

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 599

To establish the Department of State Student Internship Program as a paid internship program to provide students with the opportunity to learn about a career in diplomacy and foreign affairs, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 4, 2021

Mr. BOOKER (for himself and Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

A BILL

To establish the Department of State Student Internship Program as a paid internship program to provide students with the opportunity to learn about a career in diplomacy and foreign affairs, 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 “Department of State
5 Student Internship Program Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. DEPARTMENT OF STATE STUDENT INTERNSHIP**
2 **PROGRAM.**

3 (a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary of State shall es-
4 tablish the Department of State Student Internship Pro-
5 gram (in this section referred to as the “Program”) to
6 offer internship opportunities at the Department of State
7 to eligible students to raise awareness of the essential role
8 of diplomacy in the conduct of United States foreign policy
9 and the realization of United States foreign policy objec-
10 tives.

11 (b) **ELIGIBILITY.**—To be eligible to participate in the
12 Program, an applicant shall—

13 (1) be enrolled, not less than half-time, at—

14 (A) an institution of higher education (as
15 such term is defined section 102 of the Higher
16 Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002)); or

17 (B) an institution of higher education
18 based outside the United States, as determined
19 by the Secretary of State;

20 (2) be able to receive and hold an appropriate
21 security clearance; and

22 (3) satisfy such other criteria as established by
23 the Secretary.

24 (c) **SELECTION.**—The Secretary of State shall estab-
25 lish selection criteria for students to be admitted into the
26 Program that includes the following:

1 (1) Demonstrable interest in a career in foreign
2 affairs.

3 (2) Academic performance.

4 (3) Such other criteria as determined by the
5 Secretary.

6 (d) OUTREACH.—The Secretary of State shall adver-
7 tise the Program widely, including on the internet,
8 through the Department of State’s Diplomats in Resi-
9 dence program, and through other outreach and recruiting
10 initiatives targeting undergraduate and graduate students.
11 The Secretary shall actively recruit people belonging to
12 traditionally under represented groups, including by con-
13 ducting targeted outreach at minority serving institutions
14 (as such term is described in section 371(a) of the Higher
15 Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1067q(a)), to promote
16 diversity, as defined in subsection (e).

17 (e) DIVERSITY.—The term “diversity” means those
18 classes of persons protected under the Civil Rights Act of
19 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000a et seq.) and the Americans with
20 Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.).

21 (f) COMPENSATION.—

22 (1) IN GENERAL.—Students participating in the
23 Program shall be paid at least—

1 (A) the amount specified in section 6(a)(1)
2 of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29
3 U.S.C. 206(a)(1)); or

4 (B) the minimum wage of the jurisdiction
5 in which the internship is located, whichever is
6 greatest.

7 (2) HOUSING ASSISTANCE.—

8 (A) ABROAD.—The Secretary of State
9 shall provide housing to a student participating
10 in the Program whose permanent address is
11 within the United States if the location of the
12 internship in which such student is partici-
13 pating is outside the United States.

14 (B) DOMESTIC.—The Secretary of State is
15 authorized to provide housing to a student par-
16 ticipating in the Program whose permanent ad-
17 dress is within the United States if the location
18 of the internship in which such student is par-
19 ticipating is more than 50 miles away from
20 such student's permanent address.

21 (3) TRAVEL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary of
22 State shall provide a student participating in the
23 Program whose permanent address is within the
24 United States financial assistance to cover the costs
25 of travel once to and once from the location of the

1 internship in which such student is participating, in-
2 cluding travel by air, train, bus, or other transit as
3 appropriate, if the location of such internship is—

4 (A) more than 50 miles from such stu-
5 dent's permanent address; or

6 (B) outside the United States.

7 (g) WORKING WITH INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDU-
8 CATION.—The Secretary of State is authorized to enter
9 into agreements with institutions of higher education to
10 structure internships to ensure such internships satisfy
11 criteria for academic programs in which participants in
12 such internships are enrolled.

13 (h) TRANSITION PERIOD.—

14 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than three years
15 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Sec-
16 retary of State shall transition all unpaid internship
17 programs of the Department of State, to the max-
18 imum extent practicable and excluding internships
19 not administered by the Department, to internship
20 programs that offer compensation, such as the Pro-
21 gram and the Foreign Service Internship Program.

22 (2) WAIVER AUTHORITY.—The Secretary of
23 State may waive the transition requirement under
24 paragraph (1) for a period of not more than one
25 year if the Secretary of State—

1 (A) determines that such a waiver is nec-
2 essary; and

3 (B) submits to the Committee on Foreign
4 Relations of the Senate and the Committee on
5 Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives
6 a report providing a justification for such a
7 waiver.

8 (i) REPORTS.—Not later than 18 months after the
9 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State
10 shall submit to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the
11 Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the
12 House of Representatives a report that includes the fol-
13 lowing:

14 (1) Information regarding the number of stu-
15 dents, disaggregated by race, ethnicity, gender, insti-
16 tution of higher learning, home State, State where
17 each student graduated from high school, and dis-
18 ability status, who applied to the Program, were of-
19 fered a position, and participated.

20 (2) Information on the number of security
21 clearance investigations started and the timeline for
22 such investigations, including whether such inves-
23 tigation were completed or if, and when, an interim
24 security clearance was granted.

1 (3) Information on expenditures on the Pro-
2 gram.

3 (4) Information regarding the Department of
4 State's compliance with subsection (g).

5 (j) VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION.—

6 (1) IN GENERAL.—Nothing in this section may
7 be construed to compel any student to participate in
8 the collection of data or divulge any personal infor-
9 mation described in subsection (h). Students shall be
10 informed that their participation in the data collec-
11 tion contemplated by this title is voluntary.

12 (2) PRIVACY PROTECTION.—Any data collected
13 under this section shall be subject to the relevant
14 privacy protection statutes and regulations applica-
15 ble to Federal employees.

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