

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 8184

To direct the Secretary of Defense to establish the Center for Asymmetric Threat Research and Analytics to conduct research countering violent extremist organizations, weapons of mass destruction, and influence operations, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 8, 2020

Mr. BROWN of Maryland introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Defense to establish the Center for Asymmetric Threat Research and Analytics to conduct research countering violent extremist organizations, weapons of mass destruction, and influence operations, 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 “Center for Asymmetric
5 Threat Research and Analytics Act of 2020” or the
6 “CATRA Act of 2020”.

1 **SEC. 2. CENTER FOR ASYMMETRIC THREAT RESEARCH AND**
2 **ANALYTICS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DE-**
3 **FENSE.**

4 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of Defense
5 shall establish a research center on asymmetric threats
6 known as the “Center for Asymmetric Threat Research
7 and Analytics” (in this section referred to as the “Cen-
8 ter”).

9 (b) MISSIONS.—The Center shall—

10 (1) establish and maintain public global data-
11 bases on—

12 (A) asymmetric threats, including with re-
13 spect to—

14 (i) terrorist incidents and the behavior
15 of foreign violent extremist organizations;

16 (ii) weapons of mass destruction;

17 (iii) emerging or disruptive tech-
18 nologies;

19 (iv) influence operations; and

20 (v) other threats identified by the Sec-
21 retary;

22 (B) efficacy of responses to the asymmetric
23 threats specified in subparagraph (A); and

24 (C) relevant social, legal, political, and eco-
25 nomic factors related to terrorism and re-
26 sponses to such asymmetric threats;

1 (2) conduct advanced research on current and
2 emerging asymmetric threats;

3 (3) conduct advanced research on the effective-
4 ness of responses to asymmetric threats, and dis-
5 seminate recommendations for prioritization of re-
6 sponses;

7 (4) provide training and education to relevant
8 departments and agencies of the Federal Govern-
9 ment and associated organizations on contemporary
10 trends in global asymmetric threats, and lessons
11 learned on the effectiveness of responses; and

12 (5) coordinate with the Center of Excellence for
13 Terrorism Prevention and Counterterrorism Re-
14 search of the Department of Homeland Security, as
15 appropriate.

16 (c) LEAD INSTITUTION.—The Secretary shall select
17 an institution of higher education to serve as the lead in-
18 stitution established pursuant to subsection (a).

19 (d) CONSORTIUM.—The institution of higher edu-
20 cation selected under subsection (c) shall enter into agree-
21 ments with other institutions of higher education that the
22 Secretary determines meet the criteria for selection speci-
23 fied in subsection (e) to develop a consortium to assist
24 in accomplishing the goals of the Center.

1 (e) CRITERIA.—In selecting an institution of higher
2 education for participation in the consortium referred to
3 in subsection (d), the Secretary shall—

4 (1) consider—

5 (A) demonstrated expertise in the study of
6 global terrorism, the pursuit of weapons of
7 mass destruction and disruptive technologies,
8 influence operations, data collection, and dis-
9 semination;

10 (B) demonstrated expertise in the study of
11 countering violent extremist organizations, re-
12 sponding to influence operations, and coun-
13 tering the pursuit of weapons of mass destruc-
14 tion and disruptive technologies; and

15 (C) demonstrated expertise in research
16 transition to the Federal Government in the
17 form of knowledge tools, publications, and pro-
18 fessional training; and

19 (2) ensure participation from a representative
20 number of minority institutions.

21 (f) RESEARCH ON PRIORITIZATION OF RESPONSES
22 TO ASYMMETRIC THREATS.—

23 (1) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after
24 the establishment of the Center, and annually there-
25 after, the Center shall make publicly available on the

1 internet a report on the threat posed by asymmetric
2 threats globally, and the efficacy of responses by the
3 Secretary of Defense to asymmetric threats taking
4 social, political, legal, and economic factors into con-
5 sideration, with recommendations for prioritizing re-
6 sponses to asymmetric threats.

7 (2) CONTENTS.—Each report published under
8 paragraph (1) shall include the following:

9 (A) Information on the behaviors of asym-
10 metric threat groups and movements globally.

11 (B) Strategies that foreign governments
12 and civil society actors have undertaken to
13 counter such movements.

14 (C) Strategies that Federal, State, local,
15 and Tribal governments and civil society actors
16 have taken to counter such movements.

17 (D) Lessons learned from such strategies,
18 and recommendations for the prioritization of
19 responses to asymmetric threats.

20 (3) RECIPIENTS.—In addition to making the re-
21 port publicly available on the internet, the Center
22 shall submit each report under paragraph (1) to the
23 following:

24 (A) The Committee on Armed Services, the
25 Committee on Appropriations, the Committee

1 on Foreign Affairs, and the Permanent Select
2 Committee on Intelligence of the House of Rep-
3 resentatives.

4 (B) The Committee on Armed Services,
5 the Committee on Appropriations, the Com-
6 mittee on Foreign Relations, and the Select
7 Committee on Intelligence of the Senate.

8 (C) The Assistant Secretary of Defense for
9 Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict.

10 (D) The Commander of the United States
11 Special Operations Command.

12 (g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
13 authorized to be appropriated \$8,000,000 for each of fis-
14 cal years 2021 through 2026 to carry out this section, of
15 which \$1,000,000 is authorized to be appropriated to the
16 Department of Defense to administer this Act and
17 \$7,000,000 is authorized to be appropriated to the Center.

18 (h) DEFINITIONS.—In this section the term “minor-
19 ity institution” has the meaning given the term “covered
20 institution” in section 262(g)(2) of the National Defense
21 Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020 (Public Law 116–
22 92).

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