

114TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# S. 2369

To amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish an Office for  
Community Partnerships.

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

DECEMBER 8, 2015

Mr. CARPER introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred  
to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

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## A BILL

To amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish  
an Office for Community Partnerships.

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 “Community Partner-  
5 ship Act of 2015”.

1 **SEC. 2. AUTHORIZATION OF THE OFFICE FOR COMMUNITY**  
2 **PARTNERSHIPS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF**  
3 **HOMELAND SECURITY.**

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—Title I of the Homeland Security  
5 Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 101 et seq.) is amended by adding  
6 at the end the following:

7 **“SEC. 104. OFFICE FOR COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS.**

8 “(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

9 “(1) the term ‘countering violent extremism’  
10 means proactive and relevant actions to counter ef-  
11 forts by extremists to radicalize, recruit, and mobi-  
12 lize followers to violence and to address the condi-  
13 tions that allow for violent extremist recruitment  
14 and radicalization; and

15 “(2) the term ‘violent extremism’ means ideo-  
16 logically motivated violence as a method of advanc-  
17 ing a cause.

18 “(b) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is in the Department  
19 an Office for Community Partnerships.

20 “(c) HEAD OF OFFICE.—The Office for Community  
21 Partnerships shall be headed by an Assistant Secretary  
22 for Community Partnerships, who shall be designated by  
23 the Secretary.

24 “(d) DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY; ASSIGNMENT  
25 OF PERSONNEL.—The Secretary shall—

1           “(1) designate a career Deputy Assistant Sec-  
2           retary for Community Partnerships; and

3           “(2) assign or hire, as appropriate, permanent  
4           staff to the Office for Community Partnerships.

5           “(e) RESPONSIBILITIES.—The Assistant Secretary  
6 for Community Partnerships shall be responsible for the  
7 following:

8           “(1) Leading the efforts of the Department to  
9           counter violent extremism across all the components  
10          and offices of the Department that conduct strategic  
11          and supportive efforts to counter violent extremism.  
12          Such efforts shall include the following:

13                 “(A) Partnering with communities to ad-  
14                 dress vulnerabilities that can be exploited by  
15                 violent extremists in the United States and ex-  
16                 plore potential remedies for government and  
17                 nongovernment institutions.

18                 “(B) Working with civil society groups and  
19                 communities to counter violent extremist propa-  
20                 ganda, messaging, or recruitment.

21                 “(C) In coordination with the Office for  
22                 Civil Rights and Civil Liberties of the Depart-  
23                 ment, managing the outreach and engagement  
24                 efforts of the Department directed toward com-

1 communities at risk for radicalization and recruit-  
2 ment for violent extremist activities.

3 “(D) Ensuring relevant information, re-  
4 search, and products inform efforts to counter  
5 violent extremism.

6 “(E) Developing and maintaining Depart-  
7 mentwide plans, strategy guiding policies, and  
8 programs to counter violent extremism. Such  
9 plans shall, at a minimum, address each of the  
10 following:

11 “(i) The Department’s plan to lever-  
12 age new and existing Internet and other  
13 technologies and social media platforms to  
14 improve nongovernment efforts to counter  
15 violent extremism, as well as the best prac-  
16 tices and lessons learned of other Federal,  
17 State, local, tribal, territorial, and foreign  
18 partners engaged in similar counter-mes-  
19 saging efforts.

20 “(ii) The Department’s countering  
21 violent extremism-related engagement ef-  
22 forts.

23 “(iii) The use of cooperative agree-  
24 ments with State, local, tribal, territorial,  
25 and other Federal departments and agen-

1           cies responsible for efforts relating to  
2           countering violent extremism.

3           “(F) Coordinating with the Office for Civil  
4           Rights and Civil Liberties of the Department to  
5           ensure all of the activities of the Department  
6           related to countering violent extremism fully re-  
7           spect the privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties  
8           of all persons.

9           “(G) In coordination with the Under Sec-  
10          retary for Science and Technology and in con-  
11          sultation with the Under Secretary for Intel-  
12          ligence and Analysis, identifying and recom-  
13          mending new research and analysis require-  
14          ments to ensure the dissemination of informa-  
15          tion and methods for Federal, State, local, trib-  
16          al, and territorial countering violent extremism  
17          practitioners, officials, law enforcement, and  
18          nongovernmental partners to utilize such re-  
19          search and analysis.

20          “(H) Assessing the methods used by vio-  
21          lent extremists to disseminate propaganda and  
22          messaging to communities at risk for recruit-  
23          ment by violent extremists.

1           “(2) Developing a digital engagement strategy  
2 that expands the outreach efforts of the Department  
3 to counter violent extremist messaging by—

4                   “(A) exploring ways to utilize relevant  
5 Internet and other technologies and social  
6 media platforms; and

7                   “(B) maximizing other resources available  
8 to the Department.

9           “(3) Serving as the primary representative of  
10 the Department in coordinating countering violent  
11 extremism efforts with other Federal departments  
12 and agencies and nongovernmental organizations.

13           “(4) Serving as the primary Department-level  
14 representative in coordinating with the Department  
15 of State on international countering violent extre-  
16 mism issues.

17           “(5) In coordination with the Administrator of  
18 the Federal Emergency Management Agency, pro-  
19 viding guidance regarding the use of grants made to  
20 State, local, and tribal governments under sections  
21 2003 and 2004 under the allowable uses guidelines  
22 related to countering violent extremism.

23           “(6) Developing a plan to expand philanthropic  
24 support for domestic efforts related to countering  
25 violent extremism, including by identifying viable

1 community projects and needs for possible philan-  
 2 thropic support.

3 “(7) Administering the assistance described in  
 4 subsection (f).

5 “(f) GRANTS TO COUNTER VIOLENT EXTREMISM.—

6 “(1) IN GENERAL.—In accordance with this  
 7 subsection, the Secretary may award grants or coop-  
 8 erative agreements directly to eligible recipients  
 9 identified in paragraph (2) to support the efforts of  
 10 local communities in the United States to counter  
 11 violent extremism.

12 “(2) ELIGIBLE RECIPIENTS.—The Secretary  
 13 may award competitive grants or cooperative agree-  
 14 ments based on need directly to—

15 “(A) States;

16 “(B) local governments;

17 “(C) tribal governments;

18 “(D) nonprofit organizations; or

19 “(E) institutions of higher education.

20 “(3) USE OF FUNDS.—Each entity receiving a  
 21 grant or cooperative agreement under this sub-  
 22 section shall use the grant or cooperative agreement  
 23 for one or more of the following purposes:

24 “(A) To train or exercise for countering  
 25 violent extremism, including building training

1 or exercise programs designed to improve cul-  
2 tural competency and to ensure that commu-  
3 nities, government, and law enforcement receive  
4 accurate, intelligence-based information about  
5 the dynamics of radicalization to violence.

6 “(B) To develop, implement, or expand  
7 programs or projects with communities to dis-  
8 cuss violent extremism or to engage commu-  
9 nities that may be targeted by violent extremist  
10 radicalization.

11 “(C) To develop and implement projects  
12 that partner with local communities to prevent  
13 radicalization to violence.

14 “(D) To develop and implement a com-  
15 prehensive model for preventing violent extre-  
16 mism in local communities, including existing  
17 initiatives of State or local law enforcement  
18 agencies and existing mechanisms for engaging  
19 the resources and expertise available from a  
20 range of social service providers, such as edu-  
21 cation administrators, mental health profes-  
22 sionals, and religious leaders.

23 “(E) To educate the community about  
24 countering violent extremism, including the pro-  
25 motion of community-based activities to in-



1           crease the measures taken by the community to  
2           counter violent extremism.

3           “(F) To develop or assist social service  
4           programs that address root causes of violent ex-  
5           tremism and develop, build, or enhance alter-  
6           natives for members of local communities that  
7           may be targeted by violent extremism.

8           “(G) To develop or enhance State or local  
9           government initiatives that facilitate and build  
10          overall capacity to address the threats post by  
11          violent extremism.

12          “(H) To support such other activities, con-  
13          sistent with the purposes of this subsection, as  
14          the Secretary determines appropriate.

15          “(4) GRANT GUIDELINES.—

16          “(A) IN GENERAL.—For each fiscal year,  
17          before awarding a grant or cooperative agree-  
18          ment under this subsection, the Secretary shall  
19          develop guidelines published in a notice of fund-  
20          ing opportunity that describe—

21                  “(i) the process for applying for  
22                  grants and cooperative agreements under  
23                  this subsection;

24                  “(ii) the criteria that the Secretary  
25                  will use for selecting recipients based on

1 the need demonstrated by the applicant;  
2 and

3 “(iii) the requirements that recipients  
4 must follow when utilizing funds under  
5 this subsection to conduct training and ex-  
6 ercises and otherwise engage local commu-  
7 nities regarding countering violent extre-  
8 mism.

9 “(B) CONSIDERATIONS.—In developing the  
10 requirements under subparagraph (A)(iii), the  
11 Secretary shall consider the following:

12 “(i) Training objectives should be  
13 clearly defined to meet specific countering  
14 violent extremism goals, such as commu-  
15 nity engagement, cultural awareness, or  
16 community-based policing.

17 “(ii) Engaging diverse communities in  
18 the United States to counter violent extre-  
19 mism may require working with local  
20 grassroots community organizations to de-  
21 velop engagement and outreach initiatives.

22 “(iii) Training programs should—

23 “(I) be sensitive to constitutional  
24 values, such as protecting funda-  
25 mental civil rights and civil liberties,

1 and eschew notions of racial and eth-  
2 nic profiling; and

3 “(II) adhere to the standards  
4 and ethics of the Department, ensur-  
5 ing that the clearly defined objectives  
6 are in line with the strategies of the  
7 Department to counter violent extre-  
8 mism.

9 “(iv) Establishing vetting procedures  
10 for self-selected countering violent extre-  
11 mism training experts who offer programs  
12 that may claim to counter violent extre-  
13 mism, but serve to demonize certain indi-  
14 viduals or whole cross sections of a com-  
15 munity.

16 “(v) Providing a review process to de-  
17 termine if countering violent extremism  
18 training focuses on community engagement  
19 and outreach.

20 “(vi) Providing support to law en-  
21 forcement to enhance knowledge, skills,  
22 and abilities to increase engagement tech-  
23 niques with diverse communities in the  
24 United States.

1       “(g) ANNUAL REPORT.—Beginning in the first fiscal  
2 year beginning after the date of enactment of this section,  
3 and in each of the next 5 fiscal years, the Assistant Sec-  
4 retary of the Office for Community Partnerships shall sub-  
5 mit to Congress an annual report on the Office for Com-  
6 munity Partnerships, which shall include—

7               “(1) a description of the status of the programs  
8 and policies of the Department for countering vio-  
9 lent extremism in the United States;

10              “(2) a description of the efforts of the Office  
11 for Community Partnerships to cooperate with and  
12 provide assistance to other Federal departments and  
13 agencies;

14              “(3) qualitative and quantitative metrics for  
15 evaluating the success of such programs and policies  
16 and the steps taken to evaluate the success of such  
17 programs and policies; and

18              “(4) an accounting of—

19                      “(A) grants awarded by the Department to  
20 counter violent extremism; and

21                      “(B) all training specifically aimed at  
22 countering violent extremism sponsored by the  
23 Department.”.

24       (b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—  
25 The table of contents in section 1(b) of the Homeland Se-

1 curity Act of 2002 (Public Law 107–296; 116 Stat. 2135)

2 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section

3 103 the following:

“Sec. 104. Office for Community Partnerships.”

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