “(3) Subject to such conditions as the Director may
6 prescribe, the health care described in paragraphs (1) and
7 (2) for serving volunteers, applicants for enrollment, or
8 returned volunteers may be provided in any facility of any
9 agency of the United States Government, and in such
10 cases the amount expended for maintaining and operating
11 such facility shall be reimbursed from appropriations
12 available under this Act. Health care may not be provided
13 under this subsection in a manner that is inconsistent with
14 the Assisted Suicide Funding Restriction Act of 1997
15 (Public Law 105–12).

16 “(4) Not later than 30 days before the date on which
17 the period of service of a volunteer terminates, or 30 days
18 after such termination date if such termination is the re-
19 sult of an emergency, the Director, in consultation with
20 the Secretary of Health and Human Services, shall pro-
21 vide detailed information to such volunteer regarding op-
22 tions for health care after termination other than health
23 care provided by the Peace Corps, including information
24 regarding—

1 “(A) how to find additional, detailed informa-
2 tion, including information regarding—

3 “(i) the application process and eligibility
4 requirements for medical assistance through a
5 State Medicaid plan under title XIX of the So-
6 cial Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.), or
7 under a waiver of such plan; and

8 “(ii) health care option identification serv-
9 ices available through the public and private
10 sectors;

11 “(B) where detailed information on health plans
12 may be obtained; and

13 “(C) if such volunteer is 25 years of age or
14 younger, the eligibility of such volunteer to enroll as
15 a dependent child in a group health plan or health
16 insurance coverage in which the parent of such vol-
17 unteer is enrolled in such plan or coverage offers
18 such dependent coverage.

19 “(5) Paragraph (4) shall apply to volunteers whose
20 periods of service are subject to early termination.”.

21 **SEC. 6. ACCESS TO ANTIMALARIAL DRUGS AND HYGIENE**
22 **PRODUCTS FOR PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS.**

23 Section 5A of the Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2504a)
24 is amended—

25 (1) by striking subsections (c) and (e);

1 (2) by redesignating subsection (d) as sub-
2 section (e);

3 (3) by inserting after subsection (b) the fol-
4 lowing:

5 “(c) ANTIMALARIAL DRUGS.—

6 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall consult
7 with experts at the Centers for Disease Control and
8 Prevention regarding recommendations for pre-
9 scribing malaria prophylaxis, in order to provide the
10 best standard of care within the context of the Peace
11 Corps environment.

12 “(2) CERTAIN TRAINING.—The Director shall
13 ensure that each Peace Corps medical officer serving
14 in a malaria-endemic country receives training in the
15 recognition of the side effects of such medications.

16 “(3) CONSULTATION.—The Director shall con-
17 sult with the Assistant Secretary of Defense for
18 Health Affairs regarding the policy of using
19 mefloquine in the field as an antimalarial prophy-
20 lactic.

21 “(d) ACCESS TO HYGIENE PRODUCTS.—Not later
22 than 180 days after the date of the enactment of the
23 Peace Corps Reauthorization Act of 2023, the Director
24 shall establish a comprehensive policy to ensure Peace

1 Corps volunteers who require hygiene products are able
2 to access such products.”.

3 **SEC. 7. CODIFICATION OF CERTAIN EXECUTIVE ORDERS**
4 **RELATING TO EXISTING NONCOMPETITIVE**
5 **ELIGIBILITY FEDERAL HIRING STATUS FOR**
6 **RETURNING VOLUNTEERS AND EXTENSION**
7 **OF THE PERIOD OF SUCH STATUS.**

8 The Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2501 et seq.) is
9 amended by inserting after section 5A the following:

10 **“SEC. 5B. CODIFICATION OF EXECUTIVE ORDERS RELAT-**
11 **ING TO NONCOMPETITIVE ELIGIBILITY FED-**
12 **ERAL HIRING STATUS FOR RETURNING VOL-**
13 **UNTEERS.**

14 “(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsection (b), Execu-
15 tive Order 11103 (22 U.S.C. 2504 note; relating to Pro-
16 viding for the Appointment of Former Peace Corps Volun-
17 teers to the Civilian Career Services), as amended by Ex-
18 ecutive Order 12107 (44 Fed. Reg. 1055; relating to the
19 Civil Service Commission and Labor-Management in the
20 Federal Service), as in effect on the day before the date
21 of the enactment of the Peace Corps Reauthorization Act
22 of 2023, shall remain in effect and have the full force and
23 effect of law.

24 “(b) PERIOD OF ELIGIBILITY.—

25 “(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

1 “(A) EXECUTIVE AGENCY.—the term ‘Ex-
2 ecutive agency’—

3 “(i) has the meaning given such term
4 in section 105 of title 5, United States
5 Code;

6 “(ii) includes the United States Postal
7 Service and the Postal Regulatory Com-
8 mission; and

9 “(iii) does not include the Government
10 Accountability Office.

11 “(B) HIRING FREEZE.—The term ‘hiring
12 freeze’ means any memorandum, Executive
13 order, or other action by the President that
14 prohibits an Executive agency from filling va-
15 cant Federal civilian employee positions or cre-
16 ating new such positions.

17 “(2) IN GENERAL.—The period of eligibility for
18 noncompetitive appointment to the civil service pro-
19 vided to an individual under subsection (a), includ-
20 ing any individual who is so eligible on the date of
21 the enactment of the Peace Corps Reauthorization
22 Act of 2023, shall be extended by the total number
23 of days, during such period, that—

24 “(A) a hiring freeze for civilian employees
25 of the executive branch is in effect by order of

1 the President with respect to any Executive
2 agency at which the individual has applied for
3 employment;

4 “(B) there is a lapse in appropriations
5 with respect to any Executive agency at which
6 the individual has applied for employment; or

7 “(C) the individual is receiving disability
8 compensation under section 8142 of title 5,
9 United States Code, based on the individual’s
10 service as a Peace Corps volunteer, retroactive
11 to the date the individual applied for such com-
12 pensation.

13 “(3) APPLICABILITY.—The period of eligibility
14 for noncompetitive appointment status to the civil
15 service under subsection (a) shall apply to a Peace
16 Corps volunteer—

17 “(A) whose service ended involuntarily as a
18 result of a suspension of volunteer operations
19 by the Director, but may not last longer than
20 1 year after the date on which such service
21 ended involuntarily; or

22 “(B) who re-enrolls as a volunteer in the
23 Peace Corps after completion of a term of serv-
24 ice.”.

1 **SEC. 8. EXTENSION OF PERIOD OF EXISTING NONCOMPETI-**
2 **TIVE ELIGIBILITY FEDERAL HIRING STATUS**
3 **FOR RETURNING VOLUNTEERS.**

4 The Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2501 et seq.) is
5 amended by inserting after section 5B, as added by section
6 7 of this Act, the following:

7 **“SEC. 5C. EXTENSION OF PERIOD OF EXISTING NON-**
8 **COMPETITIVE ELIGIBILITY FEDERAL HIRING**
9 **STATUS FOR RETURNING VOLUNTEERS.**

10 “(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to section 5B, Executive
11 Order 11103 (22 U.S.C. 2504 note; relating to Providing
12 for the Appointment of Former Peace Corps Volunteers
13 to the Civilian Career Services), as amended by Executive
14 Order 12107 (44 Fed. Reg. 1055; relating to the Civil
15 Service Commission and Labor-Management in the Fed-
16 eral Service), as in effect on the day before the date of
17 the enactment of the Peace Corps Reauthorization Act of
18 2023, shall remain in effect and have the full force and
19 effect of law.

20 “(b) NONCOMPETITIVE ELIGIBILITY FEDERAL HIR-
21 ING STATUS.—Subject to subsection (d), any volunteer
22 whose Peace Corps service was terminated after April 1,
23 2020, and who has been certified by the Director as hav-
24 ing satisfactorily completed a full term of service, may be
25 appointed within two years of completion of qualifying
26 service to a position in any United States department,

1 agency, or establishment in the competitive service under
2 title 5, United States Code, without competitive examina-
3 tion, in accordance with such regulations and conditions
4 as may be prescribed by the Director of the Office of Per-
5 sonnel Management.

6 “(c) EXTENSION.—The appointing authority may ex-
7 tend the noncompetitive appointment eligibility under sub-
8 section (b) to not more than 3 years after a volunteer’s
9 separation from the Peace Corps if the volunteer, following
10 such service, was engaged in—

11 “(1) military service;

12 “(2) the pursuit of studies at a recognized insti-
13 tution of higher learning; or

14 “(3) other activities which, in the view of the
15 appointing authority, warrant an extension of such
16 eligibility.

17 “(d) EXCEPTION.—The appointing authority may not
18 extend the noncompetitive appointment eligibility under
19 subsection (b) to any volunteer who chooses to be subject
20 to early termination.”.

21 **SEC. 9. COMPREHENSIVE ILLEGAL DRUG USE POLICY WITH**
22 **RESPECT TO PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS.**

23 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C.
24 2501 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 8I (22
25 U.S.C. 2507i) the following new section:

1 **“SEC. 8J. COMPREHENSIVE ILLEGAL DRUG USE POLICY**
2 **WITH RESPECT TO PEACE CORPS VOLUN-**
3 **TEERS.**

4 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall develop and
5 implement a comprehensive drug use policy with respect
6 to Peace Corps volunteers. The policy shall—

7 “(1) establish a zero tolerance policy regarding
8 volunteer or trainee involvement with illegal drugs;
9 and

10 “(2) require that every case of volunteer or
11 trainee illegal drug involvement be brought imme-
12 diately to the attention of relevant Peace Corps lead-
13 ership, including the Director, and be reported expe-
14 ditiously by the Peace Corps to the Office of the In-
15 spector General.

16 “(b) CONSULTATION.—In developing the policy de-
17 scribed in subsection (a), the Director may consult with
18 and incorporate, as appropriate, the recommendations and
19 views of experts in the field of substance abuse, and shall
20 consult with the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the
21 House of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign
22 Relations of the Senate.”.

23 (b) REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date
24 of the enactment of this Act, the Director shall submit
25 to the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Rep-
26 resentatives and the Committee on Foreign Relations of

1 the Senate a report on the illegal drug use policy required
2 to be developed and implemented under section 8J of the
3 Peace Corps Act, as added by subsection (a).

4 **SEC. 10. PROTECTION OF PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS**
5 **AGAINST REPRISAL OR RETALIATION.**

6 Section 8G of the Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2507g)
7 is amended by adding at the end the following:

8 “(d) PROHIBITION AGAINST REPRISAL OR RETALIA-
9 TION.—

10 “(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

11 “(A) COVERED OFFICIAL OR OFFICE.—The
12 term ‘covered official or office’ means—

13 “(i) any Peace Corps employee, in-
14 cluding an employee of the Office of In-
15 spector General;

16 “(ii) a Member of Congress or a des-
17 ignated representative of a committee of
18 Congress;

19 “(iii) an Inspector General (other
20 than the Inspector General for the Peace
21 Corps);

22 “(iv) the Government Accountability
23 Office;

1 “(v) any authorized official of the De-
2 partment of Justice or other Federal law
3 enforcement agency; and

4 “(vi) a United States court, including
5 any Federal grand jury.

6 “(B) RELIEF.—The term ‘relief’ includes
7 all affirmative relief necessary to make a volun-
8 teer whole, including monetary compensation,
9 equitable relief, compensatory damages, and at-
10 torney fees and costs.

11 “(C) REPRISAL OR RETALIATION.—The
12 term ‘reprisal or retaliation’ means taking,
13 threatening to take, or initiating adverse ad-
14 ministrative action against a volunteer because
15 the volunteer made a report described in sub-
16 section (a) or otherwise disclosed to a covered
17 official or office any information pertaining to
18 waste, fraud, abuse of authority, misconduct,
19 mismanagement, violations of law, or a signifi-
20 cant threat to health and safety, if the activity
21 or occurrence complained of is based upon the
22 reasonable belief of the volunteer.

23 “(2) IN GENERAL.—The Director of the Peace
24 Corps shall take all reasonable measures, including
25 through the development and implementation of a

1 comprehensive policy, to prevent and address re-
2 prisal or retaliation against a volunteer by any Peace
3 Corps officer or employee, or any other person with
4 supervisory authority over the volunteer during the
5 volunteer's period of service.

6 “(3) REPORTING AND INVESTIGATION; RE-
7 LIEF.—

8 “(A) IN GENERAL.—A volunteer may re-
9 port a complaint or allegation of reprisal or re-
10 taliation—

11 “(i) directly to the Inspector General
12 of the Peace Corps, who may conduct such
13 investigations and make such recommenda-
14 tions with respect to the complaint or alle-
15 gation as the Inspector General considers
16 appropriate; and

17 “(ii) through other channels provided
18 by the Peace Corps, including through the
19 process for confidential reporting imple-
20 mented pursuant to subsection (a).

21 “(B) RELIEF.—The Director of the Peace
22 Corps—

23 “(i) may order any relief for an af-
24 firmative finding of a proposed or final res-
25 olution of a complaint or allegation of re-

1 prisal or retaliation in accordance with
2 policies, rules, and procedures of the Peace
3 Corps; and

4 “(ii) shall ensure that such relief is
5 promptly provided to the volunteer.

6 “(4) APPEAL.—

7 “(A) IN GENERAL.—A volunteer may sub-
8 mit an appeal to the Director of the Peace
9 Corps of any proposed or final resolution of a
10 complaint or allegation of reprisal or retaliation.

11 “(B) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing
12 in this paragraph may be construed to affect
13 any other right of recourse a volunteer may
14 have under any other provision of law.

15 “(5) NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS AND REM-
16 EDIES.—The Director of the Peace Corps shall en-
17 sure that volunteers are informed in writing of the
18 rights and remedies provided under this section.

19 “(6) DISPUTE MEDIATION.—The Director of
20 the Peace Corps shall offer the opportunity for vol-
21 unteers to resolve disputes concerning a complaint
22 or allegation of reprisal or retaliation through medi-
23 ation in accordance with procedures developed by the
24 Peace Corps.

1 “(7) VOLUNTEER COOPERATION.—The Director
2 of the Peace Corps may take such disciplinary or
3 other administrative action, including termination of
4 service, with respect to a volunteer who unreason-
5 ably refuses to cooperate with an investigation into
6 a complaint or allegation of reprisal or retaliation
7 conducted by the Inspector General of the Peace
8 Corps.”.

9 **SEC. 11. PEACE CORPS NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL.**

10 Section 12 of the Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2511)
11 is amended—

12 (1) in subsection (b)(2)—

13 (A) in the matter preceding subparagraph
14 (A), by striking “(subject to subsection (d)(1))
15 conduct on-site inspections, and make examina-
16 tions, of the activities of the Peace Corps in the
17 United States and in other countries in order
18 to”;

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

21 (C) by redesignating subparagraph (D) as
22 subparagraph (G); and

23 (D) by inserting after subparagraph (C)
24 the following:

1 “(D) make recommendations for utilizing
2 the expertise of returned Peace Corps volun-
3 teers in fulfilling the goals of the Peace Corps;

4 “(E) make recommendations on strength-
5 ening diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessi-
6 bility principles in the workforce and daily work
7 of the Peace Corps, including by—

8 “(i) increasing the recruitment of vol-
9 unteers from diverse backgrounds and bet-
10 ter supporting such volunteers during their
11 training and enrollment in the Peace
12 Corps;

13 “(ii) increasing and sustaining a di-
14 verse and inclusive workforce through data
15 collection, anti-harassment and anti-dis-
16 crimination measures, recruitment, reten-
17 tion, professional development, and pro-
18 motion and leadership initiatives that also
19 consider the work and roles of contractors;

20 “(iii) ensuring that advisory commit-
21 tees and boards represent the diversity of
22 the agency; and

23 “(iv) increasing opportunities in oper-
24 ations, programming, and procurement
25 through work with partners and commu-

1 nities that are underrepresented or tradi-
2 tionally marginalized;

3 “(F) make recommendations to reduce any
4 financial barriers to application, training, or en-
5 rollment in the Peace Corps, including medical
6 expenses and other out-of-pocket costs; and”;

7 (2) in subsection (c), by amending paragraph
8 (2) to read as follows:

9 “(2)(A) The Council shall be composed of 7 members
10 who are United States citizens and are not being paid as
11 officers or employees of the Peace Corps or of any other
12 United States Government entity.

13 “(B) Of the 7 members of the Council—

14 “(i) 1 member shall be appointed by the Presi-
15 dent;

16 “(ii) 3 members shall be appointed by the
17 President pro tempore of the Senate, of which—

18 “(I) 2 members shall be appointed upon
19 the recommendation of the leader in the Senate
20 of the political party that is not the political
21 party of the President;

22 “(II) 1 member shall be appointed upon
23 the recommendation of the leader in the Senate
24 of the political party of the President; and

1 “(III) at least 2 members shall be former
2 Peace Corps volunteers; and

3 “(iii) 3 members shall be appointed by the
4 Speaker of the House of Representatives, of which—

5 “(I) 2 members shall be appointed upon
6 the recommendation of the leader in the House
7 of Representatives of the political party that is
8 not the political party of the President;

9 “(II) 1 member shall be appointed upon
10 the recommendation of the leader in the House
11 of Representatives of the political party of the
12 President; and

13 “(III) at least 2 members shall be former
14 Peace Corps volunteers.

15 “(C) Council members shall be appointed to 2-year
16 terms. No member of the Council may serve for more than
17 2 consecutive 2-year terms.

18 “(D) Not later than 30 days after any vacancy occurs
19 on the Council, the Director shall appoint an individual
20 to fill such vacancy. Any Council member appointed to fill
21 a vacancy occurring before the expiration of the term for
22 which the member’s predecessor was appointed—

23 “(i) shall be appointed for the remainder of
24 such term; and

1 “(ii) may only serve on the Council for 1 addi-
2 tional 2-year term.

3 “(E)(i) Except as provided in clause (ii), Council
4 members shall not be subject to laws relating to Federal
5 employment, including laws relating to hours of work,
6 rates of compensation, leave, unemployment compensa-
7 tion, and Federal employee benefits.

8 “(ii) Notwithstanding clause (i), Council members
9 shall be deemed to be Federal employees for purposes of—

10 “(I) chapter 81 of title 5, United States Code
11 (relating to compensation for work-related injuries);

12 “(II) chapter 11 of title 18, United States Code
13 (relating to conflicts of interest);

14 “(III) chapter 171 of title 28, United States
15 Code (relating to tort claims); and

16 “(IV) section 3721 of title 31 (relating to
17 claims for damage to, or loss of, personal property
18 incident to service).

19 “(F) Council members shall serve at the pleasure of
20 the Director. The Council may remove a member from the
21 Council by a vote of 5 members if the Council determines
22 that such member—

23 “(i) committed malfeasance in office;

1 “(ii) persistently neglected, or was unable to
2 successfully discharge, his or her duties on the
3 Council; or

4 “(iii) committed an offense involving moral tur-
5 pitude.”;

6 (3) in subsection (g)—

7 (A) by striking “and at its first regular
8 meeting in each calendar year thereafter” and
9 inserting “at its first meeting each subsequent
10 calendar year”; and

11 (B) by adding at the end the following:
12 “The Chair and Vice Chair shall each serve in
13 such capacity for a period not to exceed 2
14 years. The Director may renew the term of
15 members appointed as Chair and Vice Chair
16 under this subsection.”;

17 (4) in subsection (h), by amending paragraph
18 (1) to read as follows:

19 “(1) The Council shall hold 1 regular meeting per
20 quarter of each calendar year at a date and time to be
21 determined by the Chair of the Council or at the call of
22 the Director.”; and

23 (5) by adding at the end the following:

24 “(k) INDEPENDENCE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL.—
25 None of the activities or functions of the Council author-

1 ized under subsection (b)(2) may undermine the independ-
2 ence or supersede the duties of the Inspector General of
3 the Peace Corps.”.

4 **SEC. 12. MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT WITH BUREAU OF**
5 **DIPLOMATIC SECURITY OF THE DEPART-**
6 **MENT OF STATE.**

7 (a) **QUINQUENNIAL REVIEW AND UPDATE.**—Not
8 later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of
9 this Act, and at least once every 5 years, the Director of
10 the Peace Corps and the Assistant Secretary of State for
11 Diplomatic Security shall—

12 (1) review the Memorandum of Agreement be-
13 tween the Bureau of Diplomatic Security of the De-
14 partment of State and the Peace Corps regarding
15 security support and protection of Peace Corps vol-
16 unteers, and staff members abroad; and

17 (2) update such Memorandum of Agreement, as
18 appropriate.

19 (b) **NOTIFICATION.**—

20 (1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Director of the Peace
21 Corps and the Assistant Secretary of State for Dip-
22 lomatic Security shall jointly submit any update to
23 the Memorandum of Agreement under subsection (a)
24 to—

1 (A) the Committee on Foreign Relations of
2 the Senate; and

3 (B) the Committee on Foreign Affairs of
4 the House of Representatives.

5 (2) TIMING OF NOTIFICATION.—Each written
6 notification submitted pursuant to paragraph (1)
7 shall be submitted not later than 30 days before the
8 update referred to in such paragraph takes effect.

9 **SEC. 13. CLARIFICATION REGARDING ELIGIBILITY OF**
10 **UNITED STATES NATIONALS.**

11 The Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2501 et seq.), as
12 amended by this Act, is further amended—

13 (1) in section 7(a)(5) (22 U.S.C. 2506(a)(5)),
14 by striking “United States citizens” each place such
15 term appears and inserting “United States nationals
16 of American Samoa and citizens of the United
17 States”;

18 (2) in section 8(b) (22 U.S.C. 2507(b)), by in-
19 serting “United States nationals of American Samoa
20 and” after “training for”;

21 (3) in section 10(b) (22 U.S.C. 2509(b)), strik-
22 ing “any person not a citizen or resident of the
23 United States” and inserting “any person who is not
24 a United States national of American Samoa nor a
25 citizen or resident of the United States”; and

1 (4) in section 12(g) (22 U.S.C. 2511(g), by in-
2 serting “United States nationals of American Samoa
3 or” after “who are”.

4 **SEC. 14. SEXUAL ASSAULT ADVISORY COUNCIL.**

5 (a) REPORT AND EXTENSION OF THE SEXUAL AS-
6 SAULT ADVISORY COUNCIL.—Section 8D of the Peace
7 Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2507d) is amended—

8 (1) by amending subsection (d) to read as fol-
9 lows:

10 “(d) REPORTS.—On an annual basis through the
11 date specified in subsection (g), the Council shall submit
12 a report to the Director of the Peace Corps, the Com-
13 mittee on Foreign Relations of the Senate, the Committee
14 on Appropriations of the Senate, the Committee on For-
15 eign Affairs of the House of Representatives, and the
16 Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representa-
17 tives that describes its findings based on the reviews con-
18 ducted pursuant to subsection (c) and includes relevant
19 recommendations. Each such report shall be made publicly
20 available.”; and

21 (2) in subsection (g), by striking “October 1,
22 2023” and inserting “October 1, 2028”.

23 **SEC. 15. SUSPENSION WITHOUT PAY.**

24 Section 7 of the Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2506)
25 is amended by inserting after subsection (a) the following:

1 “(b) SUSPENSION WITHOUT PAY.—(1) The Peace
2 Corps may suspend (without pay) any employee appointed
3 or assigned under this section if the Director has deter-
4 mined that the employee engaged in serious misconduct
5 that could impact the efficiency of the service and could
6 lead to removal for cause.

7 “(2) Any employee for whom a suspension without
8 pay is proposed under this subsection shall be entitled
9 to—

10 “(A) written notice stating the specific reasons
11 for such proposed suspension;

12 “(B)(i) up to 15 days to respond orally or in
13 writing to such proposed suspension if the employee
14 is assigned in the United States; or

15 “(ii) up to 30 days to respond orally or in writ-
16 ing to such proposed suspension if the employee is
17 assigned outside of the United States;

18 “(C) representation by an attorney or other
19 representative, at the employee’s own expense;

20 “(D) a written decision, including the specific
21 reasons for such decision, as soon as practicable;

22 “(E) a process through which the employee may
23 submit an appeal to the Director of the Peace Corps
24 not later than 10 business days after the issuance of
25 a written decision; and

1 “(F) a final decision personally rendered by the
2 Director of the Peace Corps not later than 30 days
3 after the receipt of such appeal.

4 “(3) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a
5 final decision under paragraph (2)(F) shall be final and
6 not subject to further review.

7 “(4) If the Director fails to establish misconduct by
8 an employee under paragraph (1) and no disciplinary ac-
9 tion is taken against such employee based upon the alleged
10 grounds for the suspension, the employee shall be entitled
11 to reinstatement, back pay, full benefits, and reimburse-
12 ment of attorney fees of up to \$20,000.”.

13 **SEC. 16. OCEANIA PEACE CORPS PARTNERSHIPS.**

14 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the
15 date of the enactment of this Act, the Director of the
16 Peace Corps shall submit to Congress a report on strate-
17 gies to reasonably and safely expand the number of Peace
18 Corps volunteers in the Indo-Pacific countries of Oceania,
19 with the goals of—

20 (1) expanding the presence of the Peace Corps
21 to all currently feasible locations in the Indo-Pacific
22 countries of Oceania; and

23 (2) working with regional and international
24 partners of the United States to expand the presence
25 of Peace Corps volunteers in low-income commu-

1 nities in the Indo-Pacific countries of Oceania in
2 support of climate resilience initiatives.

3 (b) ELEMENTS.—The report required by subsection
4 (a) shall—

5 (1) assess the factors contributing to the cur-
6 rent absence of the Peace Corps and its volunteers
7 in the Indo-Pacific countries of Oceania;

8 (2) examine potential remedies that include
9 working with United States Government agencies
10 and regional governments, including Governments of
11 United States allies—

12 (A) to increase the health infrastructure
13 and medical evacuation capabilities of the Indo-
14 Pacific countries of Oceania to better support
15 the safety of Peace Corps volunteers while in
16 those countries;

17 (B) to address physical safety concerns
18 that have decreased the ability of the Peace
19 Corps to operate in the Indo-Pacific countries
20 of Oceania; and

21 (C) to increase transportation infrastruc-
22 ture in the Indo-Pacific countries of Oceania to
23 better support the travel of Peace Corps volun-
24 teers and their access to necessary facilities;

1 (3) evaluate the potential to expand the deploy-
2 ment of Peace Corps Response volunteers to help the
3 Indo-Pacific countries of Oceania address social, eco-
4 nomic, and development needs of their communities
5 that require specific professional expertise; and

6 (4) explore potential new operational models to
7 address safety and security needs of Peace Corps
8 volunteers in the Indo-Pacific countries of Oceania,
9 including—

10 (A) changes to volunteer deployment dura-
11 tions; and

12 (B) scheduled redeployment of volunteers
13 to regional or United States-based healthcare
14 facilities for routine physical and behavioral
15 health evaluation.

16 (c) VOLUNTEERS IN LOW-INCOME OCEANIA COMMU-
17 NITIES.—

18 (1) IN GENERAL.—In examining the potential
19 to expand the presence of Peace Corps volunteers in
20 low-income communities in the Indo-Pacific coun-
21 tries of Oceania under subsection (a)(2), the Direc-
22 tor of the Peace Corps shall consider the develop-
23 ment of initiatives described in paragraph (2).

24 (2) INITIATIVES DESCRIBED.—Initiatives de-
25 scribed in this paragraph are volunteer initiatives

1 that help the Indo-Pacific countries of Oceania ad-
2 dress social, economic, and development needs of
3 their communities, including by—

4 (A) addressing, through appropriate resil-
5 ience-based interventions, the vulnerability that
6 communities in the Indo-Pacific countries of
7 Oceania face as result of extreme weather, se-
8 vere environmental change, and other climate
9 related trends; and

10 (B) improving, through smart infrastruc-
11 ture principles, access to transportation and
12 connectivity infrastructure that will help ad-
13 dress the economic and social challenges that
14 communities in the Indo-Pacific countries of
15 Oceania confront as a result of poor or non-
16 existent infrastructure.

17 (d) INDO-PACIFIC COUNTRIES OF OCEANIA DE-
18 FINED.—The term “Indo-Pacific countries of Oceania”
19 means Fiji, Kiribati, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Mi-
20 cronesia, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Sol-
21 omon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.

22 **SEC. 17. REPORTS.**

23 (a) REPORT ON MENTAL HEALTH EVALUATION
24 STANDARDS.—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year
2 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Di-
3 rector of the Peace Corps shall submit to the Com-
4 mittee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Rep-
5 resentatives and the Committee on Foreign Rela-
6 tions of the Senate a report on the guidelines and
7 standards used to evaluate the mental health of
8 Peace Corps applicants prior to service.

9 (2) ELEMENTS.—The report required under
10 paragraph (1) shall include the following elements:

11 (A) A detailed description of mental health
12 screening guidelines and evaluation standards
13 used by the Peace Corps to determine medical
14 eligibility of applicants for service, including a
15 description of the most common mental health
16 conditions of applicants.

17 (B) Specific standards in the mental health
18 screening process that could lead to an appli-
19 cant's disqualification from service, and a de-
20 scription of how these determinations are made.

21 (C) A description of any expedited mental
22 health clearance process for severe or recent
23 symptom presentation.

24 (D) A description of periods of stability re-
25 lated to certain mental health conditions and

1 symptoms recommended prior to an applicant's
2 clearance to serve.

3 (E) An assessment of the impact of up-
4 dated mental health evaluation guidance, in-
5 cluding a comparison of mental health related
6 volunteer medevacs in years before and after
7 updated guidelines were implemented.

8 (F) A review of these screening guidelines,
9 conducted by a panel of certified and qualified
10 medical professionals in the United States, that
11 evaluates these standards based on scientific
12 evidence and mental health research and pro-
13 poses relevant updates or additions to current
14 guidance.

15 (b) REPORT ON VOLUNTEER MEDICAL EVACU-
16 ATIONS.—

17 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than the first May
18 1 occurring after the date of the enactment of this
19 Act, and annually thereafter for five years, the Di-
20 rector of the Peace Corps shall submit to the Com-
21 mittee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Rep-
22 resentatives and the Committee on Foreign Rela-
23 tions of the Senate a report on volunteer medical
24 and mental health evacuations.

1 (2) ELEMENTS.—The report required under
2 paragraph (1) shall include the following elements:

3 (A) The number of Peace Corps volunteer
4 medical and mental health evacuations during
5 the previous year.

6 (B) A breakdown of these evacuations into
7 medical and mental health evacuation cat-
8 egories.

9 (C) The estimated cost of these evacu-
10 ations for each year, including a breakdown of
11 costs between medical and mental health evacu-
12 ation categories.

13 **SEC. 18. TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.**

14 The Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2501 et seq.), as
15 amended by this Act, is further amended—

16 (1) by amending section 1 to read as follows:

17 **“SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.**

18 “(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the
19 ‘Peace Corps Act’.

20 “(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents
21 for this Act is as follows:

“TITLE I—THE PEACE CORPS

“Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

“Sec. 2. Declaration of purpose.

“Sec. 2A. Peace Corps as an independent agency.

“Sec. 3. Authorization.

“Sec. 4. Director of the Peace Corps and delegation of functions.

“Sec. 5. Peace Corps volunteers.

“Sec. 5A. Health care for volunteers at Peace Corps posts.

- “Sec. 5B. Codification of Executive orders relating to noncompetitive eligibility Federal hiring status for returning volunteers.
- “Sec. 5C. Extension of period of existing noncompetitive eligibility Federal hiring status for returning volunteers.
- “Sec. 6. Peace Corps volunteer leaders.
- “Sec. 7. Peace Corps employees.
- “Sec. 8. Volunteer training.
- “Sec. 8A. Sexual assault risk-reduction and response training.
- “Sec. 8B. Sexual assault policy.
- “Sec. 8C. Office of Victim Advocacy.
- “Sec. 8D. Establishment of Sexual Assault Advisory Council.
- “Sec. 8E. Volunteer feedback and Peace Corps review.
- “Sec. 8F. Establishment of a policy on stalking.
- “Sec. 8G. Establishment of a confidentiality protection policy.
- “Sec. 8H. Removal and assessment and evaluation.
- “Sec. 8I. Reporting requirements.
- “Sec. 8J. Comprehensive illegal drug use policy with respect to Peace Corps volunteers.
- “Sec. 9. Participation of foreign nationals.
- “Sec. 10. General powers and authorities.
- “Sec. 11. Reports.
- “Sec. 12. Peace Corps National Advisory Council.
- “Sec. 13. Experts and consultants.
- “Sec. 14. Detail of personnel to foreign governments and international organizations.
- “Sec. 15. Utilization of funds.
- “Sec. 16. Foreign Currency Fluctuations Account.
- “Sec. 17. Use of foreign currencies.
- “Sec. 18. Activities promoting Americans’ understanding of other peoples.
- “Sec. 19. Exclusive right to seal and name.
- “Sec. 22. Security investigations.
- “Sec. 23. Universal Military Training and Service Act.
- “Sec. 24. Foreign language proficiency.
- “Sec. 25. Nonpartisan appointments.
- “Sec. 26. Definitions.
- “Sec. 27. Construction.
- “Sec. 28. Effective date.

“TITLE II—AMENDMENT OF INTERNAL REVENUE CODE AND
SOCIAL SECURITY ACT

“TITLE III—ENCOURAGEMENT OF VOLUNTARY SERVICE
PROGRAMS

“Sec. 301. ”;

- 1 (2) in section 2(a) (22 U.S.C. 2501(a))—
- 2 (A) by striking “help the peoples” and in-
- 3 serting “partner with the peoples”; and
- 4 (B) by striking “manpower” and inserting
- 5 “individuals”;

1 (3) in section 3 (22 U.S.C. 2502), in subsection
2 (e), as redesignated, by striking “disabled people”
3 each place such term appears and inserting “people
4 with disabilities”;

5 (4) in section 4(b) (22 U.S.C. 2503(b))—

6 (A) by striking “him” and inserting “the
7 President”;

8 (B) by striking “he” and inserting “the
9 Director”;

10 (C) by striking “of his subordinates” and
11 all that follows through “functions.” and insert-
12 ing “subordinate of the Director the authority
13 to perform any such function.”;

14 (5) in section 5 (22 U.S.C. 2504)—

15 (A) in subsection (c), by striking “: *Pro-*
16 *vided, however,*” and all that follows through
17 “the amount” and inserting “. Under such cir-
18 cumstances as the President may determine,
19 the accrued readjustment allowance, or any
20 part thereof, may be paid to the volunteer,
21 members of the volunteer’s family, or others,
22 during the period of the volunteer’s service, or
23 prior to the volunteer’s return to the United
24 States. In the event of the volunteer’s death

1 during the period of his service, the amount”;
2 and

3 (B) in subsection (o) by striking “the date
4 of his departure” and all that follows and in-
5 serting “the date of the volunteer’s departure
6 from the volunteer’s place of residence to enter
7 training until not later than 3 months after the
8 termination of the volunteer’s service.”;

9 (6) in section 6(3) (22 U.S.C. 2505(3)), by
10 striking by striking “he may determine” and insert-
11 ing “the President may determine”;

12 (7) in section 7 (22 U.S.C. 2506)—

13 (A) in subsection (a), by moving para-
14 graphs (7) and (8) 2 ems to the left; and

15 (B) in subsection (b), as redesignated, by
16 striking “in his discretion” and inserting “in
17 the President’s discretion”;

18 (8) in section 8A (22 U.S.C. 2507a)—

19 (A) in subsection (e), by striking “his or
20 her” and inserting “the volunteer’s”;

21 (B) in subsection (d)(2), by inserting
22 “the” before “information”; and

23 (C) in subsection (f)—

1 (i) in paragraph (2)(A), by striking
2 “his or her” each place such phrase ap-
3 pears and inserting “the volunteer’s”; and

4 (ii) in paragraph (4)(A), by striking
5 “his or her” and inserting “the person’s”;

6 (9) in section 8C(a) (22 U.S.C. 2507c(a)), in
7 the subsection heading, by striking “VICTIMS” and
8 inserting “VICTIM”;

9 (10) in section 8E (22 U.S.C. 2507e)—

10 (A) in subsection (b), by striking “sub-
11 section (c),,” and inserting “subsection (c),”;
12 and

13 (B) in subsection (e)(1)(F), by striking
14 “Peace Corp’s mission” and inserting “Peace
15 Corps’ mission”;

16 (11) in section 9 (22 U.S.C. 2508)—

17 (A) by striking “under which he was ad-
18 mitted or who fails to depart from the United
19 States at the expiration of the time for which
20 he was admitted” and inserting “under which
21 such person was admitted or who fails to depart
22 from the United States at the expiration of the
23 period for which such person was admitted”;
24 and

1 (B) by striking “Act proceedings” and in-
2 serting “Act. Removal proceedings”;

3 (12) in section 10 (22 U.S.C. 2509)—

4 (A) in subsection (b), by striking “he may
5 prescribe” and inserting “the President may
6 prescribe”;

7 (B) in subsection (d), by striking “section
8 3709 of the Revised Statutes of the United
9 States, as amended, section 302 of the Federal
10 Property and Administrative Services Act of
11 1949”; and by inserting “sections 3101(a),
12 3101(c), 3104, 3106, 3301(b)(2), and 6101 of
13 title 41, United States Code”; and

14 (C) in subsection (j), by striking “of this
15 section.”;

16 (13) in section 12(d)(1)(b) (22 U.S.C.
17 2511(d)(1)(b)), by striking “his or her” and insert-
18 ing “the member’s”;

19 (14) in section 14 (22 U.S.C. 2513)—

20 (A) in subsection (a), by striking “his
21 agency” and inserting “such agency”; and

22 (B) in subsection (b)—

23 (i) by striking “his allowance” and in-
24 serting “the”; and

25 (ii) by striking “he”;

1 (15) in section 15 (22 U.S.C. 2514)—

2 (A) in subsection (c), by striking “that
3 Act” and inserting “that subchapter”; and

4 (B) in subsection (d)(7), by striking “his
5 designee” and inserting “the Director’s des-
6 ignee”;

7 (16) in section 19(a) (22 U.S.C. 2518(a)), by
8 striking “he shall determine” and inserting “the
9 President shall determine”;

10 (17) in section 23 (22 U.S.C. 2520)—

11 (A) in the section heading, by striking
12 “UNIVERSAL MILITARY TRAINING AND SERV-
13 ICE” and inserting “MILITARY SELECTIVE
14 SERVICE”; and

15 (B) by striking “Universal Military Train-
16 ing and Service Act” and inserting “Military
17 Selective Service Act (50 U.S.C. 3801 et seq.)”;

18 (18) in section 24—

19 (A) by striking “he” each place such term
20 appears and inserting “the volunteer”; and

21 (B) by striking “his” and inserting “the
22 volunteer’s”;

23 (19) in section 26—

1 (A) by redesignating paragraphs (2)
2 through (9) as paragraphs (3) through (10), re-
3 spectively;

4 (B) by inserting after paragraph (1) the
5 following:

6 “(2) The term ‘Director’ means the Director of
7 the Peace Corps.”;

8 (C) in paragraph (5), as redesignated, by
9 striking “he or she” and inserting “the medical
10 officer”;

11 (D) in paragraph (7), as redesignated, by
12 striking “5(m)” and inserting “5(n)”; and

13 (E) in paragraph (10), as redesignated—

14 (i) by redesignating clauses (i) and
15 (ii) as subparagraphs (A) and (B), respec-
16 tively; and

17 (ii) in subparagraph (A), as redesi-
18 gnated, by striking “section 5(f)” and in-
19 serting “section 5(e)”; and

20 (20) in section 301(a), by striking “manpower”
21 each place such term appears and inserting “individ-
22 uals”.

○