

**AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE  
TO H.R. 7623  
OFFERED BY MR. CONNOLLY OF VIRGINIA**

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

**1 SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Passport Backlog  
3 Elimination Act”.

**4 SEC. 2. PLAN TO ELIMINATE PASSPORT APPLICATION  
5 BACKLOG.**

6 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after the  
7 date of the enactment of this Act or October 30, 2020,  
8 whichever is later, after consultation with the appropriate  
9 congressional committees, the Secretary of State shall sub-  
10 mit to such committees a plan, including the actionable  
11 strategies described in subsection (b), to ensure the cur-  
12 rent backlog of passport applications due to the COVID-  
13 19 pandemic is eliminated in a timely manner in order  
14 to promote the national security and economic interests  
15 of the United States.

16 (b) ACTIONABLE STRATEGIES.—The actionable  
17 strategies described in this subsection are to—

1           (1) eliminate the backlog of at least 1.4 million  
2           passport applications;

3           (2) establish a timeline for the elimination of  
4           such backlog; and

5           (3) ensure—

6                 (A) that the expected processing time  
7                 for—

8                         (i) routine passport applications is be-  
9                         tween six and eight weeks;

10                        (ii) expedited passport applications is  
11                        between two to three weeks; and

12                        (iii) expedited passport applications  
13                        for Federal Government personnel is not  
14                        more than eight business days;

15                 (B) the safety of Department of State per-  
16                 sonnel and customers and compliance with all  
17                 applicable Federal, State, and local health and  
18                 social distancing guidelines; and

19                 (C) the ability for expedited service for ap-  
20                 plicants requiring a passport for purposes re-  
21                 lated to their employment.

22           (c) IMPLEMENTATION.—Not later than 30 days after  
23           the submission of the plan under subsection (a), the Sec-  
24           retary of State shall begin implementation of the plan to

1 eliminate the backlog of passport applications due to the  
2 COVID-19 pandemic.

3 (d) INSPECTOR GENERAL AUDIT.—Not later than  
4 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the  
5 Inspector General of the Department of State shall submit  
6 to Congress an audit on the elimination of the passport  
7 application backlog required by the plan required under  
8 subsection (a), and the Department’s actionable strategies  
9 described in subsection (b).

10 (e) APPLICATION.—If by September 30, 2020, all  
11 passport applications received prior to June 15, 2020,  
12 have been processed and the Department of State has re-  
13 sumed accepting passport applications for routine and ex-  
14 pedited processing, the provisions of this section shall not  
15 apply.

16 (f) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term “appro-  
17 priate congressional committees” means the Committee on  
18 Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Oversight and Re-  
19 form of the House of Representatives and the Committee  
20 on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Homeland Se-  
21 curity and Governmental Affairs of the Senate.

