

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 324

To promote international exchanges on best election practices, cultivate more secure democratic institutions around the world, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 4, 2019

Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. SULLIVAN) introduced the following bill;
which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

A BILL

To promote international exchanges on best election practices, cultivate more secure democratic institutions around the world, 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 “Global Electoral Ex-
5 change Act of 2019”.

6 **SEC. 2. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

7 It is the sense of Congress that—

8 (1) recent elections globally have illustrated the
9 urgent need for the promotion and exchange of
10 international best election practices, particularly in

1 the areas of cybersecurity, results transmission,
2 transparency of electoral data, election dispute reso-
3 lution, and the elimination of discriminatory reg-
4 istration practices and other electoral irregularities;

5 (2) the advancement of democracy worldwide
6 promotes United States interests, as stable democ-
7 racies provide new market opportunities, improve
8 global health outcomes, and promote economic free-
9 dom and regional security;

10 (3) credible elections are the cornerstone of a
11 healthy democracy and enable all persons to exercise
12 their basic human right to have a say in how they
13 are governed;

14 (4) inclusive elections strengthen the credibility
15 and stability of democracies more broadly;

16 (5) at the heart of a strong election cycle is the
17 professionalism of the election management body
18 and an empowered civil society;

19 (6) the development of local expertise via peer-
20 to-peer learning and exchanges promotes the inde-
21 pendence of such bodies from internal and external
22 influence; and

23 (7) supporting the efforts of peoples in democ-
24 ratizing societies to build more representative gov-

1 ernments in their respective countries is in the na-
2 tional interest of the United States.

3 **SEC. 3. GLOBAL ELECTORAL EXCHANGE.**

4 (a) GLOBAL ELECTORAL EXCHANGE.—The Sec-
5 retary of State is authorized to establish and administer
6 a Global Electoral Exchange Program to promote the utili-
7 zation of sound election administration practices around
8 the world.

9 (b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the Global Electoral
10 Exchange Program described in subsection (a) shall in-
11 clude the promotion and exchange of international best
12 election practices, including in the areas of—

- 13 (1) cybersecurity;
- 14 (2) the protection of election systems against
15 influence campaigns;
- 16 (3) results transmission;
- 17 (4) transparency of electoral data;
- 18 (5) election dispute resolution;
- 19 (6) the elimination of discriminatory registra-
20 tion practices and electoral irregularities;
- 21 (7) inclusive and equitable promotion of can-
22 didate participation;
- 23 (8) equitable access to polling places, voter edu-
24 cation information, and voting mechanisms (includ-
25 ing by persons with disabilities); and

1 (9) other sound election administration prac-
2 tices.

3 (c) EXCHANGE OF ELECTORAL AUTHORITIES.—

4 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State may,
5 in consultation, as appropriate, with the United
6 States Agency for International Development, make
7 grants to any United States-based organization de-
8 scribed in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue
9 Code of 1986 and exempt from tax under section
10 501(a) of such Code with experience in and a pri-
11 mary focus on foreign comparative election systems
12 or subject matter expertise in the administration or
13 integrity of such systems that submits an application
14 in such form, and satisfying such requirements, as
15 the Secretary may require.

16 (2) TYPES OF GRANTS.—An organization de-
17 scribed in paragraph (1) may receive a grant for one
18 or more of the following purposes:

19 (A) To design and implement programs
20 bringing election administrators and officials,
21 including government officials, poll workers,
22 civil society representatives, members of the ju-
23 diciary, and others who participate in the orga-
24 nization and administration of public elections
25 in a foreign country that faces challenges to its

1 electoral process to the United States to study
2 election procedures in the United States for
3 educational purposes.

4 (B) To design and implement programs
5 taking the United States or another country's
6 election administrators and officials, including
7 government officials, poll workers, civil society
8 representatives, members of the judiciary, and
9 others who participate in the organization and
10 administration of public elections to study and
11 discuss election procedures for educational pur-
12 poses.

13 (3) LIMITS ON ACTIVITIES.—Activities adminis-
14 tered under the Global Electoral Exchange Program
15 may not—

16 (A) include observation of an election for
17 the purposes of assessing the validity or legit-
18 imacy of that election;

19 (B) facilitate any advocacy for a certain
20 electoral result by a grantee when participating
21 in the Program; or

22 (C) be carried out without proper consulta-
23 tion with State and local authorities in the
24 United States that administer elections.

1 (4) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of
2 Congress that the Secretary of State should estab-
3 lish and maintain a network of Global Electoral Ex-
4 change Program alumni, to promote communication
5 and further exchange of information regarding
6 sound election administration practices among cur-
7 rent and former program participants.

8 (5) FURTHER LIMITS.—A recipient of a grant
9 under the Global Electoral Exchange Program may
10 use such grant for only the purpose for which such
11 grant was awarded, unless otherwise authorized by
12 the Secretary of State.

13 (6) NOT DUPLICATIVE.—Grants made under
14 this subsection may not be duplicative of any other
15 grants made under any other provision of law for
16 similar or related purposes.

17 **SEC. 4. CONGRESSIONAL OVERSIGHT.**

18 Not later than one year after the date of the enact-
19 ment of this Act and in each of the following two years
20 thereafter, the Secretary of State shall provide to the
21 Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the
22 Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representa-
23 tives a briefing on the status of any activities carried out
24 pursuant to this Act during the preceding year, which
25 shall include, among other information, the following:

1 (1) A summary of all exchanges conducted
2 under the Global Electoral Exchange Program, in-
3 cluding information regarding grantees, participants,
4 and the locations where program activities were held.

5 (2) A description of the criteria used to select
6 grantees under the Global Electoral Exchange Pro-
7 gram.

8 (3) Any recommendations for the improvement
9 of the Global Electoral Exchange Program, based on
10 the purpose specified in section 3(b).

11 **SEC. 5. NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS AUTHORIZED.**

12 No additional funds are authorized to be appro-
13 priated to carry out the requirements of this Act. The re-
14 quirements shall be carried out using amounts otherwise
15 authorized to be appropriated.

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