H. R. 8153

To support diplomatic and development resourcing to the Indo-Pacific, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 21, 2022

Mr. BERA (for himself and Mr. CHABOT) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

A BILL

To support diplomatic and development resourcing to the Indo-Pacific, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Indo-Pacific Engagement Act”.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The Indo-Pacific region is home to some 60 percent of the world’s population.
(2) The Indo-Pacific region contains some of the most dynamic and rapidly growing economies in the world.

(3) A free and open Indo-Pacific is essential to American security and prosperity in the 21st century.

(4) The United States has made significant commitments of diplomatic and foreign assistance resources to the region over the past century, which have supported shared growth and prosperity.

(5) A sustained and enhanced commitment is required to advance American interests in the 21st century.

(6) Historically, independent cost assessments have served as effective tools to enhance public debate over resource allocation and have helped Congress make more informed decisions.

(7) The importance and urgency of enhancing U.S. engagement in the Indo-Pacific is such that similar tools are required to ensure a proper level of engagement with the region.

**SEC. 3. REPORT.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—At the same time as the submission of the budget of the President (submitted to Congress pursuant to section 1105 of title 31, United States Code)
for each of fiscal years 2024 through 2028, the Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, in coordination with the Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs, and Assistant Administrator for the Bureau for Asia of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), shall submit to the congressional foreign affairs committees a report assessing the resources and activities required to achieve the policy objectives described in subsection (c).

(b) CRITERIA.—The report required in subsection (a) shall be developed in accordance with the following criteria:

(1) It shall reflect the objective, autonomous, and independent assessment of the activities, resources, and costs required to achieve objectives detailed in subsection (c) by the principals, the subordinate and parallel offices providing input into the assessment, and ultimately by the Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs as the final decision-making authority on the contents of the final report.

(2) It shall cover a period of five fiscal years, beginning with the fiscal year following the fiscal year in which the report is submitted.
(3) It shall incorporate input from U.S. Ambassadors in the Indo-Pacific region provided explicitly for the required report.

(4) It may include information gathered through consultation with program offices and subject matter experts in relevant functional bureaus, as deemed necessary by the principals.

(5) It shall not be subject to fiscal guidance or global strategic tradeoffs associated with the annual President’s budget request.

(c) POLICY OBJECTIVES.—The report required in subsection (a) shall assess the activities and resources required to achieve the following policy objectives:

(1) Implement the Interim National Security Strategic Guidance, or the most recent National Security Strategy, with respect to the Indo-Pacific region.

(2) Implement the 2022 Indo-Pacific Strategy, or successor documents, that set forth the U.S. Government strategy toward the Indo-Pacific region.

(3) Implement the State-USAID Joint Strategic Plan with respect to the Indo-Pacific region.

(4) Enhance meaningful diplomatic and economic relations with allies and partners in the Indo-
Pacific and demonstrate an enduring U.S. commitment to the region.


(d) MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED.—The report required under subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) A description of the Bureaus’ bilateral and multilateral goals for the period covered in the report that the principals deem necessary to accomplish the objectives outlined in subsection (c), disaggregated by country and forum.

(2) A timeline with annual benchmarks for achieving the objectives described in subsection (c).

(3) An assessment of the sufficiency of U.S. diplomatic personnel and facilities currently available in the Indo-Pacific region to achieve the objectives outlined in subsection (c), through consultation with U.S. embassies in the region. The assessment shall include:

(A) A list, in priority order, of locations in the Indo-Pacific region that require additional diplomatic personnel or facilities.
(B) A description of locations where the United States may be able to collocate diplomatic personnel at allied or partner embassies and consulates.

(C) A discussion of embassies or consulates where diplomatic staff could be reduced within the Indo-Pacific region, where appropriate.

(D) A detailed description of the fiscal and personnel resources required to fill gaps identified.

(4) A detailed plan to expand U.S. diplomatic engagement and foreign assistance presence in the Pacific Island nations within the next five years, including a description of “quick impact” programs that can be developed and implemented within the first fiscal year of the period covered in the report.

(5) A discussion of the resources needed to enhance U.S. strategic messaging and spotlight coercive PRC behavior.

(6) A detailed description of the resources and policy tools needed to expand the United States ability to offer high-quality infrastructure projects in strategically significant parts of the Indo-Pacific re-
region, with a particular focus on expanding investments in Southeast Asia and the Pacific Islands.

(7) A gap assessment of security assistance by country, and of the resources needed to fill those gaps.

(8) A description of the resources and policy tools needed to facilitate continued private sector investment in partner countries in the Indo-Pacific.

(9) A discussion of any additional bilateral or regional assistance resources needed to achieve the objectives outlined in subsection (c), as deemed necessary by the principals.

(e) FORM.—The report required under subsection (a) shall be submitted in an unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

(f) AVAILABILITY.—Not later than February 1 each year, the Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs shall make the report available to the Secretary of State, the Administrator of the USAID, the Deputy Secretary of State, the Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources, the Deputy Administrator for Policy and Programming, the Deputy Administrator for Management and Resources, the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, the Director of the Office of Foreign Assistance at the Department of State, the Direc-
tor of the Bureau of Foreign Assistance at the USAID, and the Director of Policy Planning.

(g) DEFINITIONS.—In this Act:

(1) INDO-PACIFIC REGION.—The term “Indo-Pacific region” means the countries under the jurisdiction of the Bureau for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, as well as the countries of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka.

(2) FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEES.—The term “foreign affairs committees” means the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives; the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate; the Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, Related Programs of the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives; and the Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs of the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate.

(3) PRINCIPALS.—The term “principals” means the Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, the Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs, and the Assistant Administrator for
the Bureau for Asia of the United States Agency for International Development.