

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 4526

To establish an Office of City and State Diplomacy within the Department of State, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 19, 2021

Mr. LIEU (for himself, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. SIRES, Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Mrs. AXNE, and Mr. CASE) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

A BILL

To establish an Office of City and State Diplomacy within the Department of State, 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 “City and State Diplo-
5 macy Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) The supremacy clause of the United States
9 Constitution (article VI, clause 2) establishes that

1 the Federal Government has the primary role in con-
2 ducting diplomacy on behalf of the United States; in
3 turn, the Department of State, which was created
4 pursuant to statute by Congress in 1789, has the
5 lead role in formulating and implementing United
6 States foreign policy.

7 (2) The growth of subnational cooperation has
8 enabled States and municipalities to play an increas-
9 ingly significant role in foreign policy and com-
10 plement the efforts of the Department of State by—

11 (A) supporting exchanges and cooperation
12 agreements between elected leaders and officials
13 of State and municipal governments and those
14 of international cities, regions, and countries;

15 (B) promoting United States exports to
16 foreign markets and foreign direct investment
17 into the United States; and

18 (C) sharing best practices and striking
19 agreements with foreign counterparts on a wide
20 range of topics, including facilitating trade and
21 investment, protecting the health and safety of
22 their respective citizens, cooperating on energy
23 and the environment, and promoting people-to-
24 people exchanges.

1 (3) Global networks made up exclusively of local
2 government officials are at the forefront of har-
3 nessing the power of cities to advance international
4 cooperation, including C40 Cities Climate Leader-
5 ship Group, ICLEI, United Cities and Local Govern-
6 ments, Global Parliament of Mayors, Urban20,
7 Strong Cities Network, and Global Compact of May-
8 ors.

9 (4) In 2010, the Department of State appointed
10 the first-ever special representative for Global Inter-
11 governmental Affairs, who led efforts to build stra-
12 tegic peer-to-peer relationships between the Depart-
13 ment of State, State and local officials, and their
14 foreign counterparts.

15 **SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

16 It is the sense of Congress that—

17 (1) it is in the interest of the United States to
18 support robust two-way partnerships between the
19 Department of State and subnational entities to ad-
20 vance United States foreign policy objectives, im-
21 prove understanding of United States diplomacy,
22 and leverage Federal resources to enhance the im-
23 pact of subnational engagements; and

24 (2) the creation in the Department of State of
25 an Office of City and State Diplomacy, headed by a

1 senior Department official of appropriate rank to
 2 represent the United States at international fora
 3 would bolster United States interests through inter-
 4 national agreements and Federal support to State
 5 and local entities.

6 **SEC. 4. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE OFFICE OF CITY AND**
 7 **STATE DIPLOMACY.**

8 Section 1 of the State Department Basic Authorities
 9 Act of 1956 (22 U.S.C. 2651a) is amended by adding at
 10 the end the following new subsection:

11 “(i) OFFICE OF CITY AND STATE DIPLOMACY.—

12 “(1) IN GENERAL.—There shall be established
 13 within the Department of State an Office of City
 14 and State Diplomacy (in this subsection referred to
 15 as the ‘Office’). The Department may use a similar
 16 name at its discretion and upon notification to Con-
 17 gress.

18 “(2) HEAD OF OFFICE.—The head of the Office
 19 shall be the Ambassador-at-Large for City and State
 20 Diplomacy (in this subsection referred to as the
 21 ‘Ambassador’) or other appropriate senior official.
 22 The head of the Office shall—

23 “(A) be appointed by the President, by and
 24 with the advice and consent of the Senate; and

1 “(B) report directly to the Secretary, or
2 such other senior official as the Secretary deter-
3 mines appropriate and upon notification to
4 Congress.

5 “(3) DUTIES.—

6 “(A) PRINCIPAL DUTY.—The principal
7 duty of the head of the Office shall be the over-
8 all coordination (including policy oversight of
9 resources) of Federal support for subnational
10 engagements by State and municipal govern-
11 ments with foreign governments. The head of
12 the Office shall be the principal adviser to the
13 Secretary of State on subnational engagements
14 and the principal official on such matters within
15 the senior management of the Department of
16 State.

17 “(B) ADDITIONAL DUTIES.—The addi-
18 tional duties of the head of the Office shall in-
19 clude the following:

20 “(i) Coordinating overall United
21 States policy and programs in support of
22 subnational engagements by State and mu-
23 nicipal governments with foreign govern-
24 ments, including with respect to the fol-
25 lowing:

1 “(I) Coordinating resources
2 across the Department of State and
3 throughout the Federal Government
4 in support of such engagements.

5 “(II) Identifying policy, program,
6 and funding discrepancies among rel-
7 evant Federal agencies regarding such
8 coordination.

9 “(III) Identifying gaps in Fed-
10 eral support for such engagements
11 and developing corresponding policy
12 or programmatic changes to address
13 such gaps.

14 “(ii) Identifying areas of alignment
15 between United States foreign policy and
16 State and municipal goals.

17 “(iii) Improving communication with
18 the American public, including, potentially,
19 communication that demonstrate the
20 breadth of international engagement by
21 subnational actors and the impact of diplo-
22 macy across the United States.

23 “(iv) Providing advisory support to
24 subnational engagements, including by as-

sisting State and municipal governments
regarding—

“(I) developing and implementing
global engagement and public diplo-
macy strategies;

“(II) implementing programs to
cooperate with foreign governments on
policy priorities or managing shared
resources; and

“(III) understanding the implica-
tions of foreign policy developments or
policy changes through regular and
extraordinary briefings.

“(v) Facilitating linkages and net-
works among State and municipal govern-
ments, and between State and municipal
governments and their foreign counter-
parts, including by tracking subnational
engagements and leveraging State and mu-
nicipal expertise.

“(vi) Supporting the work of Depart-
ment of State detailees assigned to State
and municipal governments pursuant to
this subsection.

1 “(vii) Under the direction of the Sec-
2 retary, negotiating agreements and memo-
3 randa of understanding with foreign gov-
4 ernments related to subnational engage-
5 ments and priorities.

6 “(viii) Supporting United States eco-
7 nomic interests through subnational en-
8 gagements, in consultation and coordina-
9 tion with the Department of Commerce,
10 the Department of the Treasury, and the
11 Office of the United States Trade Rep-
12 resentative.

13 “(ix) Coordinating subnational en-
14 gagements with the associations of sub-
15 national elected leaders, including the
16 United States Conference of Mayors, Na-
17 tional Governors Association, National
18 League of Cities, National Association of
19 Counties, Council of State Governments,
20 National Conference of State Legislators,
21 and State International Development Or-
22 ganizations.

23 “(4) COORDINATION.—With respect to matters
24 involving trade promotion and inward investment fa-
25 cilitation, the Office shall coordinate with and sup-

1 port the International Trade Administration of the
2 Department of Commerce as the lead Federal agency
3 for trade promotion and facilitation of business
4 investment in the United States.

5 “(5) DETAILEES.—

6 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of
7 State, with respect to employees of the Department
8 of State, is authorized to detail a member
9 of the civil service or Foreign Service to State
10 and municipal governments on a reimbursable
11 or nonreimbursable basis. Such details shall be
12 for a period not to exceed two years, and shall
13 be without interruption or loss of status or
14 privilege.

15 “(B) RESPONSIBILITIES.—Detailees under
16 subparagraph (A) should carry out the following:
17

18 “(i) Supporting the mission and objectives
19 of the host subnational government
20 office.

21 “(ii) Advising State and municipal
22 government officials regarding questions of
23 global affairs, foreign policy, cooperative
24 agreements, and public diplomacy.

1 “(iii) Coordinating activities relating
2 to State and municipal government sub-
3 national engagements with the Department
4 of State, including the Office, Department
5 leadership, and regional and functional bu-
6 reaus of the Department, as appropriate.

7 “(iv) Engaging Federal agencies re-
8 garding security, public health, trade pro-
9 motion, and other programs executed at
10 the State or municipal government level.

11 “(v) Any other duties requested by
12 State and municipal governments and ap-
13 proved by the Office.

14 “(C) ADDITIONAL PERSONNEL SUPPORT
15 FOR SUBNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT.—For the
16 purposes of this subsection, the Secretary of
17 State—

18 “(i) is authorized to employ individ-
19 uals by contract;

20 “(ii) is encouraged to make use of the
21 re-hired annuitants authority under section
22 3323 of title 5, United States Code, par-
23 ticularly for annuitants who are already re-
24 siding across the United States who may

1 have the skills and experience to support
2 subnational governments; and

3 “(iii) is encouraged to make use of
4 authorities under the Intergovernmental
5 Personnel Act of 1970 (42 U.S.C. 4701 et
6 seq.) to temporarily assign State and local
7 government officials to the Department of
8 State or overseas missions to increase their
9 international experience and add their per-
10 spectives on United States priorities to the
11 Department.

12 “(6) REPORT AND BRIEFING.—

13 “(A) REPORT.—Not later than one year
14 after the date of the enactment of this sub-
15 section, the head of the Office shall submit to
16 the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the
17 Committee on Appropriations of the House of
18 Representatives and the Committee on Foreign
19 Relations and the Committee on Appropriations
20 of the Senate a report that includes information
21 relating to the following:

22 “(i) The staffing plan (including per-
23 manent and temporary staff) for the Office
24 and a justification for the location of the

Office within the Department of State’s organizational structure.

“(ii) The funding level provided to the Office for the Office, together with a justification relating to such level.

“(iii) The rank and title granted to the head of the Office, together with a justification relating to such decision and an analysis of whether the rank and title of Ambassador-at-Large is required to fulfill the duties of the Office.

“(iv) A strategic plan for the Office, including relating to—

“(I) leveraging subnational engagement to improve United States foreign policy effectiveness;

“(II) enhancing the awareness, understanding, and involvement of United States citizens in the foreign policy process; and

“(III) better engaging with foreign subnational governments to strengthen diplomacy.

“(v) Any other matters as determined relevant by the head of the Office.

1 “(B) BRIEFINGS.—Not later than 30 days
2 after the submission of the report required
3 under subparagraph (A) and annually there-
4 after, the head of the Office shall brief the
5 Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Com-
6 mittee on Appropriations of the House of Rep-
7 resentatives and the Committee on Foreign Re-
8 lations and the Committee on Appropriations of
9 the Senate on the work of the Office and any
10 changes made to the organizational structure or
11 funding of the Office.

12 “(7) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in
13 this subsection may be construed as precluding—

14 “(A) the Office from being elevated to a
15 bureau within the Department of State; or

16 “(B) the head of the Office from being ele-
17 vated to an Assistant Secretary, if such an As-
18 sistant Secretary position does not increase the
19 number of Assistant Secretary positions at the
20 Department above the number authorized under
21 subsection (c)(1).

22 “(8) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

23 “(A) MUNICIPAL.—The term ‘municipal’
24 means, with respect to the government of a mu-
25 nicipality in the United States, a municipality

1 with a population of not fewer than 100,000
2 people.

3 “(B) STATE.—The term ‘State’ means the
4 50 States, the District of Columbia, and any
5 territory or possession of the United States.

6 “(C) SUBNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT.—The
7 term ‘subnational engagement’ means formal
8 meetings or events between elected officials of
9 State or municipal governments and their for-
10 eign counterparts.”.

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