

106TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 2856

To provide for the establishment of a new international television service under the Broadcasting Board of Governors to replace Worldnet and VOA-TV to ensure that international television broadcasts of the United States Government effectively represent the United States and its policies.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JULY 12, 2000

Mr. HELMS introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

A BILL

To provide for the establishment of a new international television service under the Broadcasting Board of Governors to replace Worldnet and VOA-TV to ensure that international television broadcasts of the United States Government effectively represent the United States and its policies.

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 “International Tele-
5 vision Broadcasting Act of 2000”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 Congress makes the following findings:

3 (1) The Voice of America (VoA) is now imple-
4 menting the NewsNow format, which broadcasts
5 news repetitively in a continuous cycle.

6 (2) The NewsNow format forces most VoA cov-
7 erage of American thought and institutions, as re-
8 quired by the VoA Charter, to be accommodated
9 within that structured news cycle.

10 (3) The NewsNow format is insufficient to
11 present fully the policies of the United States as
12 clearly and effectively as the VoA Charter mandate
13 anticipates.

14 (4) The implementation of the VoA Charter's
15 mandate to present United States policies has tradi-
16 tionally and appropriately been fulfilled by airing
17 editorials.

18 (5) Editorials offer the prudential and prin-
19 ciple rationales for United States policy to radio
20 listeners and television viewers and should not be
21 marginalized in any VoA programming format.

22 (6) The television program "On the Line" pro-
23 duced by the VoA is an example of a suitable vehicle
24 for fulfilling the VoA Charter's mandate to present
25 United States policies.

1 (7) Television is an increasing important form
2 of United States Government-sponsored broad-
3 casting worldwide.

4 (8) The Broadcasting Board of Governors plans
5 to complete soon a merger of the Worldnet television
6 broadcasting into VoA.

7 (9) Explicit treatment of American thought, in-
8 stitutions, and policies needs to be sustained in
9 United States Government-sponsored television
10 broadcasting.

11 **SEC. 3. PURPOSE.**

12 The purpose of this Act is to—

13 (1) require the establishment of a new inter-
14 national television service under the Broadcasting
15 Board of Governors to replace Worldnet and VOA-
16 TV; and

17 (2) ensure that international television broad-
18 casts of the United States effectively and accurately
19 represent the United States and its policies.

20 **SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.**

21 In this Act:

22 (1) BOARD.—The term “Board” means the
23 Broadcasting Board of Governors.

24 (2) BUREAU.—The term “Bureau” means the
25 International Broadcasting Bureau under the Board.

1 (3) DIRECTOR.—Except as otherwise provided,
2 the term “Director” means the Director of the Bu-
3 reau.

4 (4) TELEVISION SERVICE.—The term “Tele-
5 vision Service” means the International Television
6 Service established under section 5.

7 (5) VOA-TV.—The term “VOA-TV” means
8 the television operations of the Voice of America
9 within the Bureau.

10 (6) WORLDNET.—The term “Worldnet” means
11 the WORLDNET Television and Film Service with-
12 in the Bureau.

13 **SEC. 5. ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW INTERNATIONAL TELE-**
14 **VISION SERVICE.**

15 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—

16 (1) IN GENERAL.—Upon the effective date of
17 this Act, there is established within the Bureau the
18 International Television Service.

19 (2) DIRECTOR OF INTERNATIONAL TELE-
20 VISION.—The Television Service shall be headed by
21 a Director of International Television, who shall be
22 appointed by the Director and who shall report di-
23 rectly to the Director.

24 (b) IMPLEMENTATION PLAN.—Sixty days after the
25 effective date of this Act, the Board shall submit a report

1 to Congress setting forth the Board's plans for the Tele-
2 vision Service, including—

3 (1) a programming plan, or strategy, or both;

4 (2) a staffing plan to implement the Television
5 Service;

6 (3) a budget; and

7 (4) a reporting relationship to the Board
8 through the Bureau.

9 (c) **TERMINATION OF PROGRAMS.**—Upon the effec-
10 tive date of this Act, Worldnet and VOA-TV shall termi-
11 nate.

12 (d) **PROHIBITION.**—Upon the effective date of this
13 Act, no funds available to the Board may be obligated or
14 expended for Worldnet or VOA-TV.

15 **SEC. 6. BROADCASTING PRINCIPLES; PROGRAMMING.**

16 (a) **BROADCASTING PRINCIPLES.**—

17 (1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Television Service shall
18 conduct all programming activities in accordance
19 with the broadcasting principles expressed in para-
20 graphs (1) through (3) of section 302(b) of the
21 United States International Broadcasting Act of
22 1994 (22 U.S.C. 6202(b)).

23 (2) **ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES.**—The Direc-
24 tor of International Television shall give equal
25 weight to the implementation of each of those para-

1 graphs in allocating budget, personnel, and other re-
2 sources, in determining program schedules, and in
3 undertaking affiliate and other placement efforts.

4 (b) PROGRAMMING.—

5 (1) IN GENERAL.—In addition to other pro-
6 grams carried by the Television Service, the regular
7 programming of the Television Service shall consist
8 of—

9 (A) those programs which were produced
10 by the Office of Policy of the Bureau before the
11 date of enactment of this Act and which are
12 being carried as of that date; and

13 (B) such additional programs relating to
14 United States policies as the Director of Policy
15 of the Bureau, in consultation with the Director
16 of International Television and the Director
17 may develop.

18 (2) FREQUENCY OF PROGRAMMING.—The Di-
19 rector, in consultation with the Director of Policy of
20 the Bureau, shall determine the frequency with
21 which the programs described in paragraph (1) shall
22 be carried by the Television Service.

23 (3) STATUTORY CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in
24 this subsection prohibits the Director from—

1 (A) requiring that the programs described
2 in paragraph (1) shall also be carried by VOA
3 Radio and Internet; or

4 (B) determining the frequency of such pro-
5 gramming.

6 **SEC. 7. TRANSITION PROVISIONS.**

7 (a) **TRANSFERS FROM VOA-TV AND WORLDNET.**—
8 Upon the effective date of this Act, the personnel em-
9 ployed in connection with, and the assets, liabilities, con-
10 tracts, property, records, and unexpended balances of ap-
11 propriations, authorizations, allocations, and other funds
12 employed, used, held, arising from, available to, or to be
13 made available in connection with Worldnet and VOA-TV
14 shall be transferred to the Television Service.

15 (b) **SAVINGS PROVISION.**—Until the effective date of
16 this Act, Worldnet shall continue to be funded at the same
17 level as Worldnet was funded during fiscal year 2001.

18 (c) **REFERENCES.**—Any reference in any Federal
19 law, Executive order, rule, regulation, or delegation of au-
20 thority, or any document of or relating to Worldnet or
21 VOA-TV before the effective date of this Act shall, on and
22 after such date, be deemed to refer to the Television Serv-
23 ice.

1 **SEC. 8. EFFECTIVE DATE.**

2 The effective date of this Act is January 1, 2001.

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