

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1297

To provide redress to the employees of Air America.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 24, 2021

Mr. GROTHMAN (for himself, Mrs. DEMINGS, Ms. BROWNLEY, Ms. NORTON, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. GALLEGRO, Mr. MAST, Mr. WALTZ, Mr. STEWART, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. KELLY of Mississippi, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. KELLER, Mr. KIM of New Jersey, Mr. COSTA, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. STEUBE, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. POCAN, Mr. GAETZ, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. CARBAJAL, Mr. MELJER, Mr. GRIFFITH, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. RUTHERFORD, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. TRONE, Mr. TIFFANY, Mr. LOUDERMILK, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. GONZALEZ of Ohio, Ms. TITUS, Miss RICE of New York, Mr. GALLAGHER, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. KILMER, Ms. HOULAHAN, Ms. LEE of California, Ms. ESCOBAR, Mr. POSEY, Ms. WILD, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mr. RYAN, Mr. CRIST, Mr. LUCAS, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Ms. MENG, Mr. VAN DREW, Mr. TONKO, and Mrs. KIRKPATRICK) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Oversight and Reform

A BILL

To provide redress to the employees of Air America.

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 “Air America Act of
5 2021”.

1 **SEC. 2. AIR AMERICA.**

2 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

3 (1) Air America, Incorporated (referred to in
4 this section as “Air America”) and its related cover
5 corporate entities were wholly owned and controlled
6 by the United States Government and directed and
7 managed by the Department of Defense, the Depart-
8 ment of State, and the Central Intelligence Agency
9 from 1950 to 1976.

10 (2) Air America, a corporation owned by the
11 Government of the United States, constituted a
12 “Government corporation”, as defined in section 103
13 of title 5, United States Code.

14 (3) It is established that the employees of Air
15 America and the other entities described in para-
16 graph (1) were Federal employees.

17 (4) The employees of Air America were retro-
18 actively excluded from the definition of the term
19 “employee” under section 2105 of title 5, United
20 States Code, on the basis of an administrative policy
21 change in paperwork requirements implemented by
22 the Office of Personnel Management 10 years after
23 the service of the employees had ended and, by ex-
24 tension, were retroactively excluded from the defini-
25 tion of the term “employee” under section 8331 of

1 title 5, United States Code, for retirement credit
2 purposes.

3 (5) The employees of Air America were paid as
4 Federal employees, with salaries subject to—

5 (A) the General Schedule under subchapter
6 III of chapter 53 of title 5, United States Code;
7 and

8 (B) the rates of basic pay payable to mem-
9 bers of the Armed Forces.

10 (6) The service and sacrifice of the employees
11 of Air America included—

12 (A) suffering a high rate of casualties in
13 the course of employment;

14 (B) saving thousands of lives in search and
15 rescue missions for downed United States air-
16 men and allied refugee evacuations; and

17 (C) lengthy periods of service in chal-
18 lenging circumstances abroad.

19 (b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

20 (1) the term “affiliated company”, with respect
21 to Air America, includes Air Asia Company Limited,
22 CAT Incorporated, Civil Air Transport Company
23 Limited, and the Pacific Division of Southern Air
24 Transport; and

1 (2) the term “qualifying service” means service
2 that—

3 (A) was performed by a United States cit-
4 izen as an employee of Air America or an affili-
5 ated company during the period beginning on
6 January 1, 1950, and ending on December 31,
7 1976; and

8 (B) is documented in the attorney-certified
9 corporate records of Air America or any affili-
10 ated company.

11 (c) TREATMENT AS FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT.—Any
12 period of qualifying service—

13 (1) is deemed to have been service of an em-
14 ployee (as defined in section 2105 of title 5, United
15 States Code) with the Federal Government; and

16 (2) shall be treated as creditable service by an
17 employee for purposes of subchapter III of chapter
18 83 of title 5, United States Code.

19 (d) RIGHTS.—An individual who performed quali-
20 fying service, or a survivor of such an individual, shall be
21 entitled to the rights, retroactive as applicable, provided
22 to employees and their survivors for creditable service
23 under the Civil Service Retirement System under sub-
24 chapter III of chapter 83 of title 5, United States Code,
25 with respect to that qualifying service.

1 (e) DEDUCTION, CONTRIBUTION, AND DEPOSIT RE-
2 QUIREMENTS.—The deposit of funds in the Treasury of
3 the United States made by Air America in the form of
4 a lump-sum payment apportioned in part to the Civil Serv-
5 ice Disability and Retirement Fund in 1976 is deemed to
6 satisfy the deduction, contribution, and deposit require-
7 ments under section 8334 of title 5, United States Code,
8 with respect to all periods of qualifying service.

9 (f) APPLICATION TIME LIMIT.—Section 8345(i)(2) of
10 title 5, United States Code, shall be applied with respect
11 to the death of an individual who performed qualifying
12 service by substituting “2 years after the effective date
13 under section 2(g) of the Air America Act of 2021” for
14 “30 years after the death or other event which gives rise
15 to title to the benefit”.

16 (g) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect
17 on the date that is 30 days after the date of enactment
18 of this Act.

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