

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. _____

To provide for an international disability rights strategy, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. KAINE introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To provide for an international disability rights strategy, 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 “State Department Dis-
5 ability Policy and Accommodations Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. DISABILITY RIGHTS IN FOREIGN POLICY.**

7 (a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Con-
8 gress that international disability rights are foundational
9 to achieving global peace, stability, and prosperity, and

1 should be fully championed as a focus of United States
2 diplomacy and development efforts.

3 (b) FORMAL POLICY GUIDANCE ON DISABILITY POL-
4 ICY.—

5 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days
6 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Sec-
7 retary of State, through the Ambassador-at-Large
8 for International Disability Rights and in consulta-
9 tion with relevant foreign affairs agencies, shall de-
10 velop and adopt a formal policy for advancing dis-
11 ability rights through United States diplomacy and
12 foreign assistance.

13 (2) MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED.—The policy
14 required under paragraph (1) should direct the De-
15 partment of State’s approach to championing dis-
16 ability rights through the conduct of United States
17 diplomacy and development.

18 (3) CONSULTATION.—In developing and adopt-
19 ing the policy, the Secretary shall consult with—

20 (A) United States missions and regional
21 and functional bureaus;

22 (B) individuals with disabilities, civil soci-
23 ety organizations, international nongovern-
24 mental organizations, and international organi-
25 zations;

1 (C) women, indigenous persons, youth, and
2 survivors of violence living with disabilities; and

3 (D) combat-injured persons living with dis-
4 abilities, including United States security part-
5 ners and allies, in countries and regions receiv-
6 ing United States security assistance.

7 (4) POLICY IMPLEMENTATION.—The Secretary
8 shall update the Foreign Affairs Manual to reflect
9 the policy required under paragraph (1).

10 (5) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—The Secretary
11 shall publish such policy on a publicly available
12 website of the Department.

13 **SEC. 3. OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL DISABILITY RIGHTS.**

14 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 5104 of the Department
15 of State Authorization Act of 2021 (division D of Public
16 Law 117–81; 135 Stat. 2345) is amended—

17 (1) in subsection (a), by striking “should be es-
18 tablished” and inserting “shall be established”;

19 (2) by redesignating subsections (b) through (d)
20 as subsections (c) through (e), respectively;

21 (3) by inserting after subsection (a) the fol-
22 lowing new subsection:

23 “(b) PURPOSE.—The Office shall coordinate and ele-
24 vate United States global engagement on disability rights
25 policy, ensuring that the Department of State and relevant

1 Federal agencies promote accessibility, equality of oppor-
2 tunity, and the protection of the rights of persons with
3 disabilities globally.”;

4 (4) in subsection (c), as redesignated by para-
5 graph (2)—

6 (A) by striking “The Office should” and
7 inserting “The Office shall”;

8 (B) by redesignating paragraphs (1), (2),
9 (3), (4), (5), (6), (7), and (8) as paragraphs
10 (2), (3), (4), (5), (6), (7), (8), and (12), respec-
11 tively;

12 (C) by inserting before paragraph (2), as
13 redesignated by subparagraph (B), the fol-
14 lowing new paragraph:

15 “(1) coordinate all international disability policy
16 and international assistance provided by the United
17 States Government, in consultation with relevant
18 and appropriate regional and functional bureaus of
19 the Department and Chiefs of Mission, to support
20 efforts abroad to promote and strengthen respect for
21 the rights of persons with disabilities;”; and

22 (D) in paragraph (8), as so redesignated,
23 by striking “disabilities; and” and inserting the
24 following: “disabilities;

1 “(9) coordinate disaggregated data collection
2 regarding the United States Government’s foreign
3 assistance and diplomatic activities promoting the
4 rights of persons with disabilities, in coordination
5 with the Secretary of State and the heads of other
6 relevant Federal agencies, including to the extent
7 feasible—

8 “(A) a detailed accounting of spending by
9 Federal departments and agencies, including,
10 for each Federal department and agency, the
11 statutory source of spending;

12 “(B) the amounts spent; and

13 “(C) activities supported to the extent
14 practicable and appropriate;

15 “(10) establish interagency details or rotation
16 opportunities for relevant Federal agencies to be
17 housed within the Office for the purposes of—

18 “(A) augmenting the Office’s ability to
19 share best practices on advancing disability
20 rights policy with United States missions and
21 with international partners; and

22 “(B) strengthening the Office’s United
23 States interagency coordination efforts;

24 “(11) work with relevant bureaus to promote
25 the use of existing educational and cultural ex-

1 changes with international disability policymakers
2 and advocates; and”;

3 (5) by amending subsection (d), as so redesign-
4 nated, to read as follows:

5 “(d) AMBASSADOR-AT-LARGE FOR INTERNATIONAL
6 DISABILITY RIGHTS.—The Office shall be headed by an
7 Ambassador-at-Large for International Disability Rights,
8 who shall be appointed by the President, by and with the
9 advice and consent of the Senate, to advise the Secretary
10 of State on matters related to disability rights. The Am-
11 bassador-at-Large should be a person of recognized dis-
12 tinction in the field of disability rights. The Ambassador-
13 at-Large shall be provided with appropriate funding and
14 staff consistent with the duties of the Office and with De-
15 partment of State guidance on the status of an Office.”;
16 and

17 (6) by adding at the end the following new sub-
18 section:

19 “(f) INTERNATIONAL DISABILITY RIGHTS STRAT-
20 EGY.—

21 “(1) STRATEGY.—Not later than one year after
22 the date of the enactment of this subsection, the
23 Secretary of State, in coordination with the Ambas-
24 sador-at-Large appointed under subsection (d), and
25 in consultation with the heads of other relevant Fed-

1 eral agencies and nongovernmental organizations,
2 shall submit to the appropriate congressional com-
3 mittees a strategy to—

4 “(A) achieve the purposes described in
5 subsection (b);

6 “(B) identify target countries and regions
7 for prioritization of the Department’s inter-
8 national assistance efforts related to the rights
9 of persons with disabilities;

10 “(C) identify United States foreign assist-
11 ance resources to be used to implement the
12 strategy;

13 “(D) establish country action plans to ad-
14 vance the rights of persons with disabilities; and

15 “(E) develop partnerships with the private
16 sector, nongovernmental organizations, inter-
17 national organizations, and research and aca-
18 demic institutions.

19 “(2) ANNUAL REPORT.—

20 “(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one
21 year after submission of the strategy required
22 under paragraph (1), and annually thereafter,
23 the Secretary of State, in consultation with the
24 Ambassador-at-Large for International Dis-
25 ability Rights and relevant Federal agencies,

1 should provide the appropriate congressional
2 committees with a written description of results
3 achieved, including—

4 “(i) progress on implementation of the
5 strategy;

6 “(ii) an assessment of efforts to co-
7 ordinate United States international dis-
8 ability rights activities and initiatives with
9 foreign governments, international organi-
10 zations, nongovernmental organizations,
11 and other key stakeholders related to the
12 rights of persons with disabilities;

13 “(iii) a detailed accounting of spend-
14 ing by the Department of State, the
15 United States Agency for International
16 Development, and other relevant Federal
17 agencies on United States international
18 disability rights assistance to foreign gov-
19 ernments international organizations re-
20 lated to the rights of persons with disabil-
21 ities; and

22 “(iv) the number of educational and
23 cultural exchanges focused on advancing
24 international disability rights.

1 “(B) DISAGGREGATION OF DATA.—The
2 data submitted under subparagraph (A) should,
3 where feasible, be disaggregated by country,
4 gender of recipients of assistance, funding ac-
5 count, funding levels, and fiscal year of funding.

6 “(3) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMIT-
7 TEES DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term ‘ap-
8 propriate congressional committees’ means—

9 “(A) the Committee on Foreign Relations
10 and the Committee on Appropriations of the
11 Senate; and

12 “(B) the Committee on Foreign Affairs
13 and the Committee on Appropriations of the
14 House of Representatives.”.

15 (b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
16 authorized to be appropriated to the Department of State
17 \$6,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2026 through 2030,
18 to achieve the purposes described in subsection (b) of sec-
19 tion 5104 of the Department of State Authorization Act
20 of 2021, as amended by subsection (a) of this section.

21 **SEC. 4. DEPARTMENTAL HIRING AND FACILITIES ACCESSI-**
22 **BILITY.**

23 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Under Secretary of State for
24 Management shall, in consultation with the Office of
25 International Disability Rights, ensure equal access to hir-

1 ing and recruitment and overseas assignments, for the
2 Civil Service and Foreign Service officers and locally em-
3 ployed staff with disabilities and their family members
4 with chronic medical conditions or disabilities, consistent
5 with the provision of a veterans' preference in accordance
6 with section 2108 of title 5, United States Code, and re-
7 lated sections and with due consideration for locally em-
8 ployed staff who sustained service-related disabilities while
9 serving as security partners or allies in support of United
10 States military or intelligence operations.

11 (b) DUTIES.—The Under Secretary shall—

12 (1) ensure that United States embassies, con-
13 sulates, and leased facilities abroad are in compli-
14 ance with United States Access Board standards, in-
15 cluding accessibility to people with disabilities, in-
16 cluding by—

17 (A) making websites and other forms of
18 communication accessible to people with disabil-
19 ities and providing reasonable accommodations
20 to program participants;

21 (B) ensuring accessibility of United States
22 Government facilities by contracting with local
23 contractors and subcontractors that meet the
24 requirements of section 503 of the Rehabilita-
25 tion Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 793) to affirma-

1 tively hire workers with disabilities, including
2 combat-injured persons with disabilities who
3 served alongside United States forces or in
4 United States-backed conflicts; and

5 (C) consulting with the Department of La-
6 bor's Office of Federal Contracts Compliance to
7 ensure all Department of State contractors are
8 compliant with the Americans with Disabilities
9 Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) and sec-
10 tion 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29
11 U.S.C. 793);

12 (2) ensure that the policies and practices for
13 the recruitment and placement of Foreign Service
14 officers and their families encourage the hiring and
15 placement of people with disabilities in compliance
16 with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 701
17 et seq.);

18 (3) consult with the Disability Rights Section of
19 the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Jus-
20 tice to ensure that Department of State hiring is
21 compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act
22 of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) and section 501
23 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 791);
24 and

1 (4) ensure that policies are in place for hiring
2 locally employed staff in embassies and consulates
3 outside the United States to ensure that accom-
4 modations are offered, provided, and funded from
5 the Department's centralized reasonable accommoda-
6 tion fund, including specialized accommodations for
7 injuries sustained in support of United States na-
8 tional security interests.

9 (c) FACILITY ACCESSIBILITY.—The Under Secretary
10 for Management shall, in consultation with the Office of
11 International Disability Rights—

12 (1) ensure that embassies and consulates and
13 their services are accessible to people with disabili-
14 ties, including with respect to—

15 (A) the physical accessibility of facilities
16 housing embassies and consulates;

17 (B) websites of United States embassies
18 and consulates;

19 (C) public internet and telecommuni-
20 cations; and

21 (D) other means of communication with
22 United States residents and the general public;
23 and

1 (2) ensure diplomatic residences meet the
2 adaptable standards set by the Director of the Bu-
3 reau of Overseas Buildings Operations.

4 **SEC. 5. TRAINING.**

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State shall re-
6 quire online or in-person disability policy training for all
7 civil service and Foreign Service personnel of the Depart-
8 ment of State and chiefs of mission, including on—

9 (1) how to develop policies and programs that
10 reflect United States disability policy priorities;

11 (2) how to help ensure a work environment in
12 compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act
13 and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973;

14 (3) how to conduct analyses of relevant laws
15 and programming;

16 (4) how to engage local organizations led by
17 and focused on people with disabilities;

18 (5) how to help remove barriers to seeking and
19 accessing United States foreign assistance for orga-
20 nizations serving people with disabilities; and

21 (6) ensuring United States humanitarian re-
22 sponse incorporates and elevates the needs of people
23 with disabilities, in line with established inter-
24 national frameworks, including the Inter-Agency
25 Standing Committee (IASC) guidelines and the

1 Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in
2 Humanitarian Action.

3 (b) COUNTRY-SPECIFIC AND CULTURAL CONSIDER-
4 ATIONS.—The Secretary shall ensure that training for
5 Foreign Service officers under subsection (a) includes
6 country-specific and cultural considerations.

7 (c) FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICERS.—Section
8 708(a)(1) of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (22 U.S.C.
9 4028(a)(1)) is amended—

10 (1) in subparagraph (C), by striking “; and”
11 and inserting a semicolon;

12 (2) by redesignating subparagraph (D) as sub-
13 paragraph (E); and

14 (3) by inserting after subparagraph (C) the fol-
15 lowing new subparagraph:

16 “(D) instruction on recognizing risks and
17 vulnerabilities of individuals with disabilities in
18 specific country contexts, addressing needs of
19 people with disabilities in policymaking and out-
20 reach at United States embassies and analysis
21 of disability-inclusive laws and programming in
22 local country contexts; and”.

23 **SEC. 6. REPORT AND BRIEFING REQUIREMENTS.**

24 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the
25 date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter,

1 the Secretary of State shall provide to the Committee on
2 Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on
3 Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives a report
4 and briefing on the steps taken to implement this Act.

5 (b) MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED.—The report and
6 briefing required under subsection (a) shall include—

7 (1) an explanation of policies and programs to
8 fulfill—

9 (A) the duties of the Office of Inter-
10 national Disability Rights established under
11 section 4; and

12 (B) the training requirements under sec-
13 tion 6;

14 (2) a description of the status of efforts to
15 mainstream disability policy through the conduct of
16 United States diplomatic outreach and programming
17 without regard to whether such programming is spe-
18 cifically directed toward people with disabilities;

19 (3) an explanation of disability-specific pro-
20 gramming across the Department;

21 (4) a description of the status of accessible fa-
22 cilities in all foreign missions, as required under sec-
23 tion 5(c);

24 (5) a description of any policy, programming, or
25 human resources gaps to mainstreaming disability

1 rights policy throughout the Department, and plans
2 to address gaps through appropriate mechanisms;

3 (6) a description of progress made on the real-
4 ization of the rights of people with disabilities as a
5 result of Department policies and programming;

6 (7) an explanation of the current status of the
7 Department's evidence gathering and improved sys-
8 tematic disability data collection, including the use
9 of disaggregated data, in order to ensure that pro-
10 gramming, monitoring, and reporting reflect and ad-
11 dress the risks and needs of people with disabilities;
12 and

13 (8) recommendations for legislative actions to
14 fully implement the matters described in paragraphs
15 (1) through (7).

16 **SEC. 7. JUDY HEUMANN FOREIGN AND CIVIL SERVICE DIS-**
17 **ABILITY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM.**

18 (a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Con-
19 gress that—

20 (1) disability rights are foundational to human
21 rights, national security, and positive economic
22 growth and development; and

23 (2) the Department of State shall seek to ex-
24 pand professional development opportunities for civil
25 service and Foreign Service personnel to become bet-

1 ter equipped to advance disability rights abroad and
2 to ensure an accessible and inclusive workplace at
3 the Department and United States missions abroad.

4 (b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

5 (1) DEPARTMENT.—The term “Department”
6 means the Department of State.

7 (2) ORGANIZATION OF PERSONS WITH DISABIL-
8 ITIES.—The term “organization of persons with dis-
9 abilities” means a nongovernmental civil society or-
10 ganization, including a think tank, nonprofit, non-
11 governmental organization, academic institution, or
12 other organization, that—

13 (A) includes staff leadership and a board
14 of directors the majority of which consists of
15 people with disabilities; and

16 (B) serves people with disabilities.

17 (c) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of State shall
18 establish and administer the Judy Heumann Foreign
19 Service Disability Fellowship (referred in this section as
20 the “Fellowship”) to expand Department expertise on dis-
21 ability rights policy formulation, execution, negotiation,
22 and advocacy. The Secretary shall be responsible for de-
23 signing, implementing, and operating the Fellowship pro-
24 gram, including setting standards for successful comple-
25 tion of each fellowship.

1 (d) SELECTION OF FELLOWS.—

2 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State shall
3 establish criteria for selecting the fellows and shall
4 play a central role in selecting at least 2 fellows for
5 the Fellowship each year.

6 (2) SELECTION AND PLACEMENT.—The Sec-
7 retary of State shall—

8 (A) make efforts to recruit fellowship can-
9 didates who reflect the diversity of the United
10 States;

11 (B) select fellows from among entry-, mid-
12 , and senior-level Foreign Service and civil serv-
13 ice personnel;

14 (C) approve fellowship placements between
15 6 months to one year in duration;

16 (D) facilitate fellowship placement with an
17 organization of persons with disabilities;

18 (E) for each fellow, establish performance
19 goals and performance indicators as part of fel-
20 lows' annual review process; and

21 (F) reimburse one international trip and
22 one domestic trip per fellow.

23 (e) FELLOWSHIP ACTIVITIES.—Fellows participating
24 in the Fellowship program shall—

1 (1) study the United Nations Convention on the
2 Rights of Persons with Disabilities, done at New
3 York December 12, 2006;

4 (2) attend the Conference of States Parties to
5 the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Dis-
6 abilities (COSPP) along with one member of the
7 hosting organization of persons with disabilities; and

8 (3) carry out such other activities as the Am-
9 bassador-at-Large for International Disability
10 Rights determines appropriate.

11 (f) ANNUAL REPORT.—Not later than one year after
12 the date of the completion of the Fellowship by the initial
13 cohort of fellows selected under subsection (d), and annu-
14 ally thereafter, the Secretary of State shall submit to the
15 Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the
16 Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representa-
17 tives a report on the implementation of the Fellowship,
18 including—

19 (1) a summary of the cohort of fellows who
20 completed a fellowship during the preceding one-year
21 period;

22 (2) a description of the fellowships and place-
23 ments, including feedback on implementation and
24 lessons learned; and

1 (3) an analysis of trends relating to the diver-
2 sity of each cohort of fellows since the establishment
3 of the Fellowship program.

4 (g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
5 are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be
6 necessary for fiscal year 2026 and each subsequent fiscal
7 year to carry out this Act.