

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 4426

To establish an Office of Subnational Diplomacy within the Department of State, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

AUGUST 4, 2020

Mr. MURPHY (for himself and Mr. PERDUE) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

A BILL

To establish an Office of Subnational Diplomacy within the Department of State, 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 “City and State Diplo-
5 macy Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) The supremacy clause of the United States
9 Constitution (article VI, clause 2) establishes that
10 the Federal Government has the primary role in con-

1 ducting diplomacy on behalf of the United States; in
2 turn, the Department of State, which was created
3 pursuant to statute by Congress in 1789, has the
4 lead role in formulating and implementing United
5 States foreign policy.

6 (2) The growth of subnational cooperation has
7 enabled States, counties, and municipalities to play
8 an increasingly significant role in foreign policy and
9 complement the efforts of the Department of State
10 by—

11 (A) supporting exchanges and cooperation
12 agreements between elected leaders and officials
13 of State, county, and municipal governments
14 and those of international cities, regions, and
15 countries;

16 (B) promoting United States exports to
17 foreign markets and foreign direct investment
18 into the United States; and

19 (C) sharing best practices and striking
20 agreements with foreign counterparts on a wide
21 range of topics, including facilitating trade and
22 investment, protecting the health and safety of
23 their respective citizens, cooperating on energy
24 and the environment, and promoting people-to-
25 people exchanges.

1 (3) Global networks made up exclusively of local
2 government officials are at the forefront of har-
3 nassing the power of cities to advance international
4 cooperation.

5 (4) In 2010, the Department of State appointed
6 the first-ever Special Representative for Global
7 Intergovernmental Affairs, who led efforts to build
8 strategic peer-to-peer relationships between the De-
9 partment of State, State and local officials, and
10 their foreign counterparts.

11 **SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

12 It is the sense of Congress that it is in the interest
13 of the United States to promote subnational engagements,
14 align such engagements with national foreign policy objec-
15 tives, and leverage Federal resources to enhance the im-
16 pact of such engagements.

17 **SEC. 4. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE OFFICE OF SUBNATIONAL**
18 **DIPLOMACY.**

19 Section 1 of the State Department Basic Authorities
20 Act of 1956 (22 U.S.C. 2651a) is amended by adding at
21 the end the following new subsection:

22 “(h) OFFICE OF SUBNATIONAL DIPLOMACY.—

23 “(1) IN GENERAL.—There shall be established
24 within the Department of State an Office of Sub-

1 national Diplomacy (in this subsection referred to as
2 the ‘Office’).

3 “(2) HEAD OF OFFICE.—The head of the Office
4 shall be the Ambassador-at-Large for Subnational
5 Diplomacy (in this subsection referred to as the
6 ‘Ambassador’). The Ambassador shall—

7 “(A) be appointed by the President, by and
8 with the advice and consent of the Senate; and

9 “(B) report directly to the Under Sec-
10 retary for Political Affairs.

11 “(3) DUTIES.—

12 “(A) PRINCIPAL DUTY.—The principal
13 duty of the Ambassador shall be the overall su-
14 pervision (including policy oversight of re-
15 sources) of Federal support for subnational en-
16 gagements by State, county, and municipal gov-
17 ernments with foreign governments. The Am-
18 bassador shall be the principal adviser to the
19 Secretary of State on subnational engagements
20 and the principal official on such matters within
21 the senior management of the Department of
22 State.

23 “(B) ADDITIONAL DUTIES.—The addi-
24 tional duties of the Ambassador shall include
25 the following:

1 “(i) Coordinating overall United
2 States policy and programs in support of
3 subnational engagements by State and mu-
4 nicipal governments with foreign govern-
5 ments, including with respect to the fol-
6 lowing activities:

7 “(I) Coordinating resources
8 across the Department of State and
9 throughout the Federal Government
10 in support of such engagements.

11 “(II) Identifying policy, program,
12 and funding disputes among relevant
13 Federal agencies regarding such co-
14 ordination.

15 “(III) Identifying gaps in Fed-
16 eral support for such engagements
17 and developing corresponding policy
18 or programmatic changes to address
19 such gaps.

20 “(ii) Promoting United States foreign
21 policy goals through support for sub-
22 national engagements and aligning sub-
23 national priorities with national foreign
24 policy goals, as appropriate.

1 “(iii) Maintaining a public database of
2 subnational engagements.

3 “(iv) Providing advisory support to
4 subnational engagements, including by as-
5 sisting State, county, and municipal gov-
6 ernments to—

7 “(I) develop, implement, and, as
8 necessary, adjust global engagement
9 and public diplomacy strategies, par-
10 ticularly for States and cities with
11 limited international outreach staff;

12 “(II) implement programs to co-
13 operate with foreign governments on
14 policy priorities or managing shared
15 resources; and

16 “(III) understand the implica-
17 tions of foreign policy developments or
18 policy changes through regular and
19 extraordinary briefings.

20 “(v) Facilitating linkages and net-
21 works between State and municipal govern-
22 ments and their foreign counterparts, in-
23 cluding leveraging of State and municipal
24 government expertise in United States for-
25 eign assistance programming.

1 “(vi) Overseeing the work of Depart-
2 ment of State detailees assigned to State
3 and municipal governments pursuant to
4 this subsection.

5 “(vii) Negotiating agreements and
6 memoranda of understanding with foreign
7 governments to support subnational en-
8 gagements and priorities.

9 “(viii) Promoting United States trade
10 and foreign exports on behalf of United
11 States businesses through exchanges be-
12 tween the United States and foreign state,
13 municipal, and provincial governments, de-
14 veloping resource lists for subnational ac-
15 tors’ international outreach, creating a
16 platform for subnational actors and small
17 and medium businesses to request support
18 or submit feedback, and by establishing a
19 more enduring relationship overall between
20 subnational governments.

21 “(ix) Promoting public health and
22 public safety areas like road safety,
23 through exchanges between the United
24 States and foreign state, municipal, and
25 provincial governments, conferences to cap-

1 ture best practices and assure future plan-
2 ning, and by establishing enduring rela-
3 tionship between subnational governments.

4 “(x) Coordinating subnational engage-
5 ments with the associations of subnational
6 elected leaders, including the United States
7 Conference of Mayors, National Governors
8 Association, National League of Cities, Na-
9 tional Association of Counties, Council of
10 State Governments, National Conference of
11 State Legislators, and State International
12 Development Offices.

13 “(4) STATE, COUNTY, AND MUNICIPAL FEL-
14 LOWS PROGRAM.—

15 “(A) IN GENERAL.—Under the Fellowship
16 Program, the Secretary of State, acting through
17 the Ambassador, is authorized to detail no
18 fewer than 30 total Foreign Service officers and
19 members of the civil service each year to State,
20 county, and municipal governments on a reim-
21 bursable or nonreimbursable basis. Such details
22 shall be for a period not to exceed two years,
23 and shall be without interruption or loss of For-
24 eign Service or civil service status or privilege.

1 “(B) RESPONSIBILITIES.—Detailees under
2 subparagraph (A) shall carry out the following
3 duties:

4 “(i) Supporting the mission and objec-
5 tives of the Office.

6 “(ii) Coordinating activities relating to
7 State and municipal government sub-
8 national engagements with the Department
9 of State, including the Office, Department
10 leadership, and regional and functional bu-
11 reaus of the Department, as appropriate.

12 “(iii) Engaging the Department of
13 State and other Federal agencies regarding
14 security, public health, trade promotion,
15 and other programs executed at the State
16 or municipal government level.

17 “(iv) Advising State and municipal
18 government officials regarding questions of
19 global affairs, foreign policy, cooperative
20 agreements, and public diplomacy.

21 “(v) Any other duties requested by
22 State and municipal governments and ap-
23 proved by the Office.

24 “(5) REPORT AND BRIEFING.—

1 “(A) REPORT.—Not later than one year
2 after the date of the enactment of this sub-
3 section, the Ambassador shall submit to the
4 Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate
5 and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the
6 House of Representatives a report that includes
7 information relating to the following matters:

8 “(i) The staffing plan (including per-
9 manent and temporary staff) for the Of-
10 fice.

11 “(ii) The funding level provided to the
12 Office for the Office, together with a jus-
13 tification relating to such level.

14 “(iii) The status of filling the position
15 of Ambassador-at-Large for Subnational
16 Diplomacy.

17 “(iv) A strategic plan for the Office,
18 including—

19 “(I) how to better integrate
20 United States cities, counties, and
21 States into United States foreign pol-
22 icy, such as through the provision of
23 trainers;

24 “(II) how partnerships with sub-
25 national entities can enhance citizen

1 involvement in the foreign policy mak-
2 ing process; and

3 “(III) how partnerships can be
4 used to increase public understanding
5 and awareness of United States diplo-
6 matic efforts.

7 “(v) A plan for better targeting for-
8 eign subnational governments through
9 State and United States Agency for Inter-
10 national Development foreign assistance
11 and diplomatic engagement, including an
12 assessment of existing efforts and best
13 practices, recommendations for expansion
14 and new initiatives to better leverage sub-
15 national governments to improve United
16 States foreign policy effectiveness including
17 public diplomacy, and emphasizing govern-
18 ance and public health.

19 “(vi) Any other matters as determined
20 relevant by the Ambassador.

21 “(B) BRIEFINGS.—Not later than 30 days
22 after the submission of the report required
23 under subparagraph (A), and annually there-
24 after, the Ambassador shall brief the Committee
25 on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the

1 Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of
2 Representatives on the work of the Office and
3 any changes made to the organizational struc-
4 ture or funding of the Office.

5 “(6) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

6 “(A) MUNICIPAL.—The term ‘municipal’
7 means, with respect to the government of a mu-
8 nicipality, a municipality with a population of
9 not fewer than 100,000 people.

10 “(B) STATE.—The term ‘State’ means the
11 50 States, the District of Columbia, and any
12 territory or possession of the United States.

13 “(C) SUBNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT.—The
14 term ‘subnational engagement’ means formal
15 meetings or events between elected officials of
16 State or municipal governments and their for-
17 eign counterparts.”.

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