

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2412

To establish an Office for Indigenous Affairs, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 27, 2025

Mr. CASE (for himself and Mr. MCGOVERN) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Natural Resources, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To establish an Office for Indigenous 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 “Indigenous Diplomacy
5 and Engagement Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) There are an estimated 476,000,000 Indige-
9 nous Peoples worldwide who share a common herit-

1 age of collective ancestral ties to the lands and nat-
2 ural resources where they and their ancestors live or
3 have lived together with their own unique cultures,
4 languages and traditions.

5 (2) The Indigenous Peoples of the world also
6 share a common challenge and goal of preserving
7 and protecting their ancestral lands and natural re-
8 sources and unique cultures, languages and tradi-
9 tions.

10 (3) The status, rights, challenges and goals of
11 Indigenous Peoples worldwide have been recognized
12 by various international organizations, including by
13 the United Nations in its September 13, 2007, Dec-
14 laration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

15 (4) The United States should expand its direct
16 engagement with Indigenous Peoples worldwide in
17 order to better assist Indigenous Peoples to achieve
18 their goals and focus on common challenges and op-
19 portunities.

20 **SEC. 3. COMPREHENSIVE INTERNATIONAL STRATEGY FOR**
21 **PROMOTING DIPLOMACY AND ENGAGEMENT**
22 **WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLES.**

23 (a) DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF
24 STRATEGY.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the
25 enactment of this Act, and every 5 years thereafter, the

1 President, acting through the Coordinator for Indigenous
2 Affairs appointed pursuant to section 4(b), shall—

3 (1) develop and implement a comprehensive, 5-
4 year international strategy for promoting diplomacy
5 and engagements with international Indigenous peo-
6 ples; and

7 (2) submit to the appropriate congressional
8 committees such strategy.

9 (b) ELEMENTS.—The strategy required by subsection
10 (a) shall include the following elements:

11 (1) An identification, for purposes of the strat-
12 egy, of at least 10 and not more than 20 countries
13 that—

14 (A) are geographically, ethnically, and cul-
15 turally diverse; and

16 (B) have significant populations of Indige-
17 nous peoples.

18 (2) An assessment of the following with respect
19 to each country identified pursuant to paragraph
20 (1):

21 (A) The nature and extent of United
22 States diplomacy and engagement with inter-
23 national Indigenous peoples in the country.

24 (B) The efforts of the government of the
25 country to promote and facilitate people-to-peo-

1 ple engagements involving international Indige-
2 nous peoples and domestic Indigenous peoples.

3 (C) Opportunities for the United States to
4 establish or enhance diplomacy and engagement
5 with international Indigenous peoples in the
6 country and how such establishment or en-
7 hancement would support the broader foreign
8 policy goals of the United States.

9 (D) Metrics by which to evaluate the over-
10 all progress of United States efforts to promote
11 and facilitate diplomacy and engagements with
12 international Indigenous peoples in the country.

13 (3) A plan (developed taking into consideration
14 the results of the assessment under paragraph (2)),
15 including an outline of specific programs, activities,
16 or other efforts that may be conducted, to—

17 (A) promote and facilitate, in cooperation
18 with the government of each country identified
19 pursuant to paragraph (1), activities that en-
20 hance diplomacy and engagement with the In-
21 digenous peoples of that country; and

22 (B) coordinate regarding such promotion
23 and facilitation with existing programs and ini-
24 tiatives involving Indigenous peoples, including
25 coordination with the heads of nongovernmental

1 organizations, civil society, and Indigenous
2 groups.

3 (4) An identification of the general levels of re-
4 sources necessary on an annual basis to implement
5 the plan under paragraph (3) in each country identi-
6 fied pursuant to paragraph (1), taking into account
7 activities and funding provided by the country and
8 multilateral institutions and leveraging private sector
9 resources.

10 (5) An identification of the relevant Federal de-
11 partments and agencies conducting the programs,
12 activities, and other efforts described with respect to
13 the plan required by paragraph (3).

14 (6) For each such Federal department or agen-
15 cy, an assessment of the anticipated contributions of
16 that department or agency (including technical, fi-
17 nancial, and in-kind contributions) to implement
18 such plan.

19 (c) COLLABORATION.—In developing the strategy
20 under subsection (a), the President, acting through the
21 Coordinator, shall consult with—

22 (1) the Secretary of State;

23 (2) the Secretary of the Interior;

24 (3) the Administrator of the United States
25 Agency for International Development;

1 (4) the Chief Executive Officer of the Millen-
 2 nium Challenge Corporation;

3 (5) the Chief Executive Officer of the Develop-
 4 ment Finance Corporation;

5 (6) the Advisory Commission on Indigenous
 6 Peoples established under section 6; and

7 (7) nongovernmental organizations that dem-
 8 onstrate sufficient background, knowledge, and ex-
 9 pertise—

10 (A) working on the issues of Indigenous
 11 rights or resources; or

12 (B) engaging with international Indigenous
 13 peoples.

14 (d) SUSTAINABILITY AND IMPACT CONSIDER-
 15 ATIONS.—In implementing the strategy under subsection
 16 (a) and the plan required by subsection (b)(3), the Presi-
 17 dent shall ensure that the policies and initiatives carried
 18 out pursuant to such strategy are designed to achieve
 19 maximum impact and long-term sustainability.

20 **SEC. 4. OFFICE FOR INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS.**

21 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established an Office
 22 for Indigenous Affairs (in this section referred to as the
 23 “Office”) for the purpose of coordinating all efforts of the
 24 Federal Government regarding diplomacy and engage-
 25 ments with international Indigenous peoples.

1 (b) COORDINATOR.—The Office shall be headed by
2 the Coordinator for Indigenous Affairs (in this section re-
3 ferred to as the “Coordinator”), who shall—

4 (1) be appointed by the President, by and with
5 the advice and consent of the Senate;

6 (2) report directly to the Secretary of State;
7 and

8 (3) have the rank and status of Ambassador at
9 Large.

10 (c) DUTIES.—The Coordinator shall have the fol-
11 lowing responsibilities:

12 (1) To design, oversee, and coordinate activities
13 and programs of the Federal Government relating to
14 diplomacy and engagement with international Indig-
15 enous peoples.

16 (2) To direct United States resources to—

17 (A) increase and enhance diplomatic ex-
18 change and engagements with international In-
19 digenous peoples; and

20 (B) assist in the development of the com-
21 prehensive international strategy under section
22 3 to promote diplomacy and engagements with
23 international Indigenous peoples and domestic
24 Indigenous peoples.

1 (3) To coordinate all policies, programs, and
2 funding relating to diplomacy and engagements with
3 international Indigenous peoples of relevant United
4 States Government agencies, including—

5 (A) the Department of State;

6 (B) the United States Agency for Inter-
7 national Development;

8 (C) the Department of the Interior;

9 (D) the Millennium Challenge Corporation;

10 and

11 (E) the Development Finance Corporation.

12 (4) To design, integrate, and, as appropriate,
13 implement policies, programs, and activities related
14 to Indigenous health, education, economic develop-
15 ment, international Indigenous human rights, and
16 protection of international Indigenous peoples in hu-
17 manitarian crises.

18 (5) To encourage the Secretary of the Interior
19 and the Administrator of the United States Agency
20 for International Development to establish
21 department- or agency-specific (as the case may be)
22 programmatic guidelines regarding diplomacy and
23 engagements between international Indigenous peo-
24 ples and domestic Indigenous peoples and to monitor
25 the implementation of those guidelines.

1 (d) PRINCIPAL ADVISOR.—In addition to the duties
2 under subsection (c), the Coordinator shall serve as the
3 principal advisor to the Secretary of State regarding mat-
4 ters relating to international Indigenous peoples.

5 (e) DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATION.—Subject to the
6 direction of the President and the Secretary of State, the
7 Coordinator may represent the United States in matters
8 relevant to diplomacy and engagements with international
9 Indigenous peoples in—

10 (1) contacts with Tribal representatives in other
11 countries, foreign governments, nongovernmental or-
12 ganizations, the United Nations and its specialized
13 agencies, and other international organizations of
14 which the United States is a member; and

15 (2) multilateral conferences and meetings rel-
16 evant to diplomacy and engagements with inter-
17 national Indigenous peoples.

18 (f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
19 authorized to be appropriated to the Coordinator such
20 sums as may be necessary to carry out the duties and re-
21 sponsibilities of the Office for Indigenous Affairs as estab-
22 lished by this section. Amount appropriated pursuant to
23 this authorization are authorized to remain available until
24 expended and shall supplement, not supplant, amounts

1 otherwise authorized to be appropriated to carry out the
2 purposes described in this section.

3 **SEC. 5. ANNUAL REPORT ON PROMOTING INTERNATIONAL**
4 **DIPLOMACY AND ENGAGEMENT WITH INDIG-**
5 **ENOUS PEOPLE.**

6 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after date
7 of the submission of the comprehensive international strat-
8 egy developed under section 3, and every 4 years there-
9 after, the Secretary of State, acting through the Coordi-
10 nator for Indigenous Affairs appointed pursuant to section
11 4(b), shall submit to the appropriate congressional com-
12 mittees a report to be titled the “Report on International
13 Indigenous Diplomacy and Engagement”.

14 (b) MATTERS.—Each report under subsection (a)
15 shall include the following:

16 (1) The goals and objectives of the comprehen-
17 sive international strategy developed under section 3.

18 (2) The assessment of the Coordinator of the
19 effectiveness to date of the strategy, including the
20 specific criteria used in such assessment.

21 (3) A description of the coordination of all Fed-
22 eral Government resources and international activi-
23 ties to engage with and support international Indige-
24 nous peoples that includes—

1 (A) an identification of the Federal depart-
2 ments or agencies involved;

3 (B) a description of the coordination be-
4 tween the heads of such Federal departments
5 and agencies; and

6 (C) a description of the coordination with
7 non-Federal Government entities, including for-
8 eign governments, multilateral organizations
9 and institutions, and nongovernmental organi-
10 zations.

11 (4) A description of the relationship between—

12 (A) efforts to support international Indige-
13 nous peoples;

14 (B) other United States assistance strate-
15 gies in developing countries; and

16 (C) diplomatic relationships with such
17 countries.

18 (5) A description of efforts to design, support,
19 and implement activities in response to the needs of
20 international Indigenous peoples and in furtherance
21 of United States diplomatic and peacemaking initia-
22 tives.

23 (6) A description of data collection efforts con-
24 ducted under programs authorized by this Act or the
25 amendments made by this Act.

1 (7) A description of any significant efforts by
2 bilateral or multilateral donors in support of inter-
3 national Indigenous peoples.

4 (8) An identification of all contractors, sub-
5 contractors, grantees, and subgrantees receiving
6 United States funds for programs supporting inter-
7 national Indigenous peoples.

8 (9) Recommendations related to best practices,
9 effective strategies, and suggested improvements to
10 enhance the impact of efforts to support inter-
11 national Indigenous peoples.

12 (10) A description of United States resources
13 that are being used—

14 (A) to implement the strategy developed
15 under section 3;

16 (B) to respond to needs of international
17 Indigenous people;

18 (C) to promote equity and advance the sta-
19 tus of international Indigenous people; and

20 (D) to encourage all parties to engage with
21 and support the participation of international
22 Indigenous peoples in decisions affecting their
23 lands, cultures, and traditions, the allocation of
24 natural resources, and the protection of the civil
25 and political rights of such peoples.

1 **SEC. 6. ADVISORY COMMISSION ON INDIGENOUS PEOPLES.**

2 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established within
3 the Department of State an Advisory Commission on In-
4 digenous Peoples (in this section referred to as the “Advi-
5 sory Commission”).

6 (b) MEMBERSHIP.—

7 (1) APPOINTMENT.—The Advisory Commission
8 shall be composed of—

9 (A) the Coordinator for Indigenous Affairs
10 appointed pursuant to section 4(b), who shall
11 serve as chair;

12 (B) 8 members appointed by the Secretary
13 of State, from among individuals who are not
14 officers or employees of the Federal Govern-
15 ment;

16 (C) 3 members appointed by the President
17 pro tempore of the Senate on the joint rec-
18 ommendation of the Majority and Minority
19 Leaders of the Senate;

20 (D) 3 members appointed by the Speaker
21 of the House of Representatives on the joint
22 recommendation of the Majority and Minority
23 Leaders of the House of Representatives; and

24 (E) 1 representative from each of—

25 (i) the National Congress of American
26 Indians;

- 1 (ii) the Alaska Federation of Natives;
- 2 and
- 3 (iii) the Office of Hawaiian Affairs.

4 (2) SELECTION.—The members of the Advisory
5 Commission described in subparagraphs (B) through
6 (D) of paragraph (1) shall be selected from among—

7 (A) academics representative of the various
8 scholarly approaches to the history of the rights
9 and resources of international Indigenous peo-
10 ples;

11 (B) representatives of nongovernmental or-
12 ganizations and other institutions having the
13 background, knowledge, and expertise related to
14 diplomacy and engagements with international
15 Indigenous peoples and domestic Indigenous
16 peoples; and

17 (C) other distinguished individuals noted
18 for their diverse background, knowledge, and
19 expertise in the fields relevant to international
20 Indigenous peoples, including foreign affairs,
21 human rights, and international law.

22 (3) TIME OF APPOINTMENT.—The appoint-
23 ments of the members described in subparagraphs
24 (B) through (D) of paragraph (1) should be made

1 not later than 120 days after the date of the enact-
2 ment of this Act.

3 (4) TERMS.—The term of each member ap-
4 pointed in accordance with paragraph (3) to the Ad-
5 visory Commission shall be 3 years. Members shall
6 be eligible for reappointment to a second term.

7 (c) DUTIES.—The Advisory Commission shall—

8 (1) annually make recommendations to the Sec-
9 retary of State regarding best practices to promote
10 diplomacy and engagements with international In-
11 digenous peoples and the effective integration of
12 such practices into the foreign policy of the United
13 States, including assistance programming; and

14 (2) consult with members of the Federal Gov-
15 ernment, domestic and international Indigenous
16 leaders, and with private groups and individuals with
17 expertise on the promotion of diplomacy and engage-
18 ments with international Indigenous peoples.

19 (d) HEARINGS.—In carrying out this section, the Ad-
20 visory Commission may conduct such hearings, sit and at
21 such times and places, take such testimony, and receive
22 such evidence, as the Advisory Commission considers ap-
23 propriate.

24 (e) FUNDING.—Members of the Advisory Commission
25 shall be allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu

1 of subsistence at rates authorized for employees of agen-
 2 cies under subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5, United
 3 States Code, while away from their homes or regular
 4 places of business in the performance of duties for the Ad-
 5 visory Commission.

6 (f) REPORT OF THE ADVISORY COMMISSION.—Not
 7 later than April 1 of each year, the Advisory Commission
 8 shall submit to the President, the Secretary of State, and
 9 the appropriate congressional committees a report that
 10 sets forth its findings and recommendations for United
 11 States policy and programs.

12 **SEC. 7. TRAINING FOR FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICERS ON**
 13 **INTERNATIONAL INDIGENOUS DIPLOMACY**
 14 **AND ENGAGEMENT.**

15 Section 708 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (22
 16 U.S.C. 4028) is amended by adding at the end the fol-
 17 lowing:

18 “(e) INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES.—The Secretary of
 19 State, acting through the Coordinator for Indigenous Af-
 20 fairs, shall establish, as part of the standard training pro-
 21 vided for chiefs of mission, deputy chiefs of mission, and
 22 other officers of the Service prior to departure for posting
 23 outside the United States, training on the history and cul-
 24 ture of the Indigenous communities that reside near the
 25 applicable posts of assignment, along with guidance on

1 ways to engage with and provide direct support to individ-
2 uals from those communities.”.

3 **SEC. 8. DEFINITIONS.**

4 In this Act:

5 (1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMIT-
6 TEES.—The term “appropriate congressional com-
7 mittees” means—

8 (A) the Committee on Foreign Affairs and
9 the Committee on Natural Resources of the
10 House of Representatives; and

11 (B) the Committee on Foreign Relations
12 and the Committee on Indian Affairs of the
13 Senate.

14 (2) COORDINATOR.—The term “Coordinator”
15 means the Coordinator for Indigenous Affairs ap-
16 pointed pursuant to section 4(b).

17 (3) DOMESTIC INDIGENOUS PEOPLES.—The
18 term “domestic Indigenous peoples” means—

19 (A) Indians, as that term is defined in sec-
20 tion 4(d) of the Indian Self-Determination and
21 Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b(d));

22 (B) Native Hawaiians, as that term is de-
23 fined in section 6207 of the Native Hawaiian
24 Education Act (20 U.S.C. 7517);

1 (C) Alaska Natives, within the meaning
2 provided for the term “Native” in section 3(b)
3 of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43
4 U.S.C. 1602(b)); and

5 (D) Pacific Islanders, as such term is de-
6 fined in section 815 of the Native American
7 Programs Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 2992c).

8 (4) INDIGENOUS PEOPLES.—The term “Indige-
9 nous peoples”—

10 (A) means distinct social and cultural
11 groups that the Coordinator for Indigenous Af-
12 fairs designates as such, taking into account
13 relevant factors such as internationally recog-
14 nized definitions of Indigenous Peoples, histor-
15 ical context, and sociological circumstances; and

16 (B) includes domestic Indigenous peoples
17 and international Indigenous peoples.

18 (5) INTERNATIONAL INDIGENOUS PEOPLES.—
19 The term “international Indigenous peoples” means
20 the peoples indigenous to foreign countries or for-
21 eign territories.

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