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To authorize grants for nongovernmental organizations that use independently produced documentary films to promote better understanding of the United States abroad and better understanding of global perspectives and other countries in the United States.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 2, 2009

Ms. WATSON (for herself, Ms. RICHARDSON, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. WOLF, Mr. FORTENBERRY, Mrs. BONO MACK, Mr. SCHIFF, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. COSTA, Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. ROYCE, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. SHERMAN, and Ms. ESHOO) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

A BILL

To authorize grants for nongovernmental organizations that use independently produced documentary films to promote better understanding of the United States abroad and better understanding of global perspectives and other countries in the United States.

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 “International Docu-
5 mentary Exchange Act of 2009”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 Congress finds the following:

3 (1) Since September 11, 2001, a distorted per-
4 ception of the United States has grown abroad, even
5 as many Americans struggle to understand the in-
6 creasingly complex world beyond the borders of the
7 United States.

8 (2) This public diplomacy crisis poses an ongo-
9 ing threat to United States security, diplomatic rela-
10 tions, commerce, and citizen-to-citizen relationships
11 between the United States and other countries.

12 (3) Independently produced documentary films
13 have proven to be an effective means of commu-
14 nicating United States ideas and values to popu-
15 lations of other countries.

16 (4) It is in the interest of the United States to
17 provide assistance to United States nongovernmental
18 organizations that produce and distribute independ-
19 ently produced documentary films.

1 **SEC. 3. GRANTS FOR INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTARY EX-**
2 **CHANGE PROGRAMS TO PROMOTE BETTER**
3 **UNDERSTANDING OF THE UNITED STATES**
4 **ABROAD AND BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF**
5 **GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES AND OTHER COUN-**
6 **TRIES IN THE UNITED STATES.**

7 (a) ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary of State is author-
8 ized to make grants, on such terms and conditions as the
9 Secretary may determine, to United States nongovern-
10 mental organizations that use independently produced
11 documentary films to promote better understanding of the
12 United States abroad and better understanding of global
13 perspectives and other countries in the United States.

14 (b) ACTIVITIES SUPPORTED.—Grants provided under
15 subsection (a) shall, to the maximum extent practicable,
16 be used to carry out the following activities:

17 (1) Fund, distribute, and promote accessible,
18 compelling, and credible documentary films that con-
19 vey a diversity of views about life in the United
20 States to foreign audiences and bring insightful for-
21 eign perspectives to United States audiences.

22 (2) Support documentaries described in para-
23 graph (1) that are made by independent foreign and
24 domestic producers, selected through a peer review
25 process.

1 (3) Develop a network of overseas partners to
2 produce, distribute, and broadcast such documen-
3 taries.

4 (c) SPECIAL FACTORS.—In making the grants de-
5 scribed in subsection (a), the Secretary shall give pref-
6 erence to nongovernmental organizations that—

7 (1) provide at least 35 percent of the total
8 project cost in matching funds from non-Federal
9 sources; and

10 (2) have prior experience supporting independ-
11 ently produced documentary films that have been
12 broadcast on public television in the United States.

13 (d) REPORT.—Not later than two years after the date
14 of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit
15 to Congress a report that contains a detailed description
16 of the implementation of this section for the prior year.

17 (e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

18 (1) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be
19 appropriated to the Secretary of State such sums as
20 may be necessary for each of fiscal years 2010
21 through 2015 to carry out this section.

22 (2) AVAILABILITY.—Amounts appropriated pur-
23 suant to the authorization of appropriations under

1 paragraph (1) are authorized to remain available
2 until expended.

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