

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 3373

To establish the Office of International Disability Rights, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 20, 2019

Ms. TITUS (for herself and Mr. YOUNG) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

A BILL

To establish the Office of International Disability Rights, 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 “Office of International
5 Disability Rights Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) The United States has shown leadership do-
9 mesticallly on disability rights with the Americans

1 with Disabilities Act, and this leadership should be
2 leveraged to support international disability rights.

3 (2) There are more than one billion persons
4 with disabilities around the world, and 80 percent
5 live in developing countries.

6 (3) 60 percent of persons with disabilities are
7 women.

8 (4) Women with disabilities are more likely to
9 experience sexual violence than women without dis-
10 abilities.

11 (5) There are more than 90 million children
12 with disabilities worldwide.

13 (6) Children with disabilities are more likely to
14 be malnourished than children without disabilities.

15 (7) Persons with disabilities are subject to eco-
16 nomic and social marginalization. The World Bank
17 has estimated the Gross Domestic Product loss due
18 to disability to be between \$1.71 trillion and \$2.23
19 trillion annually.

20 (8) The inclusion of persons with disabilities is
21 a fundamental part of democracy and essential to
22 the full realization of human rights.

23 (9) The political participation and leadership of
24 persons with disabilities, including those who ac-

1 required a disability through conflict, is crucial to sus-
2 taining democratic institutions.

3 (10) Persons with disabilities face disadvan-
4 tages in educational attainment, labor market out-
5 comes, financial stability, housing, and standard of
6 living conditions.

7 (11) Issues related to disability rights cut
8 across all sectors, including democracy, human
9 rights, labor, global health, education, and disaster
10 relief.

11 (12) Persons with disabilities are members of
12 all marginalized groups, including women, young
13 people, the LGBTI community, ethnic and religious
14 minorities, internally displaced people, and refugees.

15 (13) The public presence of the Special Advisor
16 for International Disability Rights at the Depart-
17 ment of State, first appointed in 2010, helped raise
18 the visibility of persons with disabilities in Depart-
19 ment policies and programs and improved the inclu-
20 sion of disabilities in the Department's annual Coun-
21 try Reports on Human Rights Practices and Traf-
22 ficking in Persons reports.

23 (14) There is currently no mandate that all De-
24 partment of State programming be disability inclu-

1 sive and the Department does not have a formal,
2 publicly available disability policy.

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

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State shall es-
5 tablish an Office of International Disability Rights (re-
6 ferred to in this section as the “Office”), which should
7 be placed within the Bureau for Democracy, Human
8 Rights, and Labor (DRL).

9 (b) PURPOSE.—The Office shall coordinate efforts of
10 the United States Government, as directed by the Sec-
11 retary, regarding human rights for persons with disabil-
12 ities and advancing the status of persons with disabilities
13 in United States foreign policy.

14 (c) DUTIES.—The Office shall carry out the fol-
15 lowing:

16 (1) Serve as the principal advisor to the De-
17 partment of State on all matters related to inter-
18 national rights for persons with disabilities.

19 (2) Represent the United States in diplomatic
20 and multilateral fora on matters relevant to the
21 rights of persons with disabilities and work to raise
22 the profile of disability across a broader range of or-
23 ganizations contributing to international develop-
24 ment efforts.

1 (3) Work to ensure that disability inclusive
2 practices and empowerment of persons with disabili-
3 ties are fully integrated into all United States for-
4 eign operations.

5 (4) Conduct regular consultation with civil soci-
6 ety organizations working to advance international
7 disability rights and empower persons with disabili-
8 ties internationally.

9 (5) Consult with other relevant offices at the
10 Department of State that are responsible for draft-
11 ing annual reports documenting progress on human
12 rights to include references to instances of discrimi-
13 nation, prejudice, or abuses of persons with disabili-
14 ties wherever applicable.

15 (6) Advise the Department of State's Bureau of
16 Human Resources Development on the hiring and
17 recruitment and overseas practices of civil service
18 employees and foreign service officers with disabili-
19 ties and their family members with chronic medical
20 conditions or disabilities.

21 (d) SUPERVISION.—The Office shall be headed by a
22 Special Advisor for International Disability Rights. The
23 Special Advisor should be a person of recognized distine-
24 tion in the field of disability rights.

1 (e) CONSULTATION.—The Secretary shall direct Am-
2 bassadors at Large, Representatives, Special Envoys, and
3 coordinators working on human rights to consult with the
4 Office to promote the human rights and full participation
5 in international development activities of all persons with
6 disabilities.

7 **SEC. 4. TRAINING.**

8 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State shall re-
9 quire online or in-person mandatory disability inclusion
10 training for all civil service and foreign service personnel
11 of the Department of State and chiefs of mission, includ-
12 ing on—

13 (1) how to develop solicitations, programming,
14 budgets, and policies that are inclusive;

15 (2) how to ensure a disability-inclusive work en-
16 vironment;

17 (3) how to conduct disability-inclusive analyses
18 of laws and programming;

19 (4) how to support local disabled people’s orga-
20 nizations; and

21 (5) how to ensure nongovernmental organiza-
22 tions that receive funding from the Department
23 mainstream disability rights throughout all pro-
24 grams.

1 (b) FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICERS.—The Secretary
2 shall ensure that training for foreign service officers under
3 subsection (a) should include country-specific and cultural
4 considerations.

5 **SEC. 5. DISABILITY INCLUSION IN FOREIGN POLICY.**

6 (a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Con-
7 gress that, since international disability rights is
8 foundational to development, national security, and eco-
9 nomic outcomes, disability inclusion should be
10 mainstreamed through all foreign assistance and program-
11 ming.

12 (b) FORMAL POLICY FOR DISABILITY INCLUSION.—

13 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year
14 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Sec-
15 retary of State shall develop and adopt a formal pol-
16 icy for disability inclusion in the Department of
17 State.

18 (2) MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED.—Such policy
19 should include information and guidance on the De-
20 partment’s approach to disability inclusion in United
21 States foreign assistance programming, including—

22 (A) recruiting and hiring, employment,
23 overseas assignments, accessibility, foreign as-
24 sistance, program monitoring and evaluation,
25 and reporting; and

1 (B) access and inclusion at the Depart-
2 ment's headquarters and United States diplo-
3 matic posts.

4 (3) CONSULTATION.—In developing and adopt-
5 ing such policy, the Secretary shall consult with—

6 (A) disabled person's organizations and
7 international nongovernmental organizations
8 working on disability rights; and

9 (B) the Administrator of the United States
10 Agency for International Development (USAID)
11 to promote coherence of such policy with
12 USAID's formal disability policy.

13 (4) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—The Secretary
14 shall publish such policy on a publicly available
15 website of the Department.

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

17 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the
18 date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter,
19 the Secretary of State shall submit a report and provide
20 a briefing to the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the
21 House of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign
22 Relations of the Senate on the steps taken to implement
23 this Act.

24 (b) MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED.—The report and
25 briefing required by subsection (a) shall include—

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

3 (A) the duties of the Office of Inter-
4 national Disability Rights under section 3; and

5 (B) the training requirements under sec-
6 tion 4;

7 (2) the status of efforts to mainstream dis-
8 ability rights throughout Department of State pro-
9 gramming without regard to whether such program-
10 ming is specifically directed toward persons with dis-
11 abilities;

12 (3) explanation of disability-specific program-
13 ming across the Department;

14 (4) any policy, programming, or human re-
15 sources gaps to mainstreaming disability rights
16 throughout the Department and plans to address
17 gaps through appropriate mechanisms;

18 (5) progress made on the realization of the
19 rights of persons with disabilities as a result of De-
20 partment policies and programming; and

21 (6) recommendations for legislative actions to
22 fully implement the matters described in paragraphs
23 (1) through (5).

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