

113TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 4490

To enhance the missions, objectives, and effectiveness of United States international communications, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 28, 2014

Mr. ROYCE (for himself, Mr. ENGEL, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. KEATING, and Mr. SALMON) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

A BILL

To enhance the missions, objectives, and effectiveness of United States international communications, 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; TABLE OF CONTENTS.**

4 (a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the
5 “United States International Communications Reform Act
6 of 2014”.

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

Sec. 1. Short title; Table of contents.

- Sec. 2. Findings and declarations.
- Sec. 3. Purposes.
- Sec. 4. Definitions.
- Sec. 5. Broadcasting standards.
- Sec. 6. Eligible broadcast areas.

TITLE I—ESTABLISHMENT, ORGANIZATION, AND MANAGEMENT
OF THE UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS
AGENCY

Subtitle A—Establishment of the United States International Communications
Agency

- Sec. 101. Existence within the executive branch.
- Sec. 102. Establishment of the Board of the United States International Communications Agency.
- Sec. 103. Authorities and duties of the Board of the United States International Communications Agency.
- Sec. 104. Establishment of the Chief Executive Officer of the United States International Communications Agency.
- Sec. 105. Authorities and duties of the Chief Executive Officer of the United States International Communications Agency.
- Sec. 106. Role of the Secretary of State.
- Sec. 107. Role of the Inspector General.
- Sec. 108. Enhanced coordination between United States International Communications Agency and the Freedom News Network; program content sharing; grantee independence.
- Sec. 109. Enhanced coordination among the United States International Communications Agency, the Freedom News Network, and the Department of State; Freedom News Network independence.
- Sec. 110. Grants to the Freedom News Network.
- Sec. 111. Other personnel and compensation limitations.
- Sec. 112. Reporting requirements of the United States International Communications Agency.

Subtitle B—The Voice of America

- Sec. 121. Sense of Congress.
- Sec. 122. Principles of the Voice of America.
- Sec. 123. Duties and responsibilities of the Voice of America.
- Sec. 124. Limitation on Voice of America news, programming, and content; temporary exception for Sub-Saharan Africa; exception for broadcasting to Cuba.
- Sec. 125. Director of Voice of America.

Subtitle C—General Provisions

- Sec. 131. Federal agency coordination in support of United States public diplomacy.
- Sec. 132. Federal agency assistance and coordination with the United States International Communications Agency and the Freedom News Network during international broadcast surges.
- Sec. 133. Freedom News Network right of first refusal in instances of Federal disposal of radio or television broadcast transmission facilities or equipment.
- Sec. 134. Repeal of the United States International Broadcasting Act of 1994.
- Sec. 135. Effective date.

TITLE II—THE FREEDOM NEWS NETWORK

Sec. 201. Sense of Congress.

Subtitle A—Consolidation of Existing Grantee Organizations

Sec. 211. Formation of the Freedom News Network from existing grantees.

Sec. 212. Mission of the Freedom News Network.

Sec. 213. Standards and principles of the Freedom News Network.

Subtitle B—Organization of the Freedom News Network

Sec. 221. Governance of the Freedom News Network.

Sec. 222. Budget of the Freedom News Network.

Sec. 223. Assistance from other Government agencies.

Sec. 224. Reports by the Office of the Inspector General of the Department of State; audits by GAO.

Sec. 225. Amendments to the United States Information and Educational Exchange Act of 1948.

1 SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND DECLARATIONS.

2 Congress finds and declares the following:

3 (1) United States international broadcasting ex-
4 ists to advance the United States interests and val-
5 ues by presenting accurate, objective, and com-
6 prehensive news and information, which is the foun-
7 dation for democratic governance, to societies that
8 lack a free media.

9 (2) Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of
10 Human Rights states that “[e]veryone has the right
11 to freedom of opinion and expression”, and that
12 “this right includes freedom to hold opinions without
13 interference and to seek, receive and impart infor-
14 mation and ideas through any media and regardless
15 of frontiers”.

16 (3) Secretary of State Hillary Clinton testified
17 before the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the

1 House of Representatives on January 23, 2013, that
2 the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) “is
3 practically a defunct agency in terms of its capacity
4 to be able to tell a message around the world. So
5 we’re abdicating the ideological arena and need to
6 get back into it.”.

7 (4) The BBG, which was created by Congress
8 to oversee the United States international broad-
9 casting in the wake of the Cold War, has, because
10 of structural and managerial issues, had limited suc-
11 cess to date in both coordinating the various compo-
12 nents of the international broadcasting framework
13 and managing the day-to-day operations of the Fed-
14 eral components of the international broadcasting
15 framework.

16 (5) The lack of regular attendance by board
17 members and a periodic inability to form a quorum
18 have plagued the BBG and, as a result, it has been
19 functionally incapable of running the agency.

20 (6) The board of governors has only achieved
21 the full slate of all nine governors for seven of its
22 17 years of existence, which highlights the difficul-
23 ties of confirming and retaining governors under the
24 current structure.

1 (7) Both the Department of State’s Office of
2 Inspector General and the Government Account-
3 ability Office have issued reports which outline a se-
4 verely dysfunctional organizational structure of the
5 Broadcasting Board of Governors.

6 (8) The Inspector General of the Department of
7 State concluded in its January 2013 report that dys-
8 function of the BBG stems from “a flawed legisla-
9 tive structure and acute internal dissension”.

10 (9) The Inspector General of the Department of
11 State also found that the BBG’s structure of nine
12 part-time members “cannot effectively supervise all
13 United States Government-supported, civilian inter-
14 national broadcasting”, and its involvement in day-
15 to-day operations has impeded normal management
16 functions.

17 (10) The Government Accountability Office re-
18 port determined that there was significant overlap
19 among the BBG’s languages services, and that the
20 BBG did not systematically consider the financial
21 cost of overlap.

22 (11) According to the Office of the Inspector
23 General, the BBG’s Office of Contracts is not in
24 compliance with the Federal Acquisition Regulation,
25 lacks appropriate contract oversight, and violates the

1 Anti-Deficiency Act. The Office of the Inspector
2 General also determined that the Broadcasting
3 Board of Governors has not adequately performed
4 full and open competitions or price determinations,
5 has entered into hundreds of personal service con-
6 tracts without statutory authority, and contractors
7 regularly work without valid contracts in place.

8 (12) The size and make-up of the BBG work-
9 force should be closely examined, given the agency’s
10 broader broadcasting and technical mission, as well
11 as changing media technologies.

12 (13) The BBG should be structured to ensure
13 that more taxpayer dollars are dedicated to the sub-
14 stantive, broadcasting, and information-related ele-
15 ments of the agency’s mission.

16 (14) The lack of a coherent and well defined
17 mission of the Voice of America has led to program-
18 ming that duplicates the efforts of the Office of
19 Cuba Broadcasting, Radio Free Asia, RFE/RL, In-
20 corporated, and the Middle East Broadcasting Net-
21 work that results in inefficient use of tax-payer
22 funding.

23 (15) The annual survey conducted by the
24 “Partnership for Public Service” consistently ranks
25 the Broadcasting Board of Governors at or near the

1 bottom of all Federal agencies in terms of “overall
2 best places to work” and “the extent to which em-
3 ployees feel their skills and talents are used effec-
4 tively.”. The consistency of these low scores point to
5 structural, cultural, and functional problems at the
6 Broadcasting Board of Governors.

7 (16) The Federal and non-Federal organiza-
8 tions that comprise the United States international
9 broadcasting framework have different, yet com-
10 plementary, missions that necessitate coordination at
11 all levels of management.

12 (17) The Broadcasting Board of Governors has
13 an overabundance of senior civil service positions,
14 defined here as full-time employees encumbering
15 GS-14 and GS-15 positions on the General Sched-
16 ule pay scale.

17 (18) United States international broadcasting
18 should seek to leverage public-private partnerships,
19 including the licensing of content and the use of
20 technology owned or operated by non-governmental
21 sources, where possible to expand outreach capacity.

22 (19) Congressional action is necessary at this
23 time to improve international broadcasting oper-
24 ations, strengthen the United States public diplo-
25 macy efforts, enhance the grantee surrogate broad-

1 casting effort, restore focus to news, programming,
2 and content, and maximize the value of Federal and
3 non-Federal resources that are dedicated to public
4 diplomacy and international broadcasting.

5 **SEC. 3. PURPOSES.**

6 The purposes of this Act are as follows:

7 (1) To provide objective, accurate, credible, and
8 comprehensive news and information to societies
9 that lack freedom of expression and information.

10 (2) To improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and
11 flexibility of United States international broad-
12 casting to allow it to adapt to constantly changing
13 political and media environments through clarifica-
14 tion of missions, improved coordination, and organi-
15 zational restructuring.

16 (3) To coordinate the complementary efforts of
17 the Department of State and United States inter-
18 national broadcasting.

19 (4) To create a United States international
20 broadcasting framework that more effectively
21 leverages the broadcasting tools available and cre-
22 ates specialization of expertise in mission oriented
23 programming, while minimizing waste and ineffi-
24 ciency.

1 (5) To improve United States international
2 broadcasting workforce effectiveness, security, and
3 satisfaction.

4 **SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.**

5 In this Act:

6 (1) **APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMIT-**
7 **TEES.**—The term “appropriate congressional com-
8 mittees” means the Committee on Foreign Affairs of
9 the House of Representatives, the Committee on
10 Foreign Relations of the Senate, the Committee on
11 Appropriations of the House of Representatives, and
12 the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate.

13 (2) **GRANTEE.**—The term “grantee” means the
14 non-Federal organization described in section
15 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and
16 exempt from tax under section 501(a) of such Code
17 as of day before the date of the enactment of this
18 Act that receives Federal funding from the Broad-
19 casting Board of Governors, and includes Radio
20 Free Asia, RFE/RL, Incorporated, and the Middle
21 East Broadcasting Network.

22 (3) **FREEDOM NEWS NETWORK.**—The term
23 “Freedom News Network” refers to the non-Federal
24 organization described in section 501(c)(3) of the
25 Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and exempt from tax

1 under section 501(a) of such Code that would re-
2 ceive Federal funding and be responsible for pro-
3 moting democratic freedoms and free media oper-
4 ations for foreign audiences in societies that lack
5 freedom of expression and information, and con-
6 sisting of the consolidation of the grantee in accord-
7 ance with section 211.

8 (4) PUBLIC DIPLOMACY.—The term “public di-
9 plomacy” means the effort to achieve broad United
10 States foreign policy goals and objectives, advance
11 national interests, and enhance national security by
12 informing and influencing foreign publics and by ex-
13 panding and strengthening the relationship between
14 the people and Government of the United States and
15 citizens of other countries.

16 **SEC. 5. BROADCASTING STANDARDS.**

17 United States international broadcasting shall incor-
18 porate the following standards into all of its broadcasting
19 efforts:

20 (1) Be consistent with the broad foreign policy
21 objectives of the United States.

22 (2) Be consistent with the international tele-
23 communications policies and treaty obligations of the
24 United States.

1 (3) Not duplicate the activities of private
2 United States broadcasters.

3 (4) Be conducted in accordance with the high-
4 est professional standards of broadcast journalism
5 while remaining consistent with and supportive of
6 the broad foreign policy objectives of the United
7 States.

8 (5) Be based on reliable, research-based infor-
9 mation, both quantitative and qualitative, about its
10 potential audience.

11 (6) Be designed so as to effectively reach a sig-
12 nificant audience.

13 (7) Promote freedom of expression, religion,
14 and respect for human rights and human equality.

15 **SEC. 6. ELIGIBLE BROADCAST AREAS.**

16 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Board of the United States
17 International Communications Agency and the Board of
18 the Freedom News Network shall ensure that United
19 States international broadcasting is conducted only to
20 countries and regions that—

21 (1) lack democratic rule, or the indicia of demo-
22 cratic rule, such as demonstrable proof of free and
23 fair elections;

24 (2) lack the legal and political environment that
25 allows media organizations and journalists to oper-

1 ate free from Government-led or permitted harass-
2 ment, intimidation, retribution, and from economic
3 impediments to the development, production, and
4 dissemination of news and related programming and
5 content;

6 (3) lack established, domestic, and widely acces-
7 sible media that provide accurate, objective, and
8 comprehensive news and related programming and
9 content; and

10 (4) by virtue of the criteria described in this
11 subsection, would benefit the national security and
12 related interests of the United States, and the safety
13 and security of United States citizens at home and
14 abroad.

15 (b) EXCEPTION.—The United States International
16 Communications Agency and the Freedom News Network
17 may broadcast to countries that fall outside of the criteria
18 described in subsection (a) if the Chief Executive Officer
19 of the Agency and the Freedom News Network, in con-
20 sultation with the Secretary of State, determine it is in
21 the national security interest of the United States, or in
22 the interests of preserving the safety and security of
23 United States citizens at home and abroad, to do so.

1 **TITLE I—ESTABLISHMENT, OR-**
2 **GANIZATION, AND MANAGE-**
3 **MENT OF THE UNITED**
4 **STATES INTERNATIONAL**
5 **COMMUNICATIONS AGENCY**

6 **Subtitle A—Establishment of the**
7 **United States International**
8 **Communications Agency**

9 **SEC. 101. EXISTENCE WITHIN THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH.**

10 The United States International Communications
11 Agency shall exist within the executive branch of Govern-
12 ment as an independent establishment described in section
13 104 of title 5, United States Code.

14 **SEC. 102. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE BOARD OF THE UNITED**
15 **STATES INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS**
16 **AGENCY.**

17 (a) **COMPOSITION OF THE BOARD OF THE UNITED**
18 **STATES INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS AGENCY.—**

19 (1) **IN GENERAL.—**The Board (in this section
20 referred to as the “Board”) of the United States
21 International Communications Agency shall consist
22 of nine members, as follows:

23 (A) Eight voting members who shall be ap-
24 pointed by the President, by and with the ad-
25 vice and consent of the Senate.

1 (B) The Secretary of State, who shall also
2 be a voting member.

3 (2) CHAIR.—The President shall appoint one
4 member (other than the Secretary of State) as Chair
5 of the Board, by and with the advice and consent of
6 the Senate.

7 (3) POLITICAL AFFILIATION.—Exclusive of the
8 Secretary of State, not more than four members of
9 the Board shall be of the same political party.

10 (4) RETENTION OF EXISTING BBG MEMBERS.—
11 The presidentially appointed and Senate-confirmed
12 members of the Broadcasting Board of Governors
13 serving as of the date of the enactment of this Act
14 shall constitute the Board of the United States
15 International Communications Agency and hold of-
16 fice the remainder of their original terms of office
17 without reappointment to the Board.

18 (b) TERM OF OFFICE.—The term of office of each
19 member of the Board shall be three years, except that the
20 Secretary of State shall remain a member of the Board
21 during the Secretary's term of service. Of the other eight
22 voting members, the initial terms of office of two members
23 shall be one year, and the initial terms of office of three
24 other members shall be two years, as determined by the
25 President. The President shall appoint, by and with the

1 advice and consent of the Senate, Board members to fill
2 vacancies occurring prior to the expiration of a term, in
3 which case the members so appointed shall serve for the
4 remainder of such term. Members may not serve beyond
5 their terms. When there is no Secretary of State, the Act-
6 ing Secretary of State shall serve as a member of the
7 Board until a Secretary is appointed.

8 (c) SELECTION OF BOARD.—Members of the Board
9 shall be citizens of the United States who are not regular
10 full-time employees of the United States Government.
11 Such members shall be selected by the President from
12 among citizens distinguished in the fields of public diplo-
13 macy, mass communications, print, broadcast media, or
14 foreign affairs.

15 (d) COMPENSATION.—Members of the Board, while
16 attending meetings of the Board or while engaged in du-
17 ties relating to such meetings or in other activities of the
18 Board pursuant to this section (including travel time)
19 shall be entitled to receive compensation equal to the daily
20 equivalent of the compensation prescribed for level IV of
21 the Executive Schedule under section 5315 of title 5,
22 United States Code. While away from their homes or reg-
23 ular places of business, members of the Board may be al-
24 lowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of sub-
25 sistence, in accordance with section 5703 of such title for

1 persons in the Government service employed intermit-
2 tently. The Secretary of State shall not be entitled to any
3 compensation under this chapter.

4 (e) DECISIONS.—Decisions of the Board shall be
5 made by majority vote, a quorum being present. A quorum
6 shall consist of a majority of members then serving at the
7 time a decision of the Board is made.

8 (f) TRANSPARENCY.—The Board of the United
9 States International Communications Agency shall adhere
10 to the provisions specified in the Government in the Sun-
11 shine Act (Public Law 94–409).

12 **SEC. 103. AUTHORITIES AND DUTIES OF THE BOARD OF**
13 **THE UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL COM-**
14 **MUNICATIONS AGENCY.**

15 The Board of the United States International Com-
16 munications Agency shall have the following authorities:

17 (1) To review and evaluate the mission and op-
18 eration of, and to assess the quality, effectiveness,
19 and professional integrity of, all programming pro-
20 duced by the United States International Commu-
21 nications Agency to ensure alignment with the broad
22 foreign policy objectives of the United States.

23 (2) To ensure that broadcasting of the United
24 States International Communications Agency is con-

1 ducted in accordance with the standards specified in
2 section 5.

3 (3) To review, evaluate, and recommend to the
4 Chief Executive of the United States International
5 Communications Agency, at least annually, in con-
6 sultation with the Secretary of State, the necessity
7 of adding or deleting of language services of the
8 Agency.

9 (4) To submit to the President and Congress
10 an annual report which summarizes and evaluates
11 activities of the United States International Commu-
12 nications Agency described in this title.

13 **SEC. 104. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFI-**
14 **CER OF THE UNITED STATES INTER-**
15 **NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS AGENCY.**

16 (a) IN GENERAL.—There shall be a Chief Executive
17 Officer of the United States International Communica-
18 tions Agency, appointed by the Board of the Agency for
19 a five-year term, renewable at the Board's discretion, and
20 subject to the provisions of title 5, United States Code,
21 governing appointments, classification, and compensation.

22 (b) QUALIFICATIONS.—The Chief Executive Officer
23 shall be selected from among United States citizens with
24 two or more of the following qualifications:

1 (1) A distinguished career in managing a large
2 organization or Federal agency.

3 (2) Experience in the field of mass communica-
4 tions, print, or broadcast media.

5 (3) Experience in foreign affairs or inter-
6 national relations.

7 (4) Experience in directing United States public
8 diplomacy programs.

9 (c) TERMINATION AND TRANSFER.—Immediately
10 upon appointment of the Chief Executive Officer under
11 subsection (a), the Director of the International Broad-
12 casting Bureau shall be terminated, and all of the respon-
13 sibilities and authorities of the Director shall be trans-
14 ferred to and assumed by the Chief Executive Officer.

15 (d) REMOVAL OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER.—The
16 Chief Executive Officer under subsection (a) may be re-
17 moved upon a two-thirds majority vote of the members
18 of the Board of the United States International Commu-
19 nications Agency then serving.

20 (e) COMPENSATION OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF-
21 FICER.—Any Chief Executive Officer of the United States
22 International Communications Agency hired after the date
23 of the enactment of this Act, shall be eligible to receive
24 compensation up to an annual rate of pay equivalent to

1 level I of the Executive Schedule under section 5315 of
2 title 5, United States Code.

3 **SEC. 105. AUTHORITIES AND DUTIES OF THE CHIEF EXECU-**
4 **TIVE OFFICER OF THE UNITED STATES**
5 **INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS AGENCY.**

6 (a) DUTIES.—The Chief Executive Officer under sec-
7 tion 104 shall direct operations of the United States Inter-
8 national Communications Agency and shall have the fol-
9 lowing non-delegable authorities, subject to the super-
10 vision of the Board of the United States International
11 Communications Agency:

12 (1) To supervise all Federal broadcasting activi-
13 ties conducted pursuant to title V of the United
14 States Information and Educational Exchange Act
15 of 1948 (22 U.S.C. 1461 et seq.) and the Voice of
16 America as described in subtitle B of title I of this
17 Act.

18 (2) To make and ensure compliance with the
19 terms and conditions of the grant agreement in ac-
20 cordance with section 110.

21 (3) To review engineering activities to ensure
22 that all broadcasting elements receive the highest
23 quality and cost-effective delivery services.

24 (4) To undertake such studies as may be nec-
25 essary to identify areas in which broadcasting activi-

1 ties under the authority of the United States Inter-
2 national Communications Agency could be made
3 more efficient and economical.

4 (5) To the extent considered necessary to carry
5 out the functions of the Board, procure supplies,
6 services, and other personal property, as well as pro-
7 curement pursuant to section 1535 of title 31,
8 United States Code (commonly referred to as the
9 “Economy Act”), of such goods and services from
10 other Federal agencies for the Board as the Board
11 determines are appropriate.

12 (6) To appoint such staff personnel for the
13 Board as the Board may determine to be necessary,
14 subject to the provisions of title 5, United States
15 Code, governing appointments in the competitive
16 service, and to fix their compensation in accordance
17 with the provisions of chapter 51 and subchapter III
18 of chapter 53 of such title relating to classification
19 and General Schedule pay rates.

20 (7) To obligate and expend, for official recep-
21 tion and representation expenses, such amounts as
22 may be made available through appropriations Acts.

23 (8) To make available in the annual reports re-
24 quired under section 103 information on funds ex-
25 pended on administrative and managerial services by

1 the Board of the United States Communications
2 Agency, and the steps the Board has taken to re-
3 duce unnecessary overhead costs for each of the
4 broadcasting services.

5 (9) To provide for the use of United States
6 Government broadcasting capacity to the Freedom
7 News Network.

8 (10)(A) To procure temporary and intermittent
9 personal services to the same extent as is authorized
10 by section 3109 of title 5, United States Code, at
11 rates not to exceed the daily equivalent of the rate
12 provided for positions classified above grade GS-15
13 of the General Schedule under section 5108 of such
14 title.

15 (B) To allow those individuals providing
16 such services, while away from their homes or
17 their regular places of business, travel expenses
18 (including per diem in lieu of subsistence) as
19 authorized by section 5703 of title 5, United
20 States Code, for persons in the Government
21 service employed intermittently, while so em-
22 ployed.

23 (11) To utilize the provisions of titles III, IV,
24 V, VII, VIII, IX, and X of the United States Infor-
25 mation and Educational Exchange Act of 1948 (22

1 U.S.C. 1431 et seq.), and section 6 of Reorganiza-
2 tion Plan Number 2 of 1977, as in effect on the day
3 before the effective date of title XIII of the Foreign
4 Affairs Agencies Consolidation Act of 1998, to the
5 extent the Board considers necessary to carry out
6 the provisions and purposes of this Act.

7 (12) To utilize the authorities of any other stat-
8 ute, reorganization plan, executive order, regulation,
9 agreement, determination, or other official document
10 or proceeding that had been available to the Director
11 of the United States Information Agency, the Inter-
12 national Broadcasting Bureau, or the Board of the
13 Broadcasting Board of Governors before the date of
14 the enactment of this Act.

15 (13)(A) To provide for the payment of primary
16 and secondary school expenses for dependents of
17 personnel stationed in the Commonwealth of the
18 Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) at a cost not to
19 exceed expenses authorized by the Department of
20 Defense for such schooling for dependents of mem-
21 bers of the Armed Forces stationed in the Common-
22 wealth, if the Board determines that schools avail-
23 able in the Commonwealth are unable to provide
24 adequately for the education of the dependents of
25 such personnel.

1 (B) To provide transportation for depend-
2 ents of such personnel between their places of
3 residence and those schools for which expenses
4 are provided under subparagraph (A), if the
5 Board determines that such schools are not ac-
6 cessible by public means of transportation.

7 (b) CONSULTATIONS.—The Chief Executive Officer
8 of the United States International Communications Agen-
9 cy shall regularly consult with the Chief Executive Officer
10 of the Freedom News Network and the Secretary of State
11 as described in sections 108 and 109.

12 **SEC. 106. ROLE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE.**

13 To assist the Board of the United States Inter-
14 national Communications Agency in carrying out its func-
15 tions, the Secretary of State shall provide to the Board
16 information in accordance with section 109(b), as well as
17 guidance on United States foreign policy and public diplo-
18 macy priorities, as the Secretary determines appropriate.

19 **SEC. 107. ROLE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL.**

20 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Inspector General of the De-
21 partment of State and the Foreign Service shall exercise
22 the same authorities with respect to the United States
23 International Communications Agency and the Freedom
24 News Network as the Inspector General exercises under

1 the Inspector General Act of 1978 with respect to the De-
2 partment and the Foreign Service.

3 (b) JOURNALIST INTEGRITY.—The Inspector General
4 of the Department of State shall respect the journalistic
5 integrity of all the broadcasters covered by this Act and
6 may not evaluate the philosophical or political perspectives
7 reflected in the content of the broadcasts of such broad-
8 casters.

9 **SEC. 108. ENHANCED COORDINATION BETWEEN UNITED**
10 **STATES INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS**
11 **AGENCY AND THE FREEDOM NEWS NET-**
12 **WORK; PROGRAM CONTENT SHARING;**
13 **GRANTEE INDEPENDENCE.**

14 (a) MEETINGS.—The chair of the Board and Chief
15 Executive Officer of the United States International Com-
16 munications Agency shall meet at least on a quarterly
17 basis with the chair and Chief Executive Officer, as identi-
18 fied in section 221, of the Freedom News Network to dis-
19 cuss mutual issues of concern, including the following:

20 (1) The strategic direction of their respective
21 organizations, including target audiences.

22 (2) Languages of information transmission.

23 (3) Prioritization of funding allocations.

24 (4) Areas for greater collaboration.

25 (5) Elimination of programming overlap.

1 (6) Efficiencies that can be realized through
2 best practices and lessons learned.

3 (7) Sharing of program content.

4 (b) INFORMATION SHARING.—The Chief Executive
5 Officer of the United States International Broadcasting
6 Agency and the Chief Executive Officer of the Freedom
7 News Network shall share all strategic planning docu-
8 ments, including the following:

9 (1) Results monitoring and evaluation.

10 (2) Annual planning documents.

11 (3) Audience surveys conducted.

12 (4) Budget formulation documents.

13 (c) INDEPENDENCE OF FREEDOM NEWS NET-
14 WORK.—The United States International Communications
15 Agency, while conducting management of the grant de-
16 scribed in section 110, shall avoid even the appearance of
17 involvement in daily operations, decisions, and manage-
18 ment of the Freedom News Network, and ensure that the
19 distinctions between the United States International Com-
20 munications Agency and Freedom News Network remain
21 in accordance with this Act.

1 **SEC. 109. ENHANCED COORDINATION AMONG THE UNITED**
2 **STATES INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS**
3 **AGENCY, THE FREEDOM NEWS NETWORK,**
4 **AND THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE; FREEDOM**
5 **NEWS NETWORK INDEPENDENCE.**

6 (a) **COORDINATION MEETINGS.**—The Chief Execu-
7 tive Officer of the United States International Commu-
8 nications Agency and the Chief Executive Officer of the
9 Freedom News Network shall meet, at least on a quarterly
10 basis, with the Secretary of State to—

- 11 (1) review and evaluate broadcast activities;
12 (2) eliminate overlap of programming; and
13 (3) determine long-term strategies for inter-
14 national broadcasting to ensure such strategies are
15 in accordance with the broad foreign policy interests
16 of the United States.

17 (b) **STRATEGIC PLANNING DOCUMENTS.**—The Chief
18 Executive Officer of the United States International Com-
19 munications Agency, the Chief Executive Officer of the
20 Freedom News Network, and the Secretary of State shall
21 share all relevant unclassified strategic planning docu-
22 ments produced by the Agency, the Freedom News Net-
23 work, and the Department of State.

24 (c) **FREEDOM NEWS NETWORK INDEPENDENCE.**—
25 The Department of State, while coordinating with the
26 Freedom News Network in accordance with subsection (a),

1 shall avoid even the appearance of involvement in the daily
2 operations, decisions, and management of the Freedom
3 News Network.

4 **SEC. 110. GRANTS TO THE FREEDOM NEWS NETWORK.**

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Chief Executive Officer of the
6 United States International Communications Agency shall
7 make grants to RFE/RL, Incorporated, Radio Free Asia,
8 or the Middle East Broadcasting Network only after the
9 Chief Executive Officer of the Agency and the Chief Exec-
10 utive Officer of Freedom News Network certify to the ap-
11 propriate congressional committees that the headquarters
12 of the Freedom News Network and its senior administra-
13 tive and managerial staff are in a location which ensures
14 economy, operational effectiveness, and accountability,
15 and the following conditions has been satisfied:

16 (1) RFE/RL, Incorporated, Radio Free Asia,
17 and the Middle East Broadcasting Network have
18 submitted to the Chief Executive Officer of the
19 United States International Communications Agency
20 a plan for consolidation and reconstitution as de-
21 scribed in section 211 under the new corporate name
22 “Freedom News Network” with a single organiza-
23 tional structure and management framework, as de-
24 scribed in section 221.

1 (2) The necessary steps towards the consolida-
2 tion described in paragraph (1) have been com-
3 pleted, including the selection of a Board, Chair, and
4 Chief Executive Officer for the Freedom News Net-
5 work, the establishment of bylaws to govern the
6 Freedom News Network, and the filing of articles of
7 incorporation.

8 (3) A plan for content sharing has been devel-
9 oped in accordance with section 112(f).

10 (4) A strategic plan for programming imple-
11 mentation has been developed in accordance with
12 section 221(g).

13 (b) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date
14 of the enactment of this Act, the Board of the United
15 States International Communications Agency shall submit
16 to Congress a report on the status of any grants made
17 to the Freedom News Network.

18 (c) LIMITATION ON GRANT AMOUNTS.—The total
19 amount of grants made for the operating costs of the
20 Freedom News Network may not exceed \$270,000,000 in
21 fiscal year 2015.

22 (d) ALTERNATIVE GRANTEE.—If the Chief Executive
23 Officer of the United States International Communica-
24 tions Agency, after consultation with the Board of the
25 Agency and the appropriate congressional committees, de-

1 terminates at any time that the Freedom News Network is
2 not carrying out the mission described in section 212 and
3 adhering to the standards and principles described in sec-
4 tion 213 in an effective and economical manner for which
5 a grant has been awarded, the Chief Executive Officer of
6 the Agency, upon approval of the Board, may award to
7 another entity the grant at issue to carry out such func-
8 tions after soliciting and considering applications from eli-
9 gible entities in such manner and accompanied by such
10 information as the Board may require.

11 (e) NOT A FEDERAL ENTITY.—Nothing in this Act
12 may be construed to make the Freedom News Network
13 a Federal agency or instrumentality.

14 (f) AUTHORITY.—Grants authorized under this sec-
15 tion for the United States International Communications
16 Agency shall be available to make annual grants to the
17 Freedom News Network for the purpose of carrying out
18 the mission described in section 212 and adhering to the
19 standards and principles described in section 213.

20 (g) GRANT AGREEMENT.—Grants authorized under
21 this section to the Freedom News Network by the Chief
22 Executive Officer of the United States International Com-
23 munications Agency shall only be made in accordance with
24 a grant agreement. Such grant agreement shall include
25 the following provisions:

1 (1) A grant be used only for activities in ac-
2 cordance with carrying out the mission described in
3 section 212 and adhering to the standards and prin-
4 ciples described in section 213.

5 (2) The Freedom News Network shall comply
6 with the requirements of this section.

7 (3) Failure to comply with the requirements of
8 this section may result in suspension or termination
9 of a grant without further obligation by the United
10 States International Communications Agency or the
11 United States.

12 (4) Use of broadcasting technology owned and
13 operated by the United States International Commu-
14 nications Agency be made available through an
15 International Cooperative Administrative Support
16 Service (ICASS) agreement or memorandum of un-
17 derstanding.

18 (5) The Freedom News Network shall, upon re-
19 quest, provide to the Chief Executive Officer of the
20 United States International Communications Agency
21 documentation which details the expenditure of any
22 grant funds.

23 (6) A grant may not be used to require the
24 Freedom News Network to comply with any require-

1 ments other than the requirements specified in this
2 Act.

3 (7) A grant may not be used to allocate re-
4 sources within the Freedom News Network in a
5 manner that is inconsistent with the Freedom News
6 Network strategic plan described in section 222(e).

7 (h) PROHIBITIONS ON THE USE OF GRANTS.—
8 Grants authorized under this section may not be used for
9 the following purposes:

10 (1)(A) Except as provided in subparagraph (B)
11 or (C), to pay any salary or other compensation, or
12 enter into any contract providing for the payment of
13 salary or compensation, in excess of the rates estab-
14 lished for comparable positions under title 5, United
15 States Code, or the foreign relations laws of the
16 United States, except that no employee may be paid
17 a salary or other compensation in excess of the rate
18 of pay payable for level II of the Executive Schedule
19 under section 5315 of such title.

20 (B) Salary and other compensation limitations
21 under subparagraph (A) shall not apply with respect
22 to any employee covered by a union agreement re-
23 quiring a salary or other compensation in excess of
24 such limitations before the date of the enactment of
25 this Act.

1 (C) Notwithstanding the limitations specified in
2 subparagraph (A), grants authorized under this sec-
3 tion may be used by the Freedom News Network to
4 pay up to six employees employed in the Wash-
5 ington, DC, area, salary or other compensation not
6 to exceed the rate of pay payable for level I of the
7 Executive Schedule under section 5314 of title 5,
8 United States Code, except that such shall not apply
9 to the Chief Executive Officer of the Freedom News
10 Network in accordance with section 221(d).

11 (2) For any activity intended to influence the
12 passage or defeat of legislation being considered by
13 Congress.

14 (3) To enter into a contract or obligation to pay
15 severance payments for voluntary separation for em-
16 ployees hired after December 1, 1990, except as may
17 be required by United States law or the laws of the
18 country where such an employee is stationed.

19 (4) For first class travel for any employee of
20 the Freedom News Network, or the relative of any
21 such employee.

22 **SEC. 111. OTHER PERSONNEL AND COMPENSATION LIMITA-**
23 **TIONS.**

24 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the organizational and
25 personnel restrictions described in subsection (c), the

1 Chief Executive Officer of the United States International
2 Communications Agency shall have the discretion to deter-
3 mine the distribution of all personnel within the Agency,
4 subject to the approval of the Board of the Agency.

5 (b) LIMITATION ON COMPENSATION.—

6 (1) IN GENERAL.—No employee of the United
7 States International Communications Agency, other
8 than the Chief Executive Officer or Director of the
9 Voice of America, shall be eligible to receive com-
10 pensation at a rate in excess of step 10 of GS–15
11 of the General Schedule under section 5332 of title
12 5, United States Code.

13 (2) EXCEPTION.—The limitation described in
14 paragraph (1) does not apply in the case of members
15 of the Board in accordance with section 102(d).

16 (c) PROHIBITION ON CERTAIN NEW EMPLOY-
17 MENT.—

18 (1) IN GENERAL.—Beginning on the date of the
19 enactment of this Act and ending on the date that
20 is five years after such date, the United States
21 International Communications Agency may not fill
22 any currently unfilled full-time or part-time position
23 compensated at an annual rate of basic pay for
24 grade GS–14 or GS–15 of the General Schedule
25 under section 5332 of title 5, United States Code,

1 including any currently filled position in which the
2 incumbent resigns, retires, or otherwise leaves such
3 position during the such five-year period.

4 (2) WAIVER.—The Chief Executive Officer of
5 the United States International Communications
6 Agency may waive the prohibition specified in para-
7 graph (1) if the position is determined essential to
8 the functioning of the Agency and documented as
9 such in the report required under section 112(a), or
10 necessary for the acquisition of skills or knowledge
11 not sufficiently represented in the current workforce
12 of the Agency. The Chief Executive Officer of the
13 Agency shall consult with the appropriate congress-
14 sional committees before issuing a waiver under this
15 paragraph.

16 **SEC. 112. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS OF THE UNITED**
17 **STATES INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS**
18 **AGENCY.**

19 (a) REORGANIZATION REPORT.—Not later than 180
20 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Chief
21 Executive Officer of the United States International Com-
22 munications Agency shall submit to the appropriate Con-
23 gressional committees a report that includes the following:

24 (1) A plan to assess and provide recommenda-
25 tions on the appropriate size and necessity of all

1 current offices and positions (also referred to as a
2 “staffing pattern”) within the Agency, including full-
3 time employee positions rated at the Senior Execu-
4 tive Service (SES) level or at GS–14 or GS–15 on
5 the General Schedule under section 5332 of title 5,
6 United States Code. Such plan shall include a de-
7 tailed organizational structure that delineates lines
8 of authority and reporting between junior staff,
9 management, and leadership.

10 (2) Details of how the structure and alignment
11 of resources supports the fulfillment of the Agency’s
12 mission and standards and principles as described in
13 sections 5 and 122.

14 (3) A plan for developing a platform to share
15 all programming content between the United States
16 International Communications Agency and the Free-
17 dom News Network, including making available for
18 distribution all programming content licensed or pro-
19 duced by the Agency and the Freedom News Net-
20 work, and expanding the functionality of the plat-
21 forms already in existence, such as the web content
22 management system “Pangea”.

23 (b) CONTRACTING REPORT.—The Chief Executive
24 Officer of the United States International Communica-
25 tions Agency shall annually submit to the appropriate con-

1 gressional committees a report on the Agency’s compliance
2 with the Federal Acquisition Regulation (the “FAR”) and
3 the Anti-Deficiency Act, including a review of contracts
4 awarded on a non-competitive basis, compliance with the
5 FAR requirement for publicizing contract actions, the use
6 of any personal service contracts without explicit statutory
7 authority, and processes for contract oversight in compli-
8 ance with the FAR.

9 (c) LISTENERSHIP REPORT.—The Chief Executive
10 Officer of the United States International Communica-
11 tions Agency shall annually submit to the appropriate con-
12 gressional committees a report that details the trans-
13 mission capacities, market penetration, and audience
14 listenership of all mediums of international communication
15 deployed by the United States International Communica-
16 tions Agency, including a plan for how target audiences
17 can be reached if the first medium of delivery is unavail-
18 able.

19 (d) GAO REPORT.—Every five years after the date
20 of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of
21 the United States shall submit to the appropriate congress-
22 sional committees a report that reviews the effectiveness
23 of content sharing between the United States Inter-
24 national Communications Agency and the Freedom News

1 Network and makes recommendations on how content
2 sharing can be improved.

3 **Subtitle B—The Voice of America**

4 **SEC. 121. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

5 It is the sense of Congress that—

6 (1) the Voice of America has been an indispen-
7 sable element of United States foreign policy and
8 public diplomacy efforts since 1942, and should re-
9 main the flagship brand of the United States Inter-
10 national Communications Agency;

11 (2) the Voice of America has been a reliable
12 source of accurate, objective, and comprehensive
13 news and related programming and content for the
14 millions of people around the world who cannot ob-
15 tain such news and related programming and con-
16 tent from indigenous media outlets;

17 (3) the Voice of America’s success over more
18 than seven decades has created valuable brand iden-
19 tity and international recognition that justifies the
20 maintenance of the Voice of America;

21 (4) the Voice of America’s public diplomacy
22 mission remains essential to broader United States
23 Government efforts to communicate with foreign
24 populations; and

1 (5) despite its tremendous historical success,
2 the Voice of America would benefit substantially
3 from a recalibration of Federal international broad-
4 casting agencies and resources, which would provide
5 the Voice of America with greater mission focus and
6 flexibility in the deployment of news, programming,
7 and content.

8 **SEC. 122. PRINCIPLES OF THE VOICE OF AMERICA.**

9 The Voice of America shall adhere to the following
10 principles in the course of fulfilling its duties and respon-
11 sibilities:

12 (1) Serving as a consistently reliable and au-
13 thoritative source of news on the United States, its
14 policies, its people, and the international develop-
15 ments that affect the United States.

16 (2) Providing accurate, objective, and com-
17 prehensive information, with the understanding that
18 these three values provide credibility among global
19 news audiences.

20 (3) Presenting the official policies of the United
21 States, and related discussions and opinions about
22 those policies, clearly and effectively.

23 (4) Representing the whole of the United
24 States, and shall accordingly work to produce pro-
25 gramming and content that presents a balanced and

1 comprehensive projection of the diversity of thought
2 and institutions of the United States.

3 **SEC. 123. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE VOICE OF**
4 **AMERICA.**

5 The Voice of America shall have the following duties
6 and responsibilities:

7 (1) Producing accurate, objective, and com-
8 prehensive news and related programming that is
9 consistent with and promotes the broad foreign poli-
10 cies of the United States.

11 (2) Producing news and related programming
12 and content that accurately represents the diversity
13 of thoughts and institutions of the United States as
14 a whole.

15 (3) Presenting the law and policies of the
16 United States clearly and effectively.

17 (4) Promoting the civil and responsible ex-
18 change of information and differences of opinion re-
19 garding policies, issues, and current events.

20 (5) Making all of its produced news and related
21 programming and content available to the Freedom
22 News Network for use and distribution.

23 (6) Producing or otherwise allowing editorials,
24 commentary, and programming, in consultation with
25 the Department of State, that present the official

1 views of the United States Government and its offi-
2 cials.

3 (7) Maximizing foreign national information ac-
4 cess through both the use of existing broadcasting
5 tools and resources and the development and dis-
6 semination of circumvention technology.

7 (8) Providing training and technical support for
8 independent indigenous media and journalist enter-
9 prises in order to facilitate or enhance independent
10 media environments and outlets abroad.

11 (9) Reaching identified foreign audiences in
12 local languages and dialects when possible.

13 (10) Being capable of providing a broadcasting
14 surge capacity under circumstances where overseas
15 disasters, crises, or other events require increased or
16 heightened international public diplomacy engage-
17 ment.

18 **SEC. 124. LIMITATION ON VOICE OF AMERICA NEWS, PRO-**
19 **GRAMMING, AND CONTENT; TEMPORARY EX-**
20 **CEPTION FOR SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA; EXCEP-**
21 **TION FOR BROADCASTING TO CUBA.**

22 (a) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subsections
23 (b) and (c), the Voice of America shall be limited to pro-
24 viding reporting in accordance with its public diplomacy
25 mandate on United States and international news and in-

1 formation, and producing related original programming
2 and content, including coverage of United States foreign
3 policy, international organizations, and international eco-
4 nomic developments.

5 (b) TEMPORARY EXCEPTION FOR SUB-SAHARAN AF-
6 RICA.—The Voice of America may provide original report-
7 ing on regional and local developments in sub-Saharan Af-
8 rica in accordance with the mission of the Freedom News
9 Network specified in section 212 until such time as the
10 Freedom News Network begins broadcasts to sub-Saharan
11 Africa at which time the Voice of America shall revert
12 back to the principles specified in section 122.

13 (c) EXCEPTION FOR BROADCASTING TO CUBA.—
14 Radio Marti and Television Marti, which constitute the
15 Office of Cuba Broadcasting, shall continue programming
16 and content production consistent with the mission and
17 activities as described in the Radio Broadcasting to Cuba
18 Act (Public Law 98–111) and the Television Broadcasting
19 to Cuba Act (Public Law 101–246), and continue existing
20 within the Voice of America of the United States Inter-
21 national Communications Agency.

22 **SEC. 125. DIRECTOR OF VOICE OF AMERICA.**

23 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There shall be a Director of
24 the Voice of America, who shall be responsible for exe-

1 cutting the duties and responsibilities of the Voice of Amer-
2 ica described in subsection (b).

3 (b) DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.—The Director
4 of the Voice of America shall, subject to the final approval
5 of the Chief Executive Officer of the United States Inter-
6 national Communications Agency carry out the following
7 duties and responsibilities:

8 (1) Determine the organizational structure of,
9 and personnel allocation or relocation within, the
10 Voice of America, subject to section 105.

11 (2) Make recommendations to the Chief Execu-
12 tive Officer of the United States International Com-
13 munications Agency regarding the production, devel-
14 opment, and termination of Voice of America news
15 programming and content.

16 (3) Make recommendations to the Chief Execu-
17 tive Officer of the United States International Com-
18 munications Agency about the establishment, termi-
19 nation, prioritization, and adjustments of language
20 services utilized by the Voice of America to reach its
21 international audience.

22 (4) Allocate funding and material resources
23 under the jurisdiction of the Voice of America for
24 the furtherance of the other duties and responsibil-
25 ities established under this subsection.

1 (5) Oversee the daily operations of the Voice of
2 America, including programming content.

3 (c) APPOINTMENT AND QUALIFICATIONS OF DIREC-
4 TOR.—

5 (1) IN GENERAL.—The position of Director of
6 the Voice of America shall be filled by a person who
7 shall serve at the pleasure of the Chief Executive Of-
8 ficer of the United States International Communica-
9 tions Agency.

10 (2) ELIGIBILITY.—To be eligible to be ap-
11 pointed Director of the Voice of America, a person
12 shall have at least two of the following qualifications:

13 (A) Prior, extensive experience managing
14 or operating a private-sector media or journalist
15 enterprise.

16 (B) Prior, extensive experience managing
17 or operating a large organization.

18 (C) Prior, extensive experience engaged in
19 mass media or journalist program development,
20 including the development of circumvention
21 technologies.

22 (D) Prior, extensive experience engaged in
23 international journalism or other related activi-
24 ties, including the training of international jour-

1 nalists and the promotion of democratic institu-
2 tional reforms abroad.

3 (3) COMPENSATION.—Any Director who is
4 hired after the date of the enactment of this Act
5 shall be entitled to receive compensation at a rate
6 equal to the annual rate of basic pay for level III of
7 the Executive Schedule under section 5315 of title
8 5, United States Code.

9 **Subtitle C—General Provisions**

10 **SEC. 131. FEDERAL AGENCY COORDINATION IN SUPPORT** 11 **OF UNITED STATES PUBLIC DIPLOMACY.**

12 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Board of the United States
13 International Communications Agency and the Freedom
14 News Network shall conduct periodic, unclassified con-
15 sultations with the Department of State, the United
16 States Agency for International Development, the Depart-
17 ment of Defense, and the Office of the Director of Na-
18 tional Intelligence, for the purpose of assessing the fol-
19 lowing:

20 (1) Progress toward democratization, the devel-
21 opment of free and independent media outlets, and
22 the free flow of information in countries that receive
23 programming and content from the United States
24 International Communications Agency and the Free-
25 dom News Network.

1 ity for such a temporary broadcasting surge for the Agen-
2 cy, the Freedom News Network, or both.

3 (b) ACTIONS.—In accordance with subsection (a),
4 Federal agency heads shall assist or coordinate with the
5 United States International Communications Agency by—

6 (1) supplying or facilitating access to, or use
7 of—

8 (A) United States Government-owned
9 transmission capacity, including the use of
10 transmission facilities, equipment, resources,
11 and personnel; and

12 (B) other non-transmission-related United
13 States Government-owned facilities, equipment,
14 resources, and personnel;

15 (2) communicating and coordinating with for-
16 eign host governments on behalf of, or in conjunc-
17 tion with, the Agency or the Freedom News Net-
18 work;

19 (3) providing, or assisting in the obtaining of,
20 in-country security services for the safety and pro-
21 tection of Agency or Freedom News Network per-
22 sonnel; and

23 (4) providing or facilitating access to any other
24 United States Government-owned resources.

1 (c) PROHIBITION.—Notwithstanding any other provi-
2 sion of law, neither Federal agency heads nor their agen-
3 cies shall receive any reimbursement or compensatory ap-
4 propriations for complying with implementing this section.

5 **SEC. 133. FREEDOM NEWS NETWORK RIGHT OF FIRST RE-**
6 **FUSAL IN INSTANCES OF FEDERAL DISPOSAL**
7 **OF RADIO OR TELEVISION BROADCAST**
8 **TRANSMISSION FACILITIES OR EQUIPMENT.**

9 (a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provi-
10 sion of law, it shall be the policy of the United States
11 International Communications Agency to, in the event it
12 intends to dispose of any radio or television broadcast
13 transmission facilities or equipment, provide the Freedom
14 News Network with the right of first refusal with respect
15 to the acquisition of such facilities and equipment.

16 (b) TRANSFER AND DISPOSAL.—Pursuant to sub-
17 section (a)—

18 (1) in the event the Freedom News Network is
19 willing to accept the facilities and equipment re-
20 ferred to in such subsection, the United States
21 International Communications Agency shall transfer
22 to the Freedom News Network such facilities and
23 equipment at no cost to the Freedom News Net-
24 work; or

1 **TITLE II—THE FREEDOM NEWS**
2 **NETWORK**

3 **SEC. 201. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

4 It is the sense of Congress that RFE/RL, Incorporated, Radio Free Asia, and the Middle East Broadcasting Network share a common mission with distinct geographic foci, and should therefore be merged into a single organization, with distinct marketing brands to provide the news and related programming and content in countries where free media are not established.

11 **Subtitle A—Consolidation of**
12 **Existing Grantee Organizations**

13 **SEC. 211. FORMATION OF THE FREEDOM NEWS NETWORK**
14 **FROM EXISTING GRANTEES.**

15 (a) IN GENERAL.—When the conditions specified in
16 section 110 are satisfied, the Freedom News Network,
17 comprised of the consolidation of RFE/RL Incorporated,
18 Radio Free Asia, and the Middle East Broadcasting Network,
19 shall exist to carry out all international broadcasting
20 activities supported by the United States Government, in
21 accordance with sections 212 and 213.

22 (b) MAINTENANCE OF THE EXISTING INDIVIDUAL
23 GRANTEE BRANDS.—RFE/RL, Incorporated, Radio Free
24 Asia, and the Middle East Broadcasting Network shall re-
25 main brand names under which news and related pro-

1 gramming and content may be disseminated by the Free-
2 dom News Network. Additional brands may be created as
3 necessary.

4 **SEC. 212. MISSION OF THE FREEDOM NEWS NETWORK.**

5 The Freedom News Network established under sec-
6 tion 211 shall—

7 (1) provide uncensored local and regional news
8 and analysis to people in societies where a robust,
9 indigenous, independent, and free media does not
10 exist;

11 (2) strengthen civil societies by projecting
12 democratic values and promoting equality and the
13 rights of the individual;

14 (3) help countries improve their indigenous ca-
15 pacity to enhance media professionalism and inde-
16 pendence, and develop partnerships with local media
17 outlets, as appropriate; and

18 (4) promote access to uncensored sources of in-
19 formation, especially via the internet, and use all ef-
20 fective and efficient mediums of communication to
21 reach target audiences.

22 **SEC. 213. STANDARDS AND PRINCIPLES OF THE FREEDOM**
23 **NEWS NETWORK.**

24 The broadcasting of the Freedom News Network
25 shall—

1 (1) be consistent with the broad foreign policy
2 objectives of the United States;

3 (2) be consistent with the international tele-
4 communications policies and treaty obligations of the
5 United States;

6 (3) be conducted in accordance with the highest
7 professional standards of broadcast journalism;

8 (4) be based on reliable information about its
9 potential audience;

10 (5) be designed so as to effectively reach a sig-
11 nificant audience; and

12 (6) prioritize programming to populations in
13 countries without independent indigenous media out-
14 lets.

15 **Subtitle B—Organization of the** 16 **Freedom News Network**

17 **SEC. 221. GOVERNANCE OF THE FREEDOM NEWS NET-** 18 **WORK.**

19 (a) BOARD OF THE FREEDOM NEWS NETWORK.—
20 A board shall oversee the Freedom News Network and
21 consist of nine individuals with a demonstrated back-
22 ground in media or the promotion of democracy and expe-
23 rience in measuring media impact.

24 (b) COMPOSITION OF FIRST BOARD OF THE FREE-
25 DOM NEWS NETWORK.—Not later than 90 days after the

1 date of the enactment of this Act, the Chairs and Ranking
2 Members of the appropriate congressional committees
3 shall identify and appoint candidates for the first board
4 of the Freedom News Network, direct the appointment of
5 board members, and select the first chair of the board of
6 the Freedom News Network as follows:

7 (1) Two individuals shall be appointed by the
8 Chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the
9 House of Representatives.

10 (2) Two individuals shall be appointed by the
11 Ranking Member of the Committee on Foreign Af-
12 fairs of the House of Representatives.

13 (3) Two individuals shall be appointed by the
14 Chair of the Committee on Foreign Relations of the
15 Senate.

16 (4) Two individuals shall be appointed by the
17 Ranking Member of the Committee on Foreign Rela-
18 tions of the Senate.

19 (5) One individual shall be appointed by con-
20 sensus of the Chairs and Ranking Members of the
21 Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Rep-
22 resentatives and the Committee on Foreign Rela-
23 tions of the Senate.

24 (c) OPERATIONS OF THE FIRST BOARD OF THE
25 FREEDOM NEWS NETWORK.—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—The board members of the
2 first board of the Freedom News Network shall de-
3 termine the bylaws, select the Chief Executive Offi-
4 cer of the Freedom News Network, and file articles
5 of incorporation under the corporate name “Free-
6 dom News Network”. The first board of the Free-
7 dom News Network may change the organization’s
8 name in accordance with such bylaws.

9 (2) TERM LIMITS.—The board members of the
10 first board of the Freedom News Network may not
11 serve more than a three-year term, and shall be re-
12 placed in accordance with the bylaws referred to in
13 paragraph (1) and the succession process described
14 in paragraph (3).

15 (3) SUCCESSION OF BOARD MEMBERS.—The
16 board members of the first board of the Freedom
17 News Network and all subsequent boards shall fill
18 vacancies on the board due to death, resignation, re-
19 moval, or term expiration through an election proc-
20 ess described in the bylaws referred to in paragraph
21 (1) and in accordance with the principle of a “self-
22 replenishing” body.

23 (d) COMPENSATION OF BOARD AND OFFICERS OF
24 THE FREEDOM NEWS NETWORK.—Members of the board
25 of the Freedom News Network may not receive any fee,

1 salary, or remuneration of any kind for their service as
2 members, except that such members may be reimbursed
3 for reasonable expenses, such as board-related travel, in-
4 curred with approval of the board upon presentation of
5 vouchers. No officers of the Freedom News Network, other
6 than the Chief Executive Officer, shall be eligible to re-
7 ceive compensation at a rate in excess of the annual rate
8 of basic pay for level II on the Executive Schedule under
9 section 5315 of title 5, United States Code.

10 (e) ABOLISHMENT OF EXISTING BOARDS.—The
11 boards of directors of RFE/RL, Incorporated, Radio Free
12 Asia, and the Middle East Broadcasting Network in exist-
13 ence on the day before the date of the enactment of this
14 Act shall be abolished on the date of the first official meet-
15 ing of the first board of the Freedom News Network.

16 (f) CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER.—The Chief Execu-
17 tive Officer of the Freedom News Network shall serve at
18 the pleasure of the board of the Freedom News Network,
19 and be responsible for the day-to-day management and op-
20 erations of the Freedom News Network, including the se-
21 lection of individuals for management positions. The board
22 of the Freedom News Network may add to the duties and
23 responsibilities of the Chief Executive Officer as the board
24 determines appropriate, and such additional duties and re-

1 sponsibilities shall be codified in the bylaws of the Free-
2 dom News Network.

3 (g) PLAN FOR CONSOLIDATION OF EXISTING INDI-
4 VIDUAL GRANTEES.—

5 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days
6 after the date of the first official meeting of the first
7 board of the Freedom News Network, the chair of
8 the board of the Freedom News Network shall sub-
9 mit a report to, and consult with, the appropriate
10 congressional committees on the plan to consolidate
11 RFE/RL, Incorporated, Radio Free Asia, and the
12 Middle East Broadcasting Network into a single
13 non-Federal grantee organization.

14 (2) COMPONENTS.—The consolidation plan re-
15 ferred to in paragraph (1) shall include the following
16 components:

17 (A) The location and distribution of em-
18 ployees, including administrative, managerial,
19 and technical staff, of the Freedom News Net-
20 work that will be located within and outside the
21 metropolitan area of Washington, DC.

22 (B) An organizational chart identifying the
23 managerial and supervisory lines of authority
24 among all employees of the Freedom News Net-
25 work.

1 (3) TIME FOR IMPLEMENTATION.—Not later
2 than three years after the date of the enactment of
3 this Act, the chair of the board of the Freedom
4 News Network shall fully implement the consolida-
5 tion plan referred to in paragraph (1) after consulta-
6 tion with the appropriate congressional committees.

7 (4) REPORT.—Not later than five years after
8 the date on which initial funding is provided for the
9 purpose of operating the Freedom News Network,
10 the chair of the board of the Freedom News Net-
11 work shall submit to the appropriate congressional
12 committees a report that details the following:

13 (A) Whether the Freedom News Network
14 is technically sound and cost-effective.

15 (B) Whether the Freedom News Network
16 consistently meets the standards for quality and
17 impact established by this title.

18 (C) Whether the Freedom News Network
19 is receiving a sufficient audience to warrant its
20 continued operation.

21 (D) The extent to which the Freedom
22 News Network's programming and content is
23 already being received by the target audience
24 from other credible indigenous or external
25 sources.

1 (E) The extent to which the foreign policy
2 and national security interests of the United
3 States are being served by maintaining oper-
4 ations of the Freedom News Network.

5 **SEC. 222. BUDGET OF THE FREEDOM NEWS NETWORK.**

6 (a) IN GENERAL.—The annual budget of the Free-
7 dom News Network shall consist of the following:

8 (1) A grant described in section 110, consisting
9 of the total grants to RFE/RL, Incorporated, Radio
10 Free Asia, and the Middle East Broadcasting Net-
11 work before the date of the enactment of this Act.

12 (2) Any grants or transfers from other Federal
13 agencies.

14 (3) Other funds described in subsection (b).

15 (b) OTHER SOURCES OF FUNDING.—The Freedom
16 News Network may, to the extent authorized by its board
17 and in accordance with applicable laws and the mission
18 of the Freedom News Network under section 212 and eli-
19 gible broadcast areas under section 6, collect and utilize
20 non-Federal funds, except that the Freedom News Net-
21 work may not accept funds from the following:

22 (1) Any foreign governments or foreign govern-
23 ment officials.

1 (2) Any agents, representatives, or surrogates
2 of any foreign government or foreign government of-
3 ficial.

4 (3) Any foreign-owned corporations or any sub-
5 sidiaries of any foreign-owned corporation, regard-
6 less of whether such subsidiary is foreign-owned.

7 (4) Any foreign national or individual who is
8 not either a citizen or a legal permanent resident of
9 the United States.

10 (c) ANNUAL STRATEGIC PLAN OF THE FREEDOM
11 NEWS NETWORK.—The Freedom News Network shall
12 submit to the appropriate congressional committees and
13 the United States International Communications Agency
14 an annual strategic plan to satisfy the requirements speci-
15 fied in section 110. Each such strategic plan shall outline
16 the following:

17 (1) The strategic goals and objectives of the
18 Freedom News Network for the upcoming fiscal
19 year.

20 (2) The alignment of the Freedom News Net-
21 work's resources with the strategic goals and objec-
22 tives referred to in subparagraph (A).

23 (3) Clear benchmarks that establish the
24 progress made towards achieving the strategic goals
25 and objectives referred to in subparagraph (A).

1 (b) FACILITIES AND BROADCASTING INFRASTRUC-
2 TURE.—The United States International Communications
3 Agency and the Freedom News Network shall negotiate
4 an International Cooperative Administrative Support
5 Service (ICASS) agreement or memorandum of under-
6 standing permitting the continued use of technological in-
7 frastructure for broadcasting and information dissemina-
8 tion, except that the Freedom News Network may choose
9 to procure such services through negotiated contracts with
10 private-sector providers.

11 **SEC. 224. REPORTS BY THE OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR**

12 **GENERAL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE;**

13 **AUDITS BY GAO.**

14 (a) IG REPORTS.—

15 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than September
16 30 of each year, the Inspector General of the De-
17 partment of State and the Foreign Service shall sub-
18 mit to the appropriate congressional committees a
19 report on management practices of the Freedom
20 News Network, including a financial report on unob-
21 ligated balances.

22 (2) CONTINUATION OF AUTHORITY.—Notwith-
23 standing any other provision of law, the Inspector
24 General of the Department of State and the Foreign
25 Service is authorized to exercise the authorities of

1 the Inspector General Act of 1978 with respect to
2 the Freedom News Network.

3 (b) GAO AUDITS.—

4 (1) IN GENERAL.—Financial transactions of the
5 Freedom News Network, as such relate to functions
6 carried out under this Act, may be audited by the
7 Government Accountability Office in accordance with
8 such principles and procedures and under such rules
9 and regulations as may be prescribed by the Comp-
10 troller General of the United States. Any such audit
11 shall be conducted at the place or places where ac-
12 counts of the Freedom News Network are normally
13 kept.

14 (2) ACCESS.—Representatives of the Govern-
15 ment Accountability Office shall have access to all
16 books, accounts, records, reports, files, papers, and
17 property belonging to or in use by the Freedom
18 News Network pertaining to the financial trans-
19 actions referred to in paragraph (1) and necessary
20 to facilitate an audit in accordance with such para-
21 graph. All such books, accounts, records, reports,
22 files, papers, and property of the Freedom News
23 Network shall remain in the possession and custody
24 of the Freedom News Network.

1 **SEC. 225. AMENDMENTS TO THE UNITED STATES INFORMA-**
2 **TION AND EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGE ACT OF**
3 **1948.**

4 The United States Information and Educational Ex-
5 change Act of 1948 is amended—

6 (1) in title V (22 U.S.C. 1461 et seq.), by strik-
7 ing “Broadcasting Board of Governors” and insert-
8 ing “United States International Communications
9 Agency” each place it appears;

10 (2) by amending paragraph (1) of section
11 501(b) (22 U.S.C. 1461(b)) to read as follows:

12 “(b)(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), the Sec-
13 retary and the United States International Communica-
14 tions Agency may, upon request and reimbursement of the
15 reasonable costs incurred in fulfilling such a request, make
16 available, in the United States, motion pictures, films,
17 video, audio, and other materials disseminated abroad
18 pursuant to this Act. Any reimbursement pursuant to this
19 paragraph shall be credited to the applicable appropriation
20 account of the Department of State or the United States
21 International Communications Agency, as appropriate.
22 The Secretary and the United States International Com-
23 munications Agency shall issue necessary regulations.”;

24 (3) by repealing sections 504 and 505 (22
25 U.S.C. 1464 and 1464a);

1 (4) by redesignating section 506 (22 U.S.C.
2 1464b) as section 504;

3 (5) in section 504, as so redesignated, in sub-
4 section (c), in the matter preceding paragraph (1)—

5 (A) by striking “Broadcasting Board of
6 Governors” and inserting “United States Inter-
7 national Communications Agency”; and

8 (B) by striking “Board” each place it ap-
9 pears and inserting “Agency”;

10 (6) in clause (iii) of section 604(d)(1)(A) (22
11 U.S.C. 1469(d)(1)(A)), by striking “Broadcasting
12 Board of Governors” and inserting “United States
13 International Communications Agency”;

14 (7) in paragraph (3) of section 801 (22 U.S.C.
15 1471), by striking “Director of the United States
16 Information Agency” and inserting “Chief Executive
17 Officer of the United States International Commu-
18 nications Agency”;

19 (8) in subsection (b) of section 802 (22 U.S.C.
20 1472)—

21 (A) in paragraph (1)(B), by striking “Di-
22 rector of the United States Information Agen-
23 cy” and inserting “Chief Executive Officer of
24 the United States International Communica-
25 tions Agency”; and

1 (B) in paragraph (4)(A), by striking
2 “Broadcasting Board of Governors” and insert-
3 ing “United States International Communica-
4 tions Agency”;

5 (9) in paragraph (1) of section 804 (22 U.S.C.
6 1474), by striking “Director of the United States
7 Information Agency” and inserting “Chief Executive
8 Officer of the United States International Commu-
9 nications Agency”;

10 (10) in section 810(b) (22 U.S.C. 1475e(b))—

11 (A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1),
12 by striking “United States Information Agen-
13 cy” and inserting “United States International
14 Communications Agency”; and

15 (B) in paragraph (4), by striking “Inter-
16 national Broadcasting Bureau” and inserting
17 “United States International Communications
18 Agency”; and

19 (11) in subsection (a) of section 1001 (22
20 U.S.C. 1442), by striking “Director of the United
21 States Information Agency” and inserting “Chief
22 Executive Officer of the United States International
23 Communications Agency”.

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