

**Suspend the Rules and Pass the Bill, H. R. 5274, With an  
Amendment**

**(The amendment strikes all after the enacting clause and inserts a  
new text)**

115<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS  
2<sup>D</sup> SESSION

# H. R. 5274

To promote international exchanges on best election practices, cultivate more  
secure democratic institutions around the world, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 14, 2018

Mr. CASTRO of Texas (for himself, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, and Mr. ROSKAM) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

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## A BILL

To promote international exchanges on best election practices, cultivate more secure democratic institutions around the world, 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 “Global Electoral Ex-  
5 change Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

2 It is the sense of Congress that—

3 (1) recent elections globally have illustrated the  
4 urgent need for the promotion and exchange of  
5 international best election practices, particularly in  
6 the areas of cybersecurity, results transmission,  
7 transparency of electoral data, election dispute reso-  
8 lution, and the elimination of discriminatory reg-  
9 istration practices and other electoral irregularities;

10 (2) the advancement of democracy worldwide  
11 promotes American interests, as stable democracies  
12 provide new market opportunities, improve global  
13 health outcomes, and promote economic freedom and  
14 regional security;

15 (3) credible elections are the cornerstone of a  
16 healthy democracy and enable all persons to exercise  
17 their basic human right to have a say in how they  
18 are governed;

19 (4) inclusive elections strengthen the credibility  
20 and stability of democracies more broadly, as demo-  
21 cratic institutions flourish when representative of all  
22 groups of society;

23 (5) at the heart of a strong election cycle is the  
24 professionalism of the election management body  
25 and an empowered civil society; and

1           (6) the development of local expertise via peer-  
2           to-peer learning and exchanges promotes the inde-  
3           pendence of such bodies from internal and external  
4           influence.

5 **SEC. 3. GLOBAL ELECTORAL EXCHANGE.**

6           (a) GLOBAL ELECTORAL EXCHANGE.—The Sec-  
7           retary of State is authorized to establish and administer  
8           a Global Electoral Exchange Program to promote the utili-  
9           zation of sound election administration practices around  
10          the world.

11          (b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the Global Electoral  
12          Exchange Program described in subsection (a) shall in-  
13          clude the promotion and exchange of international best  
14          election practices, including in the areas of—

- 15                 (1) cybersecurity;
- 16                 (2) results transmission;
- 17                 (3) transparency of electoral data;
- 18                 (4) election dispute resolution;
- 19                 (5) the elimination of discriminatory registra-  
20                 tion practices and electoral irregularities;
- 21                 (6) equitable access to polling places, voter edu-  
22                 cation information, and voting mechanisms (includ-  
23                 ing by persons with disabilities); and
- 24                 (7) other sound election administration prac-  
25                 tices.

1 (c) EXCHANGE OF ELECTORAL AUTHORITIES.—

2 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State may,  
3 in consultation, as appropriate, with the United  
4 States Agency for International Development, make  
5 grants to any United States-based organization de-  
6 scribed in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue  
7 Code of 1986 and exempt from tax under section  
8 501(a) of such Code with experience in comparative  
9 election systems or subject matter expertise in the  
10 areas of election administration or electoral integrity  
11 that submits an application in such form, and satis-  
12 fying such requirements, as the Secretary may re-  
13 quire.

14 (2) TYPES OF GRANTS.—An organization de-  
15 scribed in paragraph (1) may receive a grant for one  
16 or more of the following purposes:

17 (A) To design and implement programs  
18 bringing election administrators and officials,  
19 including government officials, poll workers,  
20 civil society representatives, members of the ju-  
21 diciary, and others who participate in the orga-  
22 nization and administration of public elections  
23 in a foreign country to the United States to  
24 study election procedures in the United States  
25 for educational purposes.

1           (B) To design and implement programs  
2 taking United States or another country's elec-  
3 tion administrators and officials, including gov-  
4 ernment officials, poll workers, civil society rep-  
5 resentatives, members of the judiciary, and oth-  
6 ers who participate in the organization and ad-  
7 ministration of public elections to study election  
8 procedures for educational purposes.

9           (3) LIMITS ON ACTIVITIES.—Activities adminis-  
10 tered under the Global Electoral Exchange Program  
11 may not—

12           (A) include observation of an election for  
13 the purposes of assessing the validity or legit-  
14 imacy of that election; or

15           (B) facilitate any advocacy for a certain  
16 electoral result by a grantee when participating  
17 in the Program.

18           (4) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of  
19 Congress that the Secretary of State should estab-  
20 lish and maintain a network of Global Electoral Ex-  
21 change Program alumni, to promote communication  
22 and further exchange of information regarding  
23 sound election administration practices among cur-  
24 rent and former program participants.

1           (5) FURTHER LIMITS.—A recipient of a grant  
2           under the Global Electoral Exchange Program may  
3           use such grant for only the purpose for which such  
4           grant was awarded, unless otherwise authorized by  
5           the Secretary of State.

6           (6) NOT DUPLICATIVE.—Grants made under  
7           this subsection may not be duplicative of any other  
8           grants made under any other provision of law for  
9           similar or related purposes.

10 **SEC. 4. CONGRESSIONAL OVERSIGHT.**

11           Not later than one year after the date of the enact-  
12           ment of this Act and in each of the following two years  
13           thereafter, the Secretary of State shall provide to the  
14           Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representa-  
15           tives and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Sen-  
16           ate a briefing on the status of any activities carried out  
17           pursuant to this Act during the preceding year, which  
18           shall include, among other information, the following:

19           (1) A summary of all exchanges conducted  
20           under the Global Electoral Exchange Program, in-  
21           cluding information regarding grantees, participants,  
22           and the locations where program activities were held.

23           (2) A description of the criteria used to select  
24           grantees under the Global Electoral Exchange Pro-  
25           gram.

1           (3) Any recommendations for the improvement  
2           of the Global Electoral Exchange Program, based on  
3           the purpose specified in section 3(b).

4 **SEC. 5. NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS AUTHORIZED.**

5           No additional funds are authorized to be appro-  
6           priated to carry out the requirements of this Act. Such  
7           requirements shall be carried out using amounts otherwise  
8           authorized to be appropriated.