

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 7623

To require the Secretary of State to submit a plan to eliminate the passport application backlog, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 16, 2020

Mr. CONNOLLY (for himself, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. BURCHETT, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. KINZINGER, and Mr. MFUME) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

A BILL

To require the Secretary of State to submit a plan to eliminate the passport application backlog, 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 “Passport Backlog
5 Elimination Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. PLAN TO ELIMINATE PASSPORT APPLICATION**
7 **BACKLOG.**

8 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after the
9 date of the enactment of this Act, after consultation with

1 the appropriate congressional committees, the Secretary of
2 State shall submit to such committees a plan, including
3 the actionable strategies described in subsection (b), to en-
4 sure the current backlog of passport applications due to
5 the COVID-19 pandemic is eliminated in a timely manner
6 in order to promote the national security and economic
7 interests of the United States.

8 (b) ACTIONABLE STRATEGIES.—The actionable
9 strategies described in this subsection are to—

10 (1) eliminate the backlog of at least 1.4 million
11 passport applications;

12 (2) establish a timeline for the elimination of
13 such backlog; and

14 (3) ensure—

15 (A) that the expected processing time
16 for—

17 (i) routine passport applications is be-
18 tween six and eight weeks;

19 (ii) expedited passport applications is
20 between two to three weeks; and

21 (iii) expedited passport applications
22 for Federal Government personnel is not
23 more than eight business days;

24 (B) the safety of Department of State per-
25 sonnel and customers and compliance with all

1 applicable Federal, State, and local health and
2 social distancing guidelines; and

3 (C) the ability for expedited service for ap-
4 plicants requiring a passport for purposes re-
5 lated to their employment.

6 (c) IMPLEMENTATION.—Not later than 30 days after
7 the submission of the plan under subsection (a), the Sec-
8 retary of State shall begin implementation of the plan to
9 eliminate the backlog of passport applications due to the
10 COVID-19 pandemic.

11 (d) INSPECTOR GENERAL AUDIT.—Not later than
12 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the
13 Inspector General of the Department of State shall submit
14 to Congress an audit on the elimination of the passport
15 application backlog required by the plan required under
16 subsection (a), and the Department’s actionable strategies
17 described in subsection (b).

18 (e) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term “appro-
19 priate congressional committees” means the Committee on
20 Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Oversight and Re-
21 form of the House of Representatives and the Committee
22 on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Homeland Se-
23 curity and Governmental Affairs of the Senate.

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