

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 2142

To require annual reports on religious intolerance in Saudi Arabian educational materials, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 21, 2021

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

A BILL

To require annual reports on religious intolerance in Saudi Arabian educational materials, 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 “Saudi Educational
5 Transparency and Reform Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress makes the following findings:

8 (1) The Government of the Kingdom of Saudi
9 Arabia for more than 15 years has made incre-

1 mental progress in removing intolerant content in
2 state-published textbooks.

3 (2) Saudi Arabia has committed to educational
4 reforms through its Vision 2030 and National
5 Transformation Program, and is an important part-
6 ner of the United States in combating terrorism and
7 violent extremism.

8 (3) The 2006 “confirmation of policies” nego-
9 tiated by the United States and Saudi Arabia stated
10 that textbooks would be revised within one or two
11 years “to remove remaining intolerant references
12 that disparage Muslims or non-Muslims or that pro-
13 mote hatred toward other religions or religious
14 groups”.

15 (4) According to the Department of State’s Au-
16 gust 2017 International Religious Freedom Report,
17 “[t]he government continued to distribute revised
18 textbooks, although some intolerant material re-
19 mained in circulation, particularly at the high school
20 level, including content justifying the execution of
21 ‘sorcerers’ ” and social exclusion of non-Muslims.

22 (5) Saudi textbooks have been exported inter-
23 nationally, including to countries in the Middle East,
24 Africa, South, Central, and South East Asia, and
25 parts of Europe and North America.

1 (6) The International Religious Freedom Act of
2 1998 requires the President to designate countries
3 in which violations of religious freedom are “system-
4 atic, ongoing, [and] egregious” as countries of par-
5 ticular concern.

6 (7) The President has designated Saudi Arabia
7 as a country of particular concern since 2004, pur-
8 suant to the International Religious Freedom Act of
9 1998 (22 U.S.C. 6401 et seq.), and a waiver of fur-
10 ther action has been in place since 2006.

11 **SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

12 It is the sense of Congress that, in spite of some
13 progress, the Government of Saudi Arabia has not yet suf-
14 ficiently met its commitments for eliminating all forms of
15 incitement from its educational materials and curriculum
16 in line with its commitments to combat terrorism and vio-
17 lent extremism.

18 **SEC. 4. REPORTS.**

19 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsection (d), not
20 later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of
21 this Act and annually thereafter for 10 years within 90
22 days of the start of the new school year in Saudi Arabia,
23 the Secretary of State shall submit to the Committee on
24 Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on
25 Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives a report

1 reviewing educational materials published by Saudi Ara-
2 bia's Ministry of Education that are used in schools both
3 inside the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and at schools
4 throughout the world.

5 (b) CONSULTATION.—Not later than 30 days after
6 the submission of a report under subsection (a), the Sec-
7 retary of State shall consult with the Committee on For-
8 eign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on For-
9 eign Affairs of the House of Representatives on the con-
10 tents of each such report.

11 (c) CONTENTS.—The reports required under sub-
12 section (b) should include the following elements:

13 (1) A detailed determination regarding whether
14 all intolerant content has been removed from edu-
15 cational materials published by Saudi Arabia's Min-
16 istry of Education that are used in schools both in-
17 side the Saudi Arabia and at schools throughout the
18 world, including full quotations of all passages that
19 could be seen as encouraging violence or intolerance
20 towards adherents of religions other than Islam or
21 towards Muslims who hold dissenting views.

22 (2) A detailed assessment of the global expor-
23 tation of such materials, including the extent to
24 which such materials are used in privately funded
25 educational institutions overseas.

1 (3) A detailed summary of actions the Govern-
2 ment of Saudi Arabia has taken to retrieve and de-
3 stroy materials with intolerant material.

4 (4) A detailed assessment of the Government of
5 Saudi Arabia's efforts to revise teacher manuals and
6 retrain teachers to reflect changes in educational
7 materials and promote tolerance.

8 (5) A detailed determination regarding whether
9 issuing a waiver regarding Saudi Arabia as a coun-
10 try of particular concern under the International Re-
11 ligious Freedom Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 6401 et
12 seq.) furthers the purposes of such Act or is other-
13 wise in the important national security interests of
14 the United States.

15 (d) TERMINATION OR EXTENSION OF REPORTING
16 REQUIREMENT.—

17 (1) TERMINATION BEFORE TEN YEARS.—If at
18 any time after submission of a report required under
19 subsection (a) but before the expiration of the 10-
20 year period referred to in such subsection, the Sec-
21 retary of State determines that intolerant religious
22 content has been removed completely from Saudi
23 Arabia's education materials, the requirement to
24 submit any remaining reports under such subsection
25 shall not apply.

1 (2) FIVE-YEAR EXTENSION OF REQUIRE-
2 MENT.—If at the end of the 10-year period referred
3 to in subsection (a), the Secretary of State deter-
4 mines that intolerant religious content remains in
5 Saudi Arabia’s education materials, the termination
6 of the requirement to submit reports under such
7 subsection shall not apply and the requirement shall
8 be extended an additional five years.

9 (e) FORM.—Reports under this section shall be sub-
10 mitted in an unclassified form, but may contain a classi-
11 fied annex.

12 **SEC. 5. TRANSPARENCY.**

13 Not later than 60 days after the submission of an
14 annual report under section 4, the Secretary of State shall
15 make copies of reviewed Saudi educational materials pub-
16 licly available on a website of the Department of State.

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