

AMENDMENT TO RULES COMM. PRINT 114-51
OFFERED BY MR. THORNBERRY OF TEXAS

At the end of subtitle E of title XII, add the following:

1 SEC. 12xx. GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT CENTER.

2 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 180 days after
3 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of
4 State, in coordination with the Secretary of Defense and
5 the heads of other relevant Federal departments and agen-
6 cies, shall establish a Global Engagement Center (in this
7 section referred to as the “Center”). The purposes of the
8 Center are—

9 (1) to lead and coordinate the compilation and
10 examination of information on foreign government
11 information warfare efforts monitored and inte-
12 grated by the appropriate interagency entities with
13 responsibility for such information, including infor-
14 mation provided by recipients of information access
15 fund grants awarded under subsection (f) and other
16 sources;

17 (2) to establish a framework for the integration
18 of critical data and analysis provided by the appro-
19 priate interagency entities with responsibility for

1 such information on foreign propaganda and
2 disinformation efforts into the development of na-
3 tional strategy;

4 (3) to develop, plan, and synchronize, in coordi-
5 nation with the Secretary of Defense, and the heads
6 of other relevant Federal departments and agencies,
7 whole-of-government initiatives to expose and
8 counter foreign propaganda and disinformation di-
9 rected against United States national security inter-
10 ests and proactively advance fact-based narratives
11 that support United States allies and interests;

12 (4) to demonstrate new technologies, meth-
13 odologies and concepts relevant to the missions of
14 the Center that can be transitioned to other depart-
15 ments or agencies of the United States Government,
16 foreign partners or allies, or other nongovernmental
17 entities;

18 (5) to establish cooperative or liaison relation-
19 ships with foreign partners and allies in consultation
20 with interagency entities with responsibility for such
21 activities, and other entities, such as academia, non-
22 governmental organizations, and the private sector;
23 and

24 (6) to identify shortfalls in United States capa-
25 bilities in any areas relevant to the United States

1 Government's mission, and recommend necessary en-
2 hancements or changes.

3 (b) FUNCTIONS.—The Center shall carry out the fol-
4 lowing functions:

5 (1) Integrating interagency and international
6 efforts to track and evaluate counterfactual nar-
7 ratives abroad that threaten the national security in-
8 terests of the United States and United States allies.

9 (2) Integrating, and analyzing relevant informa-
10 tion, data, analysis, and analytics from United
11 States Government agencies, allied nations, think
12 tanks, academic institutions, civil society groups,
13 and other nongovernmental organizations.

14 (3) Developing and disseminating fact-based
15 narratives and analysis to counter propaganda and
16 disinformation directed at United States allies and
17 partners.

18 (4) Identifying current and emerging trends in
19 foreign propaganda and disinformation based on the
20 information provided by the appropriate interagency
21 entities with responsibility for such information, in-
22 cluding information obtained from print, broadcast,
23 online and social media, support for third-party out-
24 lets such as think tanks, political parties, and non-
25 governmental organizations, and the use of covert or

1 clandestine special operators and agents to influence
2 targeted populations and governments in order to
3 coordinate and shape the development of tactics,
4 techniques, and procedures to expose and refute for-
5 eign misinformation and disinformation and
6 proactively promote fact-based narratives and poli-
7 cies to audiences outside the United States.

8 (5) Facilitating the use of a wide range of tech-
9 nologies and techniques by sharing expertise among
10 agencies, seeking expertise from external sources,
11 and implementing best practices.

12 (6) Identifying gaps in United States capabili-
13 ties in areas relevant to the Center's mission and
14 recommending necessary enhancements or changes.

15 (7) Identifying the countries and populations
16 most susceptible to foreign government propaganda
17 and disinformation based on information provided by
18 appropriate interagency entities.

19 (8) Administering the information access fund
20 established pursuant to subsection (f).

21 (9) Coordinating with allied and partner na-
22 tions, particularly those frequently targeted by for-
23 eign disinformation operations, and international or-
24 ganizations and entities such as the NATO Center
25 of Excellence on Strategic Communications, the Eu-

1 ropean Endowment for Democracy, and the Euro-
2 pean External Action Service Task Force on Stra-
3 tegic Communications, in order to amplify the Cen-
4 ter’s efforts and avoid duplication.

5 (c) COORDINATOR.—The Secretary of State shall ap-
6 point a full-time Coordinator to lead the Center.

7 (d) EMPLOYEES OF THE CENTER.—

8 (1) DETAILEES.—Any Federal Government em-
9 ployee may be detailed to the Center without reim-
10 bursement, and such detail shall be without inter-
11 ruption or loss of civil service status or privilege for
12 a period of not more than three years.

13 (2) PERSONAL SERVICE CONTRACTORS.—The
14 Secretary of State may exercise the authority pro-
15 vided under section 3161 of title 5, United States
16 Code, to establish a program (referred to in this
17 subsection as the “Program”) for hiring United
18 States citizens or aliens as personal services contrac-
19 tors for purposes of personnel resources of the Cen-
20 ter, if—

21 (A) the Secretary determines that existing
22 personnel resources are insufficient;

23 (B) the period in which services are pro-
24 vided by a personal services contractor under
25 the Program, including options, does not exceed

1 three years, unless the Secretary determines
2 that exceptional circumstances justify an exten-
3 sion of up to one additional year;

4 (C) not more than 20 United States citi-
5 zens or aliens are employed as personal services
6 contractors under the Program at any time;
7 and

8 (D) the Program is only used to obtain
9 specialized skills or experience or to respond to
10 urgent needs.

11 (e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Under
12 “Diplomatic and Consular Programs”, for each of fiscal
13 years 2017 and 2018, \$10,000,000 is authorized to be ap-
14 propriated to the Department of State and may remain
15 available until expended to carry out the functions, duties,
16 and responsibilities of the Center.

17 (f) INFORMATION ACCESS FUND.—

18 (1) AUTHORITY FOR GRANTS.—The Center is
19 authorized to provide grants or contracts of financial
20 support to civil society groups, journalists, non-
21 governmental organizations, federally-funded re-
22 search and development centers, private companies,
23 or academic institutions for the following purposes:

24 (A) To support local independent media
25 who are best placed to refute foreign

1 disinformation and manipulation in their own
2 communities.

3 (B) To collect and store examples in print,
4 online, and social media, disinformation, misin-
5 formation, and propaganda directed at the
6 United States and its allies and partners.

7 (C) To analyze and report on tactics, tech-
8 niques, and procedures of foreign government
9 information warfare with respect to
10 disinformation, misinformation, and propa-
11 ganda.

12 (D) To support efforts by the Center to
13 counter efforts by foreign governments to use
14 disinformation, misinformation, and propa-
15 ganda to influence the policies and social and
16 political stability of the United States and
17 United States allies and partners.

18 (2) FUNDING AVAILABILITY AND LIMITA-
19 TIONS.—The Secretary of State shall provide that
20 each organization that applies to receive funds under
21 this subsection undergoes a vetting process in ac-
22 cordance with the relevant existing regulations to en-
23 sure its bona fides, capability, and experience, and
24 its compatibility with United States interests and
25 objectives.

1 (g) LIMITATION.—None of the funds authorized to
2 be appropriated by the Act to carry out this section shall
3 be used for purposes other than countering foreign propa-
4 ganda and misinformation that threatens United States
5 national security.

6 (h) TERMINATION OF CENTER.—The Center shall
7 terminate on the date that is 5 years after the date of
8 the enactment of this Act.

9 **SEC. 12yy. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE BROADCASTING**
10 **BOARD OF GOVERNORS CHIEF EXECUTIVE**
11 **OFFICER POSITION.**

12 The United States International Broadcasting Act of
13 1994 (22 U.S.C. 6201 et seq.; Public Law 103–236) is
14 amended—

15 (1) by amending section 304 (22 U.S.C. 6203)
16 to read as follows:

17 **“SEC. 304. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF-**
18 **FICER OF THE BROADCASTING BOARD OF**
19 **GOVERNORS.**

20 “(a) CONTINUED EXISTENCE WITHIN EXECUTIVE
21 BRANCH.—The Broadcasting Board of Governors shall
22 continue to exist within the Executive branch of Govern-
23 ment as an entity described in section 104 of title 5,
24 United States Code.

25 “(b) CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER.—

1 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The head of the Broad-
2 casting Board of Governors shall be a Chief Execu-
3 tive Officer, who shall be appointed by the Presi-
4 dent, by and with the advice and consent of the Sen-
5 ate. The President shall nominate the Chief Execu-
6 tive Officer not later than 60 days after the date of
7 the enactment of this section. Until such time as a
8 Chief Executive Officer is appointed and has quali-
9 fied, the current or acting Chief Executive Officer
10 appointed by the Board may continue to serve and
11 exercise the authorities and powers under this Act.

12 “(2) TERM.—The first Chief Executive Officer
13 appointed pursuant to paragraph (1) shall serve for
14 an initial term of three years.

15 “(3) COMPENSATION.—A Chief Executive Offi-
16 cer appointed pursuant to paragraph (1) shall be
17 compensated at the annual rate of basic pay for level
18 III of the Executive Schedule under section 5314 of
19 title 5, United States Code.

20 “(c) TERMINATION OF DIRECTOR OF INTER-
21 NATIONAL BROADCASTING BUREAU.—Immediately upon
22 appointment of the Chief Executive Officer under sub-
23 section (b), the Director of the International Broadcasting
24 Bureau shall be terminated, and all of the responsibilities,
25 authorities, and immunities of the Director or the Board

1 under this or any other Act or authority before the date
2 of the enactment of this section shall be transferred to
3 and assumed or overseen by the Chief Executive Officer,
4 as head of the agency.

5 “(d) MEMBERS OF THE BROADCASTING BOARD OF
6 GOVERNORS.—Members of the Broadcasting Board of
7 Governors in office as of the date of the enactment of this
8 section may serve the remainder of their terms of office
9 in an advisory capacity, but such terms may not be ex-
10 tended beyond the date on which such terms are set to
11 expire.

12 “(e) IMMUNITY FROM CIVIL LIABILITY.—Notwith-
13 standing any other provision of law, all limitations on li-
14 ability that apply to the Chief Executive Officer shall also
15 apply to members of the board of directors of RFE/RL,
16 Inc., Radio Free Asia, the Middle East Broadcasting Net-
17 works, or any organization that consolidates such entities
18 when such members are acting in their official capac-
19 ities.”; and

20 (2) in section 305 (22 U.S.C. 6204)—

21 (A) in subsection (a)—

22 (i) by striking “Board” each place it
23 appears and inserting “Chief Executive Of-
24 ficer”;

1 (ii) in paragraph (1), by inserting “di-
2 rect and” before “supervise”;

3 (iii) in paragraph (5)—

4 (I) by inserting “and cooperative
5 agreements” after “grants”; and

6 (II) by striking “sections 308
7 and 309” and inserting “this Act, and
8 on behalf of other agencies, accord-
9 ingly”;

10 (iv) in paragraph (6), by striking
11 “subject to the limitations in sections 308
12 and 309 and”;

13 (v) in paragraph (11), by inserting
14 “not” before “subject”;

15 (vi) in paragraph (15)(A), by strik-
16 ing—

17 (I) “temporary and intermit-
18 tent”; and

19 (II) “to the same extent as is au-
20 thorized by section 3109 of title 5,
21 United States Code,”; and

22 (vii) by adding at the end the fol-
23 lowing new paragraphs:

24 “(20) Notwithstanding any other provision of
25 law, including section 308(a), to condition, if appro-

1 piate, any grant or cooperative agreement to RFE/
2 RL, Inc., Radio Free Asia, and the Middle East
3 Broadcasting Networks on authority to determine
4 membership of their respective boards, and the con-
5 solidation of such entities into a single grantee orga-
6 nization.

7 “(21) To redirect funds within the scope of any
8 grant or cooperative agreement, or between grantees,
9 as necessary, and to condition grants or cooperative
10 agreements, if appropriate, on similar amendments
11 as authorized under section 308(a) to meet the pur-
12 poses of this Act.

13 “(22) To change the name of the Board pursu-
14 ant to congressional notification 60 days prior to
15 any such change.”;

16 (B) by striking subsections (b) and (c);

17 and

18 (C) by redesignating subsection (d) as sub-
19 section (b).

20 **SEC. 12zz. UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL BROAD-**
21 **CASTING ACT OF 1994.**

22 The United States International Broadcasting Act of
23 1994 (22 U.S.C. 6201 et seq.; Public Law 103–236) is
24 amended—

25 (1) in section 306 (22 U.S.C. 6205)—

- 1 (A) in subsection (a)—
2 (i) by striking the heading; and
3 (ii) by striking “Board” each place it
4 appears and inserting “Agency”; and
5 (B) by striking subsection (b);
6 (2) by striking section 307 (22 U.S.C. 6206);
7 and
8 (3) by inserting after section 309 the following
9 new sections:

10 **“SEC. 310. BROADCAST ENTITIES REPORTING TO CHIEF EX-**
11 **ECUTIVE OFFICER.**

12 “(a) GRANTEE ORGANIZATIONS.—Notwithstanding
13 any other provision of law, the following provisions shall
14 apply:

15 “(1) CONSOLIDATION.—The Chief Executive
16 Officer, subject to the regular notification proce-
17 dures of the Committee on Appropriations and the
18 Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Rep-
19 resentatives and the Committee on Appropriations
20 and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Sen-
21 ate, who is authorized to incorporate a grantee, may
22 condition annual grants to RFE/RL, Inc., Radio
23 Free Asia, and the Middle East Broadcasting Net-
24 works on the consolidation of such grantees into a
25 single, consolidated private, non-profit corporation

1 (in accordance with section 501(c)(3) of the Internal
2 Revenue Code and exempt from tax under section
3 501(a) of such Code), which may broadcast and pro-
4 vide news and information to audiences wherever the
5 Agency may broadcast, for activities that the Chief
6 Executive Officer determines are consistent with the
7 purposes of this Act, including the terms and condi-
8 tions of subsections (g)(5), (h), (i), and (j) of section
9 308, except that the Agency may select any name
10 for such a consolidated grantee.

11 “(2) FEDERAL STATUS.—Nothing in this or
12 any other Act, or any action taken pursuant to this
13 or any other Act, may be construed to make such a
14 consolidated grantee described in paragraph (1) or
15 RFE/RL, Inc., Radio Free Asia, or the Middle East
16 Broadcasting Networks or any other grantee or enti-
17 ty provided funding by the Agency a Federal agency
18 or instrumentality. Employees or staff of such grant-
19 ees or entities shall not be considered Federal em-
20 ployees. For purposes of this subsection and this
21 Act, the term ‘grant’ includes agreements under sec-
22 tion 6305 of title 31, United States Code, and the
23 term ‘grantee’ includes recipients of such agree-
24 ments.

1 “(3) LEADERSHIP OF GRANTEE ORGANIZA-
2 TIONS.—Officers of RFE/RL Inc., Radio Free Asia,
3 and the Middle East Broadcasting Networks or any
4 organization that is established through the consoli-
5 dation of such entities, or authorized under this Act,
6 shall serve at the pleasure of the Chief Executive Of-
7 ficer of the Agency.

8 “(b) VOICE OF AMERICA.—

9 “(1) STATUS AS A FEDERAL ENTITY.—The
10 Chief Executive Officer is authorized to establish an
11 independent grantee organization, as a private non-
12 profit organization, to carry out all broadcasting and
13 related programs currently performed by the Voice
14 of America. The Chief Executive Officer may make
15 and supervise grants or cooperative agreements to
16 such grantee, including under terms and conditions
17 and in any manner authorized under section 305(a).
18 Such grantee shall not be considered a Federal
19 agency or instrumentality and shall adhere to the
20 same standards of professionalism and account-
21 ability required of all Board broadcasters and grant-
22 ees. The Board is authorized to transfer any facili-
23 ties or equipment to such grantee, and to utilize the
24 provisions of subchapter VI of chapter 33 of title 5,
25 United States Code.

1 “(2) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of
2 the Congress that the Voice of America, operating as
3 a nonprofit organization, should have the mission
4 to—

5 “(A) serve as a consistently reliable and
6 authoritative source of news on the United
7 States, its policies, its people, and the inter-
8 national developments that affect the United
9 States;

10 “(B) provide accurate, objective, and com-
11 prehensive information, with the understanding
12 that these three values provide credibility
13 among global news audiences;

14 “(C) present the official policies of the
15 United States, and related discussions and
16 opinions about those policies, clearly and effec-
17 tively; and

18 “(D) represent the whole of the United
19 States, and shall accordingly work to produce
20 programming and content that presents a bal-
21 anced and comprehensive projection of the di-
22 versity of thought and institutions of the
23 United States.

1 **“SEC. 311. INSPECTOR GENERAL AUTHORITIES.**

2 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Inspector General of the
3 Department of State and the Foreign Service shall exer-
4 cise the same authorities with respect to the Broadcasting
5 Board of Governors and the International Broadcasting
6 Bureau as the Inspector General exercises under the In-
7 spector General Act of 1978 and section 209 of the For-
8 eign Service Act of 1980 with respect to the Department
9 of State.

10 “(b) RESPECT FOR JOURNALISTIC INTEGRITY OF
11 BROADCASTERS.—The Inspector General shall respect the
12 journalistic integrity of all the broadcasters covered by this
13 title and may not evaluate the philosophical or political
14 perspectives reflected in the content of broadcasts.”.

