

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 555

To direct the Secretary of State to establish a national registry of Korean American divided families, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 12, 2025

Mr. KAINE (for himself, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. COONS, Mr. KELLY, and Mr. RICKETTS) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of State to establish a national registry of Korean American divided families, 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 “Korean American Di-
5 vided Families National Registry Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. NATIONAL REGISTRY OF KOREAN AMERICAN DI-**
7 **VIDED FAMILIES.**

8 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State, acting
9 through the Special Envoy on North Korean Human

1 Rights Issues, the Assistant Secretary of State for Con-
 2 sular Affairs, or such other individual as the Secretary
 3 may designate, shall—

4 (1) identify Korean American families who wish
 5 to be reunited with family members residing in
 6 North Korea from which such Korean American
 7 families were divided after the signing of the Agree-
 8 ment Concerning a Military Armistice in Korea,
 9 signed at Panmunjom July 27, 1953 (commonly re-
 10 ferred to as the “Korean War Armistice Agree-
 11 ment”), in anticipation of future reunions for such
 12 families and family members, including in-person
 13 and video reunions; and

14 (2) establish a national registry of the names
 15 and other relevant information of such Korean
 16 American families—

17 (A) to facilitate such future reunions; and

18 (B) to provide for a repository of informa-
 19 tion about such Korean American families and
 20 family members in North Korea, including in-
 21 formation about individuals who may be de-
 22 ceased.

23 (b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
 24 authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of State
 25 \$1,000,000 to carry out this section.

1 **SEC. 3. ACTIONS TO FACILITATE DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE**
2 **UNITED STATES AND NORTH KOREA.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State should
4 take such actions as may be necessary to ensure that any
5 direct dialogue between the United States and North
6 Korea includes progress towards holding future reunions
7 for Korean American families and their family members
8 in North Korea.

9 (b) CONSULTATIONS.—The Secretary of State should
10 consult with the Government of the Republic of Korea,
11 as appropriate, in carrying out this section.

12 (c) REPORTING REQUIREMENT.—

13 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State, act-
14 ing through the Special Envoy on North Korean
15 Human Rights Issues, shall include in each report
16 required under section 107(d) of the North Korean
17 Human Rights Act of 2004 (22 U.S.C. 7817(d)) a
18 description of the consultations described in sub-
19 section (b) conducted during the year preceding the
20 submission of the report.

21 (2) ELEMENTS.—The reporting required under
22 paragraph (1) should include—

23 (A) the status of the national registry es-
24 tablished pursuant to section 2(a)(2);

25 (B) the number of individuals included on
26 the registry who—

1 (i) have met their family members in
2 North Korea during previous reunions; and

3 (ii) have yet to meet their family
4 members in North Korea during previous
5 reunions;

6 (C) a summary of responses by North
7 Korea to requests to hold reunions of divided
8 families; and

9 (D) a description of actions taken by
10 North Korea that prevent the emigration of
11 family members of Korean American families.

12 (d) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES
13 DEFINED.—In this Act, the term “appropriate congres-
14 sional committees” means the Committee on Foreign Re-
15 lations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Af-
16 fairs of the House of Representatives.

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