

117TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

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.

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 “Indo-Pacific Engage-
5 ment Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress makes the following findings:

8 (1) The Indo-Pacific region is home to some 60
9 percent of the world’s population.

1 (2) The Indo-Pacific region contains some of
2 the most dynamic and rapidly growing economies in
3 the world.

4 (3) A free and open Indo-Pacific is essential to
5 American security and prosperity in the 21st cen-
6 tury.

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

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

14 (6) Historically, independent cost assessments
15 have served as effective tools to enhance public de-
16 bate over resource allocation and have helped Con-
17 gress make more informed decisions.

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

22 **SEC. 3. REPORT.**

23 (a) IN GENERAL.—At the same time as the submis-
24 sion of the budget of the President (submitted to Congress
25 pursuant to section 1105 of title 31, United States Code)

1 for each of fiscal years 2024 through 2028, the Assistant
2 Secretary of State for the Bureau of East Asian and Pa-
3 cific Affairs, in coordination with the Assistant Secretary
4 of State for the Bureau of South and Central Asian Af-
5 fairs, and Assistant Administrator for the Bureau for Asia
6 of the United States Agency for International Develop-
7 ment (USAID), shall submit to the congressional foreign
8 affairs committees a report assessing the resources and
9 activities required to achieve the policy objectives de-
10 scribed in subsection (c).

11 (b) CRITERIA.—The report required in subsection (a)
12 shall be developed in accordance with the following cri-
13 teria:

14 (1) It shall reflect the objective, autonomous,
15 and independent assessment of the activities, re-
16 sources, and costs required to achieve objectives de-
17 tailed in subsection (c) by the principals, the subor-
18 dinate and parallel offices providing input into the
19 assessment, and ultimately by the Assistant Sec-
20 retary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs as
21 the final decision-making authority on the contents
22 of the final report.

23 (2) It shall cover a period of five fiscal years,
24 beginning with the fiscal year following the fiscal
25 year in which the report is submitted.

1 (3) It shall incorporate input from U.S. Ambassadors in the Indo-Pacific region provided explicitly
2 for the required report.
3

4 (4) It may include information gathered
5 through consultation with program offices and subject matter experts in relevant functional bureaus, as
6 deemed necessary by the principals.
7

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

11 (c) POLICY OBJECTIVES.—The report required in
12 subsection (a) shall assess the activities and resources required to achieve the following policy objectives:
13

14 (1) Implement the Interim National Security
15 Strategic Guidance, or the most recent National Security Strategy, with respect to the Indo-Pacific region.
16 region.
17

18 (2) Implement the 2022 Indo-Pacific Strategy, or successor documents, that set forth the U.S. Government strategy toward the Indo-Pacific region.
19
20

21 (3) Implement the State-USAID Joint Strategic Plan with respect to the Indo-Pacific region.
22

23 (4) Enhance meaningful diplomatic and economic relations with allies and partners in the Indo-
24

1 Pacific and demonstrate an enduring U.S. commit-
2 ment to the region.

3 (5) Secure and advance U.S. national interests
4 in the Indo-Pacific, including through countering the
5 malign influence of the Government of the People's
6 Republic of China.

7 (d) MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED.—The report re-
8 quired under subsection (a) shall include the following:

9 (1) A description of the Bureaus' bilateral and
10 multilateral goals for the period covered in the re-
11 port that the principals deem necessary to accom-
12 plish the objectives outlined in subsection (c),
13 disaggregated by country and forum.

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

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

22 (A) A list, in priority order, of locations in
23 the Indo-Pacific region that require additional
24 diplomatic personnel or facilities.

1 (B) A description of locations where the
2 United States may be able to collocate diplo-
3 matic personnel at allied or partner embassies
4 and consulates.

5 (C) A discussion of embassies or con-
6 sulates where diplomatic staff could be reduced
7 within the Indo-Pacific region, where appro-
8 priate.

9 (D) A detailed description of the fiscal and
10 personnel resources required to fill gaps identi-
11 fied.

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

18 (5) A discussion of the resources needed to en-
19 hance U.S. strategic messaging and spotlight coer-
20 cive PRC behavior.

21 (6) A detailed description of the resources and
22 policy tools needed to expand the United States abil-
23 ity to offer high-quality infrastructure projects in
24 strategically significant parts of the Indo-Pacific re-

1 gion, with a particular focus on expanding invest-
2 ments in Southeast Asia and the Pacific Islands.

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

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

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

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

16 (f) AVAILABILITY.—Not later than February 1 each
17 year, the Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific
18 Affairs shall make the report available to the Secretary
19 of State, the Administrator of the USAID, the Deputy
20 Secretary of State, the Deputy Secretary of State for
21 Management and Resources, the Deputy Administrator
22 for Policy and Programming, the Deputy Administrator
23 for Management and Resources, the Under Secretary of
24 State for Political Affairs, the Director of the Office of
25 Foreign Assistance at the Department of State, the Direc-

1 tor of the Bureau of Foreign Assistance at the USAID,
2 and the Director of Policy Planning.

3 (g) DEFINITIONS.—In this Act:

4 (1) INDO-PACIFIC REGION.—The term “Indo-
5 Pacific region” means the countries under the juris-
6 diction of the Bureau for East Asian and Pacific Af-
7 fairs, as well as the countries of Bangladesh, Bhui-
8 tan, India, Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka.

9 (2) FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEES.—The term
10 “foreign affairs committees” means the Committee
11 on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives;
12 the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate;
13 the Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, Re-
14 lated Programs of the Committee on Appropriations
15 of the House of Representatives; and the Sub-
16 committee on State, Foreign Operations, and Re-
17 lated Programs of the Committee on Appropriations
18 of the Senate.

19 (3) PRINCIPALS.—The term “principals” means
20 the Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of
21 East Asian and Pacific Affairs, the Assistant Sec-
22 retary of State for the Bureau of South and Central
23 Asian Affairs, and the Assistant Administrator for

1 the Bureau for Asia of the United States Agency for
2 International Development.

○