

117TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. _____

To establish a comprehensive, long-term United States strategy and policy
for the Pacific Islands, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO introduced the following bill; which was read twice and
referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To establish a comprehensive, long-term United States strat-
egy and policy for the Pacific Islands, 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 TITLES; TABLE OF CONTENTS.**

4 (a) SHORT TITLES.—This Act may be cited as the
5 “Boosting Long-term U.S. Engagement in the Pacific
6 Act” or “BLUE Pacific Act”.

7 (b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for
8 this Act is as follows:

- Sec. 1. Short titles; table of contents.
- Sec. 2. Findings.
- Sec. 3. Statement of policy.

Sec. 4. Definitions.

Sec. 5. Authority to consolidate reports; form of reports.

TITLE I—UNITED STATES ENGAGEMENT AND COUNTERING
TRANSNATIONAL CRIME

Sec. 101. Diplomatic presence in the Pacific Islands.

Sec. 102. International Law Enforcement Academy for the Pacific Islands.

Sec. 103. Security assistance for the Pacific Islands.

Sec. 104. Countering transnational crime.

Sec. 105. Coordination with regional allies.

TITLE II—DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

Sec. 201. Trade development with the Pacific Islands.

Sec. 202. Trade capacity building initiative for the Pacific Islands.

Sec. 203. Emergency preparedness initiative for the Pacific Islands.

Sec. 204. Peace Corps in the Pacific Islands.

Sec. 205. Public health in the Pacific Islands.

Sec. 206. Education assistance.

Sec. 207. Climate resilient development in the Pacific Islands.

Sec. 208. Coordination with other Federal agencies and cooperation and participation of nongovernmental United States entities.

TITLE III—PROMOTION OF SHARED VALUES

Sec. 301. Press freedom in the Pacific Islands.

Sec. 302. United States Agency for Global Media.

Sec. 303. Gender equality.

Sec. 304. Pacific Islands Leadership Development Initiative.

Sec. 305. Civil society engagement and development.

1 SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

2 Congress finds the following:

3 (1) The Pacific Islands—

4 (A) are home to roughly 10,000,000 resi-
5 dents, including more than 8,600,000 in Papua
6 New Guinea, constituting diverse and dynamic
7 cultures and peoples;

8 (B) are spread across an expanse of the
9 Pacific Ocean equivalent to 15 percent of the
10 Earth's surface, including the 3 subregions of
11 Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia; and

1 (C) face shared challenges in development
2 that have distinct local contexts, including cli-
3 mate change, rising sea levels, geographic dis-
4 tances from major markets, and vulnerability to
5 external shocks such as natural disasters.

6 (2) The United States is a Pacific country with
7 longstanding ties and shared values and interests
8 with the Pacific Islands, including through the Com-
9 pacts of Free Association with the Freely Associated
10 States, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the
11 Federated States of Micronesia, and the Republic of
12 Palau.

13 (3) The United States has vital national secu-
14 rity interests in the Pacific Islands, including—

15 (A) protecting regional peace and security
16 that fully respects the sovereignty of all nations;

17 (B) advancing economic prosperity free
18 from coercion through trade and sustainable de-
19 velopment; and

20 (C) supporting democracy, good govern-
21 ance, the rule of law, and human rights and
22 fundamental freedoms.

23 (4) Successive United States administrations
24 have recognized the importance of the Pacific region,

1 including the Pacific Islands, in high-level strategic
2 documents, including

3 (A) the 2015 United States National Security
4 Strategy, which—

5 (i) first declared the rebalance to Asia
6 and the Pacific;

7 (ii) affirmed the United States as a
8 Pacific nation; and

9 (iii) paved the way for subsequent
10 United States engagement with the Pacific
11 Islands, including several new policies fo-
12 cused on conservation and resilience to cli-
13 mate change that were announced in Sep-
14 tember 2016;

15 (B) the 2017 United States National Security
16 Strategy, which includes a commitment to
17 “shore up fragile partner states in the Pacific
18 Islands region to reduce their vulnerability to
19 economic fluctuations and natural disasters”.

20 (C) the 2019 Indo-Pacific Strategy Report,
21 which identified the Pacific Islands as “critical
22 to U.S. strategy because of our shared values,
23 interests, and commitments” and committed the
24 United States to “building capacity and resil-
25 ience to address maritime security; Illegal, Un-

1 reported, and Unregulated fishing; drug traf-
2 ficking; and resilience to address climate change
3 and disaster response”.

4 (5) The United States has deepened its diplo-
5 matic engagement with the Pacific Islands through
6 several recent initiatives, including—

7 (A) the Pacific Pledge, which provided an
8 additional \$100,000,000 in 2019 and
9 \$200,000,000 in 2020, in addition to approxi-
10 mately \$350,000,000 that the United States
11 provides annually to the region to support
12 shared priorities in economic and human devel-
13 opment, climate change, and more; and

14 (B) the Small and Less Populous Island
15 Economies Initiative, which was launched in
16 March 2021 to strengthen United States col-
17 laboration with island countries and territories,
18 including in the Pacific Islands, regarding
19 COVID–19 economic challenges, long-term eco-
20 nomic development, climate change, and other
21 shared interests.

22 (6) The Boe Declaration on Regional Security,
23 signed by leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum in
24 2018, affirmed that climate change “remains the
25 single greatest threat to the livelihoods, security, and

1 well-being of the peoples of the Pacific” and asserted
2 “the sovereign right of every Member to conduct its
3 national affairs free of external interference and co-
4 ercion”.

5 (7) The Asian Development Bank has estimated
6 that the Pacific Islands region has up to
7 \$2,800,000,000 per year in investment needs
8 through 2030, in addition to \$300,000,000 per year
9 for climate mitigation and adaptation during the
10 same period.

11 (8) The Pacific Islands swiftly enacted effective
12 policies to prevent and contain the spread of the
13 Coronavirus Disease 2019 (commonly referred to as
14 “COVID–19”) pandemic to their populations. The
15 United States has provided more than \$130,000,000
16 in assistance to the Pacific Islands for their
17 COVID–19 response. However, priorities must be
18 met to ensure continued success in preventing the
19 spread of the COVID–19 pandemic, achieving swift
20 and widespread vaccinations, and pursuing long-
21 term economic recovery in the Pacific Islands, in-
22 cluding through—

23 (A) expanding testing capacity and acquisi-
24 tion of needed medical supplies, including avail-

1 able COVID–19 vaccines, and supporting vac-
2 cination efforts through a reliable supply chain;

3 (B) planning for lifting of lockdowns and
4 reopening of economic and social activities; and

5 (C) mitigating and recovering from the im-
6 pacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the health
7 system and the reliance on food and energy im-
8 ports and lost tourism revenue and other eco-
9 nomic and food security damages caused by the
10 COVID–19 pandemic.

11 (9) Since 1966, thousands of Peace Corps vol-
12 unteers have proudly served in the Pacific Islands,
13 building strong people-to-people relationships and
14 demonstrating the United States commitment to
15 peace and development in the region. Before the
16 COVID–19 pandemic, the Peace Corps maintained a
17 presence in 4 countries of the Pacific Islands. Peace
18 Corps volunteers continue to be in high demand in
19 the Pacific Islands and have been requested across
20 the region.

21 **SEC. 3. STATEMENT OF POLICY.**

22 It is the policy of the United States—

23 (1) to develop and commit to a comprehensive,
24 multifaceted, and principled United States policy in
25 the Pacific Islands that—

1 (A) promotes peace, security, and pros-
2 perity for all countries through a rules-based
3 regional order that respects the sovereignty and
4 political independence of all nations;

5 (B) preserves the Pacific Ocean as an open
6 and vibrant corridor for international maritime
7 trade and promotes trade and sustainable devel-
8 opment that—

9 (i) supports inclusive economic growth
10 and autonomy for all nations; and

11 (ii) addresses socioeconomic chal-
12 lenges related to public health, education,
13 renewable energy, digital connectivity, and
14 more;

15 (C) supports regional efforts to address the
16 challenges posed by climate change, including
17 by strengthening resilience to natural disasters
18 and through responsible stewardship of natural
19 resources;

20 (D) improves civil society, strengthens
21 democratic governance and the rule of law, and
22 promotes human rights and the preservation of
23 the Pacific Islands region's unique cultural her-
24 itages;

1 (E) assists the Pacific Islands in pre-
2 venting and containing the spread of the
3 COVID–19 pandemic and in pursuing long-
4 term economic recovery; and

5 (F) supports existing regional architecture
6 and international norms;

7 (2) to support the vision, values, and objectives
8 of existing regional multilateral institutions and
9 frameworks, such as the Pacific Islands Forum and
10 the Pacific Community, including—

11 (A) the 2014 Framework for Pacific Re-
12 gionalism;

13 (B) the 2018 Boe Declaration on Regional
14 Security; and

15 (C) the Boe Declaration Action Plan;

16 (3) to extend and renew the provisions of the
17 Compacts of Free Association and related United
18 States law that will expire in 2023, for the Republic
19 of the Marshall Islands and the Federated States of
20 Micronesia, and in 2024, for the Republic of Palau,
21 unless they are extended and renewed; and

22 (4) to work closely with United States allies
23 and partners with existing relationships and inter-
24 ests in the Pacific Islands, including Australia,

1 Japan, New Zealand, and Taiwan, in advancing
2 common goals.

3 **SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.**

4 In this Act:

5 (1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term “Adminis-
6 trator” means the Administrator of the United
7 States Agency for International Development.

8 (2) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMIT-
9 TEES.—Except as otherwise provided, the term “ap-
10 propriate congressional committees” means—

11 (A) the Committee on Foreign Relations of
12 the Senate; and

13 (B) the Committee on Foreign Affairs of
14 the House of Representatives.

15 (3) PACIFIC ISLANDS.—The term “Pacific Is-
16 lands” means the Cook Islands, the Republic of Fiji,
17 the Republic of Kiribati, the Republic of the Mar-
18 shall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia,
19 the Republic of Nauru, Niue, the Republic of Palau,
20 the Independent State of Papua New Guinea, the
21 Independent State of Samoa, the Solomon Islands,
22 the Kingdom of Tonga, Tuvalu, and the Republic of
23 Vanuatu.

24 (4) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
25 the Secretary of State.

1 **SEC. 5. AUTHORITY TO CONSOLIDATE REPORTS; FORM OF**
2 **REPORTS.**

3 (a) **AUTHORITY TO CONSOLIDATE REPORTS.**—Any
4 reports required to be submitted to the appropriate con-
5 gressional committees under this Act that are subject to
6 deadlines for submission consisting of the same units of
7 time may be consolidated into a single report that is sub-
8 mitted to appropriate congressional committees pursuant
9 to such deadlines and that contains all information re-
10 quired under such reports.

11 (b) **FORM OF REPORTS.**—Each report required under
12 this Act shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may
13 contain a classified annex.

14 **TITLE I—UNITED STATES EN-**
15 **GAGEMENT AND COUN-**
16 **TERING TRANSNATIONAL**
17 **CRIME**

18 **SEC. 101. DIPLOMATIC PRESENCE IN THE PACIFIC IS-**
19 **LANDS.**

20 (a) **SENSE OF CONGRESS.**—It is the sense of Con-
21 gress that—

22 (1) the strategic importance of the Pacific Is-
23 lands necessitates an examination of whether United
24 States diplomatic, economic, and development en-
25 gagement and presence in the Pacific Islands region
26 is sufficient to effectively support United States ob-

1 jectives and meaningful participation in regional fo-
2 rums;

3 (2) improving shared understanding of, and
4 jointly combating the transnational challenges perti-
5 nent to, the Pacific Islands region with countries of
6 the Pacific Islands and regional partners, such as
7 Australia, New Zealand, Japan, and Taiwan, is vi-
8 tally important to our shared long-term interests of
9 stability, security, and prosperity;

10 (3) the United States should seek to participate
11 in, and support efforts to coordinate, a regional re-
12 sponse toward maritime security, including
13 through—

14 (A) continued United States and Pacific
15 Islands participation in the Pacific Fusion Cen-
16 tre in Vanuatu and the Information Fusion
17 Centre in Singapore; and

18 (B) robust cooperation with regional allies;
19 and

20 (4) the United States Government should com-
21 mit to sending appropriate levels of representation to
22 regional events.

23 (b) REPORT.—

24 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days
25 after the date of the enactment of this Act, and an-

1 nually thereafter for 5 years, the Secretary, in con-
2 sultation with the Secretary of Commerce and the
3 Administrator, shall submit a report to the appro-
4 priate congressional committees regarding the diplo-
5 matic and development presence of the United
6 States in the Pacific Islands.

7 (2) ELEMENTS.—The report required under
8 paragraph (1) shall include—

9 (A) a description of the presence, staffing,
10 programming, and resourcing of operations of
11 the Department of State, the United States
12 Agency for International Development, the
13 United States International Development Fi-
14 nance Corporation, the Millennium Challenge
15 Corporation, and the United States Commercial
16 Service in the Pacific Islands, including pro-
17 gramming and resourcing not specifically allo-
18 cated to the Pacific Islands;

19 (B) a description of the gaps in the pres-
20 ence described under subparagraph (A), includ-
21 ing unfilled full-time equivalent positions;

22 (C) a description of the limitations and
23 challenges such gaps pose to United States
24 strategic objectives, including—

1 (i) gaps in support of the Pacific Is-
2 lands due to operations being conducted
3 from the United States Agency for Inter-
4 national Development offices in Manila and
5 Suva; and

6 (ii) gaps in programming and
7 resourcing; and

8 (D) a strategy to expand and elevate such
9 presence to fill such gaps, including by—

10 (i) establishing new missions;

11 (ii) expanding participation in re-
12 gional forums; and

13 (iii) elevating United States represen-
14 tation in regional forums.

15 (c) **AUTHORITY TO ENHANCE DIPLOMATIC AND ECO-**
16 **NOMIC ENGAGEMENT.**—The Secretary and the Secretary
17 of Commerce are authorized to hire locally employed staff
18 in the Pacific Islands for the purpose of promoting in-
19 creased diplomatic engagement and economic and com-
20 mercial engagement between the United States and the
21 Pacific Islands.

22 (d) **REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION STRAT-**
23 **EGY.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enact-
24 ment of this Act, and every 5 years thereafter, the Admin-
25 istrator shall submit a regional development cooperation

1 strategy for the Pacific Islands to the appropriate congres-
2 sional committees.

3 **SEC. 102. INTERNATIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ACADEMY**
4 **FOR THE PACIFIC ISLANDS.**

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall develop and
6 implement a plan to expand coverage of the International
7 Law Enforcement Academies (ILEA) program for the Pa-
8 cific Islands, including by—

9 (1) expanding coverage of the regional program
10 located in Bangkok, Thailand to the Pacific Islands;

11 or

12 (2) establishing a new regional program for the
13 Pacific Islands.

14 (b) ELEMENTS.—The plan required under subsection
15 (a) shall—

16 (1) require consultation and coordination with
17 existing regional law enforcement entities, including
18 the Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police and civil society,
19 including entities that focus on human rights and
20 specialize in victim-centered approaches; and

21 (2) consider the costs of implementation, effec-
22 tiveness, and capacity of the Pacific Islands to par-
23 ticipate in the ILEA program.

24 (c) BRIEFING.—Not later than 180 days after the
25 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall brief

1 the appropriate congressional committees regarding the
2 plan developed pursuant to subsection (a).

3 **SEC. 103. SECURITY ASSISTANCE FOR THE PACIFIC IS-**
4 **LANDS.**

5 (a) STRATEGY.—

6 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, with the con-
7 currence of the Secretary of Defense, and in coordi-
8 nation with the Secretary of Homeland Security,
9 shall develop and implement a comprehensive strat-
10 egy for providing assistance to build the capacity of
11 local civilian and national security institutions of the
12 Pacific Islands for purposes of—

13 (A) enhancing maritime security and mari-
14 time domain awareness to address challenges
15 such as illegal, unreported, and unregulated
16 fishing;

17 (B) assisting local law enforcement in de-
18 tecting, preventing, and combating human and
19 drug trafficking and other forms of
20 transnational crime;

21 (C) providing essential services to civilian
22 populations and responding to humanitarian
23 challenges caused by natural disasters;

24 (D) participating in efforts by regional in-
25 stitutions and frameworks to coordinate and fa-

1 facilitate cooperation on shared security chal-
2 lenges; and

3 (E) expanding information sharing and
4 working toward operational coordination and
5 interoperability among Pacific Island maritime
6 security forces, including through regional fu-
7 sion centers.

8 (2) PROGRAMS AND AUTHORITIES DE-
9 SCRIBED.—The strategy required under paragraph
10 (1) shall build on the following programs and au-
11 thorities:

12 (A) The International Military Education
13 and Training program.

14 (B) The Foreign Military Financing pro-
15 gram.

16 (C) The Overseas Humanitarian Disaster
17 and Civic Aid program.

18 (D) The authority to build the capacity of
19 foreign security forces under section 333 of title
20 10, United States Code.

21 (E) the authority to provide excess defense
22 articles under section 516 of the Foreign As-
23 sistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2321j).

24 (F) The National Guard State Partnership
25 Program.

1 (3) NATIONAL POLICE FORCES AND COAST
2 GUARDS.—The national police forces and coast
3 guards of the Pacific Islands are eligible to receive
4 assistance under the programs and authorities de-
5 scribed in subparagraphs (B), (C), and (E) of para-
6 graph (2) for purposes of carrying out the strategy
7 required under this subsection.

8 (b) ELEMENTS.—The strategy required under sub-
9 section (a) shall—

10 (1) seek to preserve peace and regional stability
11 in the Pacific Islands; and

12 (2) consider and seek to build upon (without
13 duplicating) existing assistance provided by United
14 States allies and partners.

15 (c) REPORT.—

16 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days
17 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Sec-
18 retary shall submit a report that contains the strat-
19 egy developed pursuant to subsection (a) to—

20 (A) the Committee on Foreign Relations of
21 the Senate;

22 (B) the Committee on Armed Services of
23 the Senate;

24 (C) the Committee on Commerce, Science,
25 and Transportation of the Senate;

1 (D) the Committee on Foreign Affairs of
2 the House of Representatives;

3 (E) the Committee on Armed Services of
4 the House of Representatives; and

5 (F) the Committee on Transportation and
6 Infrastructure of the House of Representatives.

7 (2) MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED.—The report
8 required under paragraph (1) shall include—

9 (A) an assessment of the security chal-
10 lenges in the Pacific Islands;

11 (B) an analysis of demonstrated needs of
12 the Pacific Islands for assistance, including ex-
13 cess defense, to fulfill such needs;

14 (C) a review of existing security assistance
15 programs in the Pacific Islands, including pro-
16 grams and efforts provided by United States al-
17 lies and partners;

18 (D) a plan for training and sustainment
19 programs with respect to such excess defense
20 equipment and related materials, including
21 those with humanitarian and development uses;

22 (E) a list of militaries, national police
23 forces, coast guards, and other national security
24 forces of the Pacific Islands receiving assistance
25 under the strategy;

1 (F) a plan to provide humanitarian assist-
2 ance and disaster relief, if necessary, through
3 the Overseas Humanitarian Disaster and Civic
4 Aid program;

5 (G) a review of existing cross-border mari-
6 time law enforcement operations (commonly
7 known as “shiprider agreements”) with the Pa-
8 cific Islands, including—

9 (i) an assessment of additional
10 resourcing needs to enhance operational
11 capacity; and

12 (ii) a plan to improve on such pro-
13 grams and operations;

14 (H) a review of existing National Guard
15 State Partnership programs with the Pacific Is-
16 lands, including—

17 (i) an assessment of additional oppor-
18 tunities for leveraging such programs to
19 address law enforcement, disaster relief
20 and emergency management, and related
21 priorities; and

22 (ii) a plan to expand, as appropriate,
23 existing and new National Guard State
24 Partnership Programs in the Pacific Is-
25 lands region;

1 (I) a review of current efforts and progress
2 in removing unexploded ordnance in the Pacific
3 Islands, including an assessment of additional
4 resources needed—

5 (i) to ensure continued progress with
6 such efforts; and

7 (ii) to support coordination with re-
8 gional efforts and those of United States
9 allies and partners;

10 (J) a review of existing regional fusion cen-
11 ters and other cooperative intelligence sharing
12 efforts in the Pacific Islands to address mari-
13 time security, transnational crime, natural dis-
14 asters, and other security challenges, including
15 an assessment of opportunities for the United
16 States to participate in such efforts by allo-
17 cating staff and supplying resources;

18 (K) measures to evaluate success for the
19 strategy; and

20 (L) a detailed assessment of the level of
21 appropriations that will be required to achieve
22 the objectives for the strategy in future years.

23 **SEC. 104. COUNTERING TRANSNATIONAL CRIME.**

24 (a) RATIFICATION OF INTERNATIONAL LEGAL IN-
25 STRUMENTS.—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall
2 prioritize efforts to assist the Pacific Islands in rati-
3 fying and implementing international legal conven-
4 tions related to transnational crime, including—

5 (A) the Convention on International Trade
6 in Endangered Species of Wildlife Fauna and
7 Flora, done at Washington March 3, 1973 (27
8 UST 1087; TIAS 8429);

9 (B) the Agreement on Port State Measures
10 to Prevent, Deter, and Eliminate Illegal, Unre-
11 ported, and Unregulated Fishing, done at Rome
12 November 22, 2009, and entered into force
13 June 5, 2016; and

14 (C) relevant protocols supplementing the
15 United Nations Convention Against
16 Transnational Organized Crime, done at New
17 York November 15, 2000, including—

18 (i) the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress,
19 and Punish Trafficking in Person, Espe-
20 cially Women and Children (commonly
21 known as the “Palermo Protocol”), entered
22 into force December 25, 2003; and

23 (ii) the Protocol Against the Smug-
24 gling of Migrants by Land, Sea, and Air,
25 entered into force January 28, 2004.

1 (2) BIENNIAL REPORT.—Not later than 180
2 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and
3 every 2 years thereafter, as appropriate, the Sec-
4 retary shall submit a report to the appropriate con-
5 gressional committees regarding—

6 (A) the status of the progress of each
7 country of the Pacific Islands toward ratifying
8 and implementing international legal conven-
9 tions related to transnational crime; and

10 (B) the plans of the United States for as-
11 sisting countries that have yet to fully ratify
12 such conventions with their respective ratifica-
13 tion efforts.

14 (b) UPDATES OF CERTAIN REPORTS.—The Sec-
15 retary, in coordination with other Federal agencies, as ap-
16 propriate, shall identify and update existing reports re-
17 garding forms of transnational crime affecting the Pacific
18 Islands, such as—

19 (1) the International Narcotics Control Strat-
20 egy Report;

21 (2) the Improving International Fisheries Man-
22 agement Report; and

23 (3) the Trafficking in Persons Report.

24 (c) ILLEGAL LOGGING AND ASSOCIATED TRADE.—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days
2 after the date of the enactment of this Act, and an-
3 nually thereafter, the Secretary, in coordination with
4 the heads of relevant Federal agencies, shall submit
5 a report that identifies countries of the Pacific Is-
6 lands that are countries of concern with respect to
7 illegal logging and associated trade to—

8 (A) the Committee on Foreign Relations of
9 the Senate;

10 (B) the Committee on Finance of the Sen-
11 ate;

12 (C) the Committee on Foreign Affairs of
13 the House of Representatives; and

14 (D) the Committee on Ways and Means of
15 the House of Representatives.

16 (2) ELEMENTS.—The report required under
17 paragraph (1) shall include a description of—

18 (A) the impact illegal logging and associ-
19 ated trade have had on local communities, good
20 governance, and biodiversity, including an iden-
21 tification of those foreign countries that may be
22 financing or in any other manner supporting il-
23 legal logging activities;

24 (B) efforts taken by countries identified
25 under paragraph (1) to comply and take appro-

1 appropriate corrective action to mitigate illegal log-
2 ging, and an evaluation of the progress of those
3 efforts; and

4 (C) steps taken by the heads of relevant
5 Federal agencies to assist the Pacific Islands in
6 adopting and implementing international meas-
7 ures comparable to those of the United States,
8 such as the Lacey Act Amendments of 1981
9 (16 U.S.C. 3371 et seq.), to reduce the impacts
10 of illicit logging.

11 (d) **ILLEGAL, UNREPORTED, AND UNREGULATED**
12 **FISHING.**—Section 3553 of the National Defense Author-
13 ization Act for Fiscal Year 2020 (16 U.S.C. 8033) is
14 amended—

15 (1) in paragraph (7), by striking “and” at the
16 end;

17 (2) by redesignating paragraph (8) as para-
18 graph (9); and

19 (3) by inserting after paragraph (7) the fol-
20 lowing:

21 “(8) an assessment of gaps or limitations in the
22 ability of the United States to effectively assist pri-
23 ority regions and priority flag states relating to IUU
24 fishing due to resource constraints and the addi-

1 tional resources necessary to overcome those con-
2 straints; and”.

3 **SEC. 105. COORDINATION WITH REGIONAL ALLIES.**

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall consult and
5 coordinate with regional allies and partners, including
6 Australia, Japan, New Zealand, Taiwan, and regional in-
7 stitutions, such as the Pacific Islands Forum and the Pa-
8 cific Community, with respect to programs to provide as-
9 sistance to the Pacific Islands, including programs estab-
10 lished under this Act, including for purposes of—

11 (1) deconflicting programming;

12 (2) ensuring that any programming does not
13 adversely affect the absorptive capacity of the Pa-
14 cific Islands; and

15 (3) ensuring that complementary programs ben-
16 efit the Pacific Islands to the maximum extent prac-
17 ticable.

18 (b) FORMAL CONSULTATIVE PROCESS.—The Sec-
19 retary shall establish a formal consultative process with
20 such regional allies and partners to coordinate with re-
21 spect to such programs and future years programming.

22 (c) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date
23 of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the
24 Secretary shall submit a report to the appropriate congres-
25 sional committees that includes—

1 (1) a review of ongoing efforts, initiatives, and
2 programs undertaken by regional allies and part-
3 ners, including multilateral organizations, to advance
4 priorities identified in this Act;

5 (2) a review of ongoing efforts, initiatives, and
6 programs undertaken by non-allied foreign actors
7 that are viewed as being potentially harmful or in
8 any way detrimental to 1 or more countries of the
9 Pacific Islands;

10 (3) an assessment of United States programs in
11 the Pacific Islands and their alignment and
12 complementarity with the efforts of regional allies
13 and partners referred to in paragraph (1); and

14 (4) a review of the formal consultative process
15 required under subsection (b) to summarize engage-
16 ments held and identify opportunities to improve co-
17 ordination with regional allies and partners.

18 **TITLE II—DEVELOPMENT** 19 **INITIATIVES**

20 **SEC. 201. TRADE DEVELOPMENT WITH THE PACIFIC IS-** 21 **LANDS.**

22 (a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Con-
23 gress that the United States should expand bilateral and
24 multilateral trade with the Pacific Islands to promote so-
25 cioeconomic development and mutual prosperity.

1 (b) STRATEGY.—The United States Trade Rep-
2 representative shall develop and implement a strategy to ex-
3 pand and diversify trade and promote regional develop-
4 ment with the Pacific Islands, including through negoti-
5 ating trade and investment framework agreements.

6 (c) REPORT.—

7 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days
8 after the date of the enactment of this Act, and an-
9 nually thereafter, the United States Trade Rep-
10 representative shall submit a report containing the
11 strategy developed pursuant to subsection (b) to—

12 (A) the Committee on Finance of the Sen-
13 ate; and

14 (B) the Committee on Ways and Means of
15 the House of Representatives.

16 (2) MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED.—The report
17 required under paragraph (1) shall include—

18 (A) an assessment of the readiness of
19 countries in the Pacific Islands to enter into en-
20 hanced trade relationships with the United
21 States, including with respect to reducing or
22 eliminating tariff and nontariff barriers inhib-
23 iting progress towards deepening trade relation-
24 ships;

1 (B) a review of existing regional multilat-
2 eral and bilateral trade agreements and pref-
3 erence programs involving the Pacific Islands
4 and their impacts on regional trade and devel-
5 opment; and

6 (C) an identification of opportunities to
7 work with existing regional frameworks to in-
8 crease trade and economic integration with the
9 Pacific Islands.

10 (d) BRIEFING REQUIRED ON PACIFIC ISLANDS
11 TRADE PREFERENCES.—

12 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days
13 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the
14 United States Trade Representative shall provide a
15 briefing to the congressional committees referred to
16 in subsection (c)(1) regarding the use of the Gener-
17 alized System of Preferences under title V of the
18 Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2461 et seq.) by the
19 Pacific Islands.

20 (2) MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED.—The briefing
21 required under paragraph (1) shall include—

22 (A) a review of the usage of the General-
23 ized System of Preferences by the Pacific Is-
24 lands over the past 20 years, including the

1 value and types of goods traded under the pro-
2 gram;

3 (B) an analysis of United States trade
4 with the Pacific Islands covered under the Gen-
5 eralized System of Preferences compared to
6 trade with the Pacific Islands not conducted
7 under any trade preference program;

8 (C) an assessment of why the Pacific Is-
9 lands underutilizes the Generalized System of
10 Preferences in trade with the United States;
11 and

12 (D) recommendations for how the United
13 States Government can further assist the Pa-
14 cific Islands in utilizing the Generalized System
15 of Preferences.

16 (3) UPDATE.—The Trade Representative shall
17 provide to the appropriate congressional committees
18 an updated briefing under this subsection not later
19 than 3 years after the date of the enactment of this
20 Act.

21 **SEC. 202. TRADE CAPACITY BUILDING INITIATIVE FOR THE**
22 **PACIFIC ISLANDS.**

23 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator, in coordina-
24 tion with the Secretary, the Secretary of the Treasury, the
25 Secretary of Commerce, and the Chief Executive Officer

1 of the United States International Development Finance
2 Corporation, shall develop and implement a trade capacity
3 building initiative for the Pacific Islands.

4 (b) ELEMENTS AND CONDUCT OF INITIATIVE.—The
5 initiative developed pursuant to subsection (a) shall—

6 (1) include an initial, public assessment of—

7 (A) economic opportunities for which
8 United States businesses, or those of other like-
9 minded partners, would be competitive; and

10 (B) legal, economic, governance,
11 infrastructural, or other hurdles limiting United
12 States investment in the Pacific Islands;

13 (2) develop human and institutional capacity
14 and infrastructure across multiple sectors of econo-
15 mies, including digital connectivity and cybersecu-
16 rity;

17 (3) assist with development and implementation
18 of regional and international trade agreements, in-
19 cluding the World Trade Organization’s Agreement
20 on Trade Facilitation and facilitation of
21 intraregional trade flows;

22 (4) support women-owned enterprises and gen-
23 der equality; and

24 (5) promote government policies that encourage
25 free and fair competition, sound governance, envi-

1 ronmental protection, and business environments
2 conducive to sustainable and inclusive economic
3 growth.

4 (c) UNITED STATES COMMERCIAL SERVICE PRES-
5 ENCE.—The Secretary of Commerce shall expand the
6 presence of the United States Commercial Service in the
7 Pacific Islands and allocate additional Foreign Commer-
8 cial Service Officers to the Pacific Islands, including by
9 elevating existing partner posts and establishing new Com-
10 mercial Service posts and partner posts—

11 (1) to explore opportunities for United States
12 private sector investment;

13 (2)(A) to examine regulations in host countries
14 in the Pacific Islands that may hinder foreign direct
15 investment, including regulations related to human
16 rights, labor rights, and environmental protection;
17 and

18 (B) to provide technical assistance when re-
19 quested by such host countries; and

20 (3) to report on the commercial and investment
21 activities of non-allied foreign actors in the Pacific
22 Islands.

23 (d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
24 are authorized to be appropriated \$15,000,000 for each

1 of the fiscal years 2023 through 2027 to carry out this
2 section.

3 **SEC. 203. EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS INITIATIVE FOR**
4 **THE PACIFIC ISLANDS.**

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall develop
6 and implement an initiative to assist the Pacific Islands
7 in enhancing their preparedness for, and resilience to, nat-
8 ural disasters and other emergencies.

9 (b) CONDUCT OF PROGRAM.—The program devel-
10 oped under this section shall include—

11 (1) education and training programs on natural
12 disaster prevention and preparedness for emergency
13 management professionals in the Pacific Islands, in-
14 cluding by leveraging the expertise of nonprofit orga-
15 nizations and institutions of higher education in the
16 United States;

17 (2) technical assistance, including through
18 grants and cooperative agreements for qualified
19 United States and local nongovernmental organiza-
20 tions, to enhance early warning systems, emergency
21 management and preparedness procedures, and post-
22 disaster relief and recovery; and

23 (3) coordination of existing disaster mitigation
24 and response plans in the Pacific Islands region, in-

1 cluding by United States allies and partners in the
2 region.

3 (c) REPORT.—

4 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after
5 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Adminis-
6 trator shall submit a report regarding the program
7 developed pursuant to this section to—

8 (A) the Committee on Foreign Relations of
9 the Senate;

10 (B) the Committee on Energy and Natural
11 Resources of the Senate;

12 (C) the Committee on Foreign Affairs of
13 the House of Representatives; and

14 (D) the Committee on Natural Resources
15 of the House of Representatives.

16 (2) MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED.—The report
17 required under paragraph (1) shall include—

18 (A) an assessment of disaster risks in the
19 Pacific Islands and existing local and regional
20 capacity to respond to such risks;

21 (B) a review of existing efforts by United
22 States allies and partners to provide assistance
23 and training for natural disaster preparedness
24 and emergency management; and

1 (C) objectives, means of implementation,
2 and measures of success for the initiative.

3 (d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
4 are authorized to be appropriated \$40,000,000 for each
5 of the fiscal years 2023 through 2027 to carry out this
6 section.

7 **SEC. 204. PEACE CORPS IN THE PACIFIC ISLANDS.**

8 (a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Con-
9 gress that—

10 (1) the presence of the Peace Corps in the Pa-
11 cific Islands should be expanded by reopening its
12 programs in as many of the Pacific Islands as pos-
13 sible, including where it has previously operated but
14 has suspended operations;

15 (2) consulting like-minded regional allies and
16 partners, such as Australia, New Zealand, Japan,
17 and Taiwan, is crucial for identifying and over-
18 coming challenges for increased Peace Corps pres-
19 ence in the Pacific Islands;

20 (3) the Peace Corps, whose mission is, in part,
21 to promote world peace and friendship by helping
22 the people of interested countries in meeting their
23 need for trained men and women, provides an in-
24 valuable opportunity to connect the American people
25 with the people of the Republic of the Marshall Is-

1 lands, the Federated States of Micronesia, and the
2 Republic of Palau; and

3 (4) the Peace Corps should promptly reopen its
4 programs in the Republic of the Marshall Islands,
5 the Federated States of Micronesia, and the Repub-
6 lic of Palau.

7 (b) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date
8 of the enactment of this Act, the Director of the Peace
9 Corps shall submit a report to the appropriate congres-
10 sional committees that includes—

11 (1) a comparative analysis of the presence of
12 the Peace Corps in the Pacific Islands region to
13 other regions of the world, including a cost-benefit
14 analysis of placement in the Pacific Islands region
15 versus elsewhere; and

16 (2) an analysis of current impediments to Peace
17 Corps expansion in the Pacific Islands region;

18 (3) outcomes of consultations among United
19 States agencies, and with regional allies and part-
20 ners, on areas in which cooperation can reduce fac-
21 tors limiting Peace Corps expansion, particularly
22 those related to medical transportation and personal
23 safety; and

24 (4) a plan and timeline for implementing out-
25 comes identified under paragraph (3) to facilitate

1 the expansion of the Peace Corps presence in the
2 Pacific Islands region, as appropriate.

3 **SEC. 205. PUBLIC HEALTH IN THE PACIFIC ISLANDS.**

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator, in coordina-
5 tion with the Secretary, shall develop and implement a
6 strategy to assist the Pacific Islands—

7 (1) to improve public health outcomes; and

8 (2) to build public health capacity, including in
9 response to the COVID–19 pandemic.

10 (b) CONDUCT OF STRATEGY.—The strategy devel-
11 oped pursuant to subsection (a) shall include—

12 (1) programming, including grants, cooperative
13 agreements, and other forms of assistance that the
14 Administrator determines appropriate, to assist in
15 building local capacity to address—

16 (A) maternal and child health;

17 (B) family planning and reproductive
18 health;

19 (C) gender-based violence;

20 (D) food security and nutrition;

21 (E) non-communicable diseases;

22 (F) communicable diseases, including ne-
23 glected tropical diseases, tuberculosis, HIV/
24 AIDS, sexually-transmitted infections, and

1 zoonotic and emerging infectious disease
2 threats;

3 (G) equitable access to quality, essential,
4 and affordable health services and quality-as-
5 sured, safe, effective medical products and their
6 appropriate use; and

7 (H) water, sanitation, and hygiene;

8 (2) technical assistance to strengthen local
9 health system capacity and resilience in the areas
10 of—

11 (A) good leadership and governance;

12 (B) sustainable financing;

13 (C) interoperable information systems and
14 high quality data for decision making;

15 (D) efficient medical products and supply
16 chain systems; and

17 (E) management of human resources for
18 health, with special attention to increasing
19 health worker performance, retention, produc-
20 tivity, number, skill mix, and competency, in-
21 cluding through exploring opportunities such as
22 private sector engagement and digital health in-
23 tegration and access; and

1 (3) coordination with existing local and regional
2 health sector goals, efforts, institutions, and frame-
3 works.

4 (c) REPORT.—

5 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days
6 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Ad-
7 ministrator shall submit a report to the congress-
8 sional committees referred to in section 203(c)(1)
9 that contains the strategy developed pursuant to
10 subsection (a).

11 (2) MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED.—The report
12 required under paragraph (1) shall identify—

13 (A) health care challenges, including health
14 systems strengthening, immunization, non-
15 communicable diseases, and gender-based vio-
16 lence, in the Pacific Islands;

17 (B) public health challenges and needs re-
18 lated to the COVID–19 pandemic in the Pacific
19 Islands; and

20 (C) objectives, means of implementation,
21 and measures of success for the strategy.

22 (d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
23 are authorized to be appropriated \$20,000,000 for each
24 of the fiscal years 2023 through 2027 to carry out this
25 section.

1 **SEC. 206. EDUCATION ASSISTANCE.**

2 (a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Con-
3 gress that—

4 (1)(A) promoting basic education in the Pacific
5 Islands, particularly in traditionally under-served
6 communities—

7 (i) advances United States foreign policy
8 goals; and

9 (ii) requires a whole of government ap-
10 proach; and

11 (B) the United States Government currently
12 dedicates insufficient resources and attention to as-
13 sisting with education needs in the region;

14 (2) the Peace Corps alone is insufficient to
15 achieve United States objectives of promoting sus-
16 tainable, quality basic education; and

17 (3) countries of the Pacific Islands meet the re-
18 quirements outlined in section 105(c)(4) of the For-
19 eign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151c).

20 (b) EDUCATION ASSISTANCE.—The President is au-
21 thorized to provide assistance under section 105 of the
22 Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151c) to pro-
23 mote sustainable, quality basic education in the Pacific Is-
24 lands by—

25 (1) supporting national nutrition and health
26 programs;

1 (2) working with partner governments to re-
2 form policies, improve curricula, strengthen data
3 systems, train teachers, and provide quality learning
4 materials;

5 (3) building new schools and renovating older
6 facilities to ensure safe places for learning;

7 (4) providing individuals, particularly at-risk
8 youth, with relevant education, training, and skills
9 for meaningful employment;

10 (5) removing barriers to entering formal edu-
11 cation for out-of-school individuals, assisting in
12 keeping them in school, and providing an oppor-
13 tunity to catch up on schooling for those left behind;
14 and

15 (6) promoting teaching and research exchanges
16 between the Pacific Islands and United States insti-
17 tutions of higher education.

18 (c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
19 are authorized to be appropriated \$5,000,000 for each of
20 the fiscal years 2023 through 2027 to carry out this sec-
21 tion.

22 **SEC. 207. CLIMATE RESILIENT DEVELOPMENT IN THE PA-**
23 **CIFIC ISLANDS.**

24 (a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Con-
25 gress that—

1 (1) the United States Government should lever-
2 age the full range of authorities and programs avail-
3 able to assist the Pacific Islands in achieving their
4 development goals;

5 (2) United States development assistance
6 should seek to build on existing public and private
7 sector investments while creating new opportunities
8 toward a favorable environment for additional such
9 investments; and

10 (3) United States development efforts should be
11 coordinated with and seek to build on existing ef-
12 forts by like-minded partners and allies and regional
13 and international multilateral organizations.

14 (b) STRATEGY.—The Secretary, in coordination with
15 the Administrator, the Secretary of the Treasury, and the
16 Chief Executive Officer of the United States International
17 Development Finance Corporation, shall develop and im-
18 plement a strategy—

19 (1) to invest in and improve critical infrastruc-
20 ture, including transport connectivity, information
21 and communications technology, food security, coast-
22 al zone management, marine and water resource
23 management, and energy security and access to elec-
24 tricity in the Pacific Islands, with an emphasis on
25 climate resiliency and sustainable development;

1 (2) to provide technical assistance to assist local
2 government and civil society leaders assess risks to
3 local infrastructure, especially those posed by climate
4 change, consider and implement risk mitigation ef-
5 forts and policies to strengthen resilience, and evalu-
6 ate proposed projects and solutions for their efficacy
7 and sustainability; and

8 (3) to support investment and improvement in
9 ecosystem conservation and protection for the long-
10 term sustainable use of ecosystem services, especially
11 those that mitigate effects of climate change and
12 those that support food security and livelihoods.

13 (c) CONDUCT OF STRATEGY.—The strategy devel-
14 oped under this section shall be coordinated with like-
15 minded partners and allies, regional and international
16 multilateral organizations, and regional frameworks for
17 development in the Pacific Islands.

18 (d) INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS.—
19 The Secretary of the Treasury shall direct the representa-
20 tives of the United States to the World Bank Group, the
21 International Monetary Fund, and the Asian Development
22 Bank to use the voice and vote of the United States to
23 support climate resilient infrastructure projects in the Pa-
24 cific Islands.

25 (e) REPORT.—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days
2 after the date of the enactment this Act, and annu-
3 ally thereafter, the Secretary shall submit a report
4 to the congressional committees referred to in sec-
5 tion 203(c)(1) regarding foreign infrastructure de-
6 velopments in the Pacific Islands.

7 (2) MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED.—The report
8 required under paragraph (1) shall include—

9 (A) a review of foreign infrastructure de-
10 velopments in the Pacific Islands by non-United
11 States allies and partners;

12 (B) assessments of the environmental im-
13 pact and sustainability of such developments;
14 and

15 (C) an analysis of the financial sustain-
16 ability of such developments and their impacts
17 on the debt of host countries in the Pacific Is-
18 lands.

19 (f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
20 are authorized to be appropriated \$50,000,000 for each
21 of the fiscal years 2023 through 2027 to carry out this
22 section.

1 **SEC. 208. COORDINATION WITH OTHER FEDERAL AGEN-**
2 **CIES AND COOPERATION AND PARTICIPA-**
3 **TION OF NONGOVERNMENTAL UNITED**
4 **STATES ENTITIES.**

5 The Federal officials responsible for carrying out sec-
6 tions 202, 203, 205, 206, and 207 shall—

7 (1) coordinate with existing programs and ef-
8 forts of relevant agencies of the United States Gov-
9 ernment, especially with regards to the Republic of
10 the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micro-
11 nesia, and the Republic of Palau; and

12 (2) seek the cooperation and participation of
13 United States private sector, United States non-
14 governmental organizations, and United States insti-
15 tutions of higher education.

16 **TITLE III—PROMOTION OF**
17 **SHARED VALUES**

18 **SEC. 301. PRESS FREEDOM IN THE PACIFIC ISLANDS.**

19 (a) FINDING.—Congress finds that residents of the
20 Pacific Islands speak 24 official languages and thousands
21 of indigenous or unofficial local languages.

22 (b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Con-
23 gress that—

24 (1) the United States should work with allies
25 and partners, particularly Australia and New Zea-
26 land, to provide free or low-cost access to national

1 news wires so the Pacific Islands have greater access
2 to raw news feeds; and

3 (2) it is in the interest of the United States to
4 work with the Pacific Islands to develop regulations
5 to address the licensing and operations of foreign
6 media to build resilience in the media sector to
7 unsanctioned external influence or interference,
8 while respecting free expression and cultivating di-
9 verse media voices.

10 (c) PRESS FREEDOM ASSISTANCE.—The President is
11 authorized to provide assistance to promote the dissemina-
12 tion of free and accurate information in the Pacific Is-
13 lands, including for—

14 (1) media capacity building and education, such
15 as—

16 (A) providing on-site media training tai-
17 lored to local needs;

18 (B) collaborating with local government
19 and nongovernmental entities to promote media
20 literacy and integrate media literacy into pri-
21 mary education curricula in local languages and
22 dialects to ensure accessibility; and

23 (C) routinizing funding for professional
24 programs, such as the Pacific Islands Jour-
25 nalism Reporting Tour, that bring media pro-

1 professionals from the Pacific Islands to the
2 United States;

3 (2) strengthening and diversifying broadcast
4 content tailored to local audiences, including content
5 broadcast in the local vernacular; and

6 (3) investing in connectivity infrastructure with
7 an emphasis on broadcast radio and transmission.

8 (d) REPORT.—

9 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days
10 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Sec-
11 retary shall submit a report to the appropriate con-
12 gressional committees regarding the implementation
13 of this section.

14 (2) MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED.—The report
15 required under paragraph (1) shall include—

16 (A) an assessment of—

17 (i) the national laws of the Pacific Is-
18 lands with respect to foreign investment in
19 media and related sectors;

20 (ii) relevant licensing regulations of
21 the Pacific Islands; and

22 (iii) governmental restrictions on free
23 expression that limit the availability of di-
24 verse media voices in the Pacific Islands;
25 and

1 (B) analyses of covert efforts by foreign
2 media actors in the Pacific Islands—

3 (i) to influence, shape, or circumvent
4 regulations in the media or telecommuni-
5 cation sectors; and

6 (ii) to co-opt local media and nar-
7 ratives.

8 (e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
9 authorized to be appropriated \$2,000,000 for each of the
10 fiscal years 2023 through 2027 to carry out this section.

11 **SEC. 302. UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR GLOBAL MEDIA.**

12 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Chief Executive Officer of the
13 United States Agency for Global Media shall develop and
14 implement a plan to provide expanded media content to
15 the Pacific Islands and partner with journalists in the Pa-
16 cific Islands.

17 (b) BRIEFING REQUIRED.—

18 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days
19 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the
20 Chief Executive Officer shall provide a briefing to
21 the appropriate congressional committees regarding
22 the plan developed pursuant to subsection (a).

23 (2) MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED.—The briefing
24 required under paragraph (1) shall include—

1 (A) an assessment of facilities and costs to
2 expand coverage to the Pacific Islands, includ-
3 ing options to utilize Voice of America affiliates;

4 (B) an identification of objectives, means
5 of implementation, and measures of success for
6 the plan; and

7 (C) an assessment on the scope and impact
8 of media training efforts and people-to-people
9 engagements organized by other countries for
10 the Pacific Islands.

11 (c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
12 are authorized to be appropriated \$2,000,000 for each of
13 the fiscal years 2023 through 2027 to carry out this sec-
14 tion.

15 **SEC. 303. GENDER EQUALITY.**

16 (a) STATEMENT OF POLICY.—Congress—

17 (1) affirms the importance of gender equality
18 and women’s empowerment to United States policy
19 in the Pacific Islands; and

20 (2) recognizes the work of the existing regional
21 frameworks and platforms on gender equality.

22 (b) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary and the Adminis-
23 trator shall—

24 (1) develop and implement an initiative to en-
25 courage and support efforts by the Pacific Islands to

1 reduce and combat gender-based violence, in coordi-
2 nation with existing efforts by United States allies
3 and partners and regional organizations; and

4 (2) promote gender equality in political, eco-
5 nomic, social, and cultural development programs in
6 the Pacific Islands.

7 **SEC. 304. PACIFIC ISLANDS LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**
8 **INITIATIVE.**

9 (a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Con-
10 gress that routinized people-to-people exchange programs
11 to bring Pacific Islands religious leaders, journalists, civil
12 society members, politicians, and others to the United
13 States strengthens existing relationships and advances
14 United States interests and shared values in the region.

15 (b) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall develop and
16 implement a program to promote educational and profes-
17 sional development for young adult leaders and profes-
18 sionals in the Pacific Islands with a demonstrated passion
19 to contribute to the continued development of the Pacific
20 Islands.

21 (c) CONDUCT OF PROGRAM.—The program developed
22 pursuant to subsection (b) shall be implemented on a rou-
23 tine basis and may be carried out through—

1 (1) grants provided on a competitive basis to
2 qualified organizations with demonstrated expertise
3 relating to the Pacific Islands;

4 (2) grants, in amounts not to exceed \$50,000,
5 provided on a competitive basis to qualified young
6 leaders from the Pacific Islands for the purpose of
7 carrying out projects dedicated to the improvement
8 of their communities in the Pacific Islands;

9 (3) regional workshops and professional and
10 academic fellowships; and

11 (4) people-to-people exchanges.

12 (d) REPORT.—

13 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days
14 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Sec-
15 retary, acting through the Assistant Secretary of
16 State for Educational and Cultural Affairs, shall
17 submit a report to the appropriate congressional
18 committees regarding the exchange programs for the
19 Pacific Islands region.

20 (2) ELEMENTS.—The report required under
21 paragraph (1) shall—

22 (A) assess the factors constraining the
23 number and frequency of International Visitor
24 Leadership Program participants from coun-
25 tries of the Pacific Islands;

1 (B) identify the resources that are nec-
2 essary to address the factors described in sub-
3 paragraph (A); and

4 (C) include a strategy for connecting alum-
5 ni and participants of the Department of
6 State's professional development exchange pro-
7 grams in East Asia, such as the Young South-
8 east Asian Leaders Initiative and the Young
9 Pacific Leaders programs, to enhance inter-re-
10 gion and intra-region people-to-people ties.

11 (e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
12 are authorized to be appropriated \$10,000,000 for each
13 of the fiscal years 2023 through 2027 to carry out this
14 section.

15 **SEC. 305. CIVIL SOCIETY ENGAGEMENT AND DEVELOP-**
16 **MENT.**

17 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall develop
18 and implement a program to promote the development of
19 civil society in the Pacific Islands for the purpose of—

20 (1) strengthening independent media and press
21 freedom;

22 (2) empowering citizens to freely organize and
23 communicate, including through existing and new
24 civic spaces;

1 (3) strengthening rule of law and increasing
2 government accountability; and

3 (4) promoting democratic political culture.

4 (b) CONDUCT OF PROGRAM.—

5 (1) IN GENERAL.—The program developed pur-
6 suant to subsection (a) shall be carried out in con-
7 sultation with local civil society groups in the Pacific
8 Islands, including civil society groups that represent
9 or work with traditionally marginalized groups.

10 (2) ELEMENTS.—The program developed pur-
11 suant to subsection (a) may be carried out
12 through—

13 (A) technical assistance and support, in-
14 cluding through training and professional and
15 academic fellowships;

16 (B) grants provided on a competitive basis
17 to qualified civil society organizations for the
18 purpose of carrying out projects and programs
19 dedicated to the objectives described in sub-
20 section (a); and

21 (C) grants provided on a competitive basis
22 to qualified United States organizations with
23 demonstrated expertise in civil society develop-
24 ment and the Pacific Islands.

25 (c) REPORT.—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days
2 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Ad-
3 ministrator shall submit a report to the appropriate
4 congressional committees regarding the program de-
5 veloped pursuant to subsection (a).

6 (2) MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED.—The report
7 required under paragraph (1) shall—

8 (A) assess the strength and viability of
9 civil society sectors of the Pacific Islands, in-
10 cluding legal, organizational capacity, financial,
11 advocacy, services, infrastructure, and public
12 image sectors; and

13 (B) identify the objectives and measures of
14 success for the program.

15 (d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
16 are authorized to be appropriated \$5,000,000 for each of
17 the fiscal years 2023 through 2027 to carry out this sec-
18 tion.