

Calendar No. _____

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION**S. 1203**

To amend the Peace Corps Act by reauthorizing the Peace Corps, providing better support for current, returning, and former volunteers, and for other purposes.

 IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 19, 2023

Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. RISCH, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CRAPO, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. YOUNG, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. COONS, Ms. HASSAN, and Mr. SCHATZ) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

JULY _____ (legislative day, _____), 2023

Reported by Mr. MENENDEZ, without amendment

A BILL

To amend the Peace Corps Act by reauthorizing the Peace Corps, providing better support for current, returning, and former volunteers, 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 “Peace Corps Reauthorization Act of 2023”.

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

- Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
- Sec. 2. Authorization of appropriations.
- Sec. 3. Readjustment allowances for volunteers and volunteer leaders.
- Sec. 4. Restoration of volunteer opportunities for major disruptions to volunteer service.
- Sec. 5. Health care continuation for Peace Corps volunteers.
- Sec. 6. Access to antimalarial drugs and hygiene products for Peace Corps volunteers.
- Sec. 7. Codification of certain Executive orders relating to existing noncompetitive eligibility Federal hiring status for returning volunteers and extension of the period of such status.
- Sec. 8. Extension of period of existing noncompetitive eligibility Federal hiring status for returning volunteers.
- Sec. 9. Comprehensive illegal drug use policy with respect to Peace Corps volunteers.
- Sec. 10. Protection of Peace Corps volunteers against reprisal or retaliation.
- Sec. 11. Peace Corps National Advisory Council.
- Sec. 12. Memorandum of Agreement with Bureau of Diplomatic Security of the Department of State.
- Sec. 13. Clarification regarding eligibility of United States nationals.
- Sec. 14. Sexual Assault Advisory Council.
- Sec. 15. Suspension without pay.
- Sec. 16. Oceania Peace Corps partnerships.
- Sec. 17. Reports.
- Sec. 18. Technical and conforming amendments.

3 **SEC. 2. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

4 Section 3 of the Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2502)
5 is amended—

6 (1) in subparagraph (b)—

7 (A) by amending paragraph (1) to read as
8 follows:

9 “(1) There is authorized to be appropriated
10 \$410,500,000 for each of the fiscal years 2024
11 through 2028 to carry out this Act.”; and

12 (B) in paragraph (2), by striking “that fis-
13 cal year and the subsequent fiscal year” and in-

1 serting “obligation until the last day of the sub-
2 sequent fiscal year”; and

3 (2) by redesignating subsection (h) as sub-
4 section (e).

5 **SEC. 3. READJUSTMENT ALLOWANCES FOR VOLUNTEERS**
6 **AND VOLUNTEER LEADERS.**

7 Section 5 of the Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2504)
8 is amended—

9 (1) in subsection (b), by striking “insure their
10 health” and inserting “ensure their safety, their
11 health,”;

12 (2) in subsection (c)—

13 (A) by striking “\$125” and inserting
14 “\$375”;

15 (B) by striking “his” each place such term
16 appears and inserting “the volunteer’s”; and

17 (C) by striking “he” and inserting “the
18 volunteer”;

19 (3) by redesignating subsection (e) as sub-
20 section (d);

21 (4) by inserting after subsection (d), as redesign-
22 ated, the following:

23 “(e) The Director shall consult with health experts
24 outside of the Peace Corps, including experts licensed in
25 the field of mental health, and follow guidance by the Cen-

1 ters for Disease Control and Prevention regarding the pre-
2 scription of medications to volunteers.”;

3 (5) in subsection (h), by striking “he” and in-
4 serting “the President”;

5 (6) in subsection (n)(2)—

6 (A) by striking “subsection (e)” each place
7 such term appears and inserting “subsection
8 (d)”;

9 (B) by striking “he” and inserting “the
10 President”;

11 (7) in subsection (o), by striking “his” each
12 place such term appears and inserting “the volun-
13 teer’s”.

14 **SEC. 4. RESTORATION OF VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**
15 **FOR MAJOR DISRUPTIONS TO VOLUNTEER**
16 **SERVICE.**

17 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 5 of the Peace Corps Act
18 (22 U.S.C. 2504), as amended by section 3 of this Act,
19 is further amended by adding at the end the following:

20 “(q) DISRUPTION OF SERVICE PROTOCOLS.—

21 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall establish
22 processes for the safe return to service of returning
23 Peace Corps volunteers whose service is interrupted
24 due to mandatory evacuations of volunteers due to

1 catastrophic events or global emergencies of unknow-
2 able duration, which processes shall include—

3 “(A) the establishment of monitoring and
4 communications systems, protocols, safety
5 measures, policies, and metrics for determining
6 the appropriate approaches for restoring volun-
7 teer opportunities for evacuated returned volun-
8 teers whose service is interrupted by a cata-
9 strophic event or global emergency; and

10 “(B) streamlining, to the fullest extent
11 practicable, application requirements for the re-
12 turn to service of such volunteers.

13 “(2) RETURN TO SERVICE.—Beginning on the
14 date on which any volunteer described in paragraph
15 (1) returns to service, the Director shall strive to af-
16 ford evacuated volunteers, to the fullest extent prac-
17 ticable, the opportunity—

18 “(A) to return to their previous country of
19 service, except for Peace Corps missions in
20 China; and

21 “(B) to continue their service in the most
22 needed sectors within the country in which they
23 had been serving immediately before their evac-
24 uation due to a catastrophic event or global

1 emergency, except for Peace Corps missions in
2 China.”.

3 (b) **MEDICAL PERSONNEL.**—Section 5A(b) of the
4 Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2504a(b)) is amended, in the
5 matter preceding paragraph (1), by inserting “, mental
6 health professionals” after “medical officers”.

7 (c) **VOLUNTEER LEADERS.**—Section 6 of the Peace
8 Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2505) is amended—

9 (1) in paragraph (1), by striking “\$125” and
10 inserting “\$375”; and

11 (2) in paragraph (3), by striking “he” and in-
12 serting “the President”.

13 **SEC. 5. HEALTH CARE CONTINUATION FOR PEACE CORPS**
14 **VOLUNTEERS.**

15 Section 5(d) of the Peace Corps Act, as redesignated
16 by section 3(3) of this Act, is amended to read as follows:

17 “(d)(1) Volunteers shall receive such health care dur-
18 ing their service as the Director considers necessary or ap-
19 propriate, including, if necessary, services described in sec-
20 tion 8B.

21 “(2) Applicants for enrollment shall receive such
22 health examinations preparatory to their service, and ap-
23 plicants for enrollment who have accepted an invitation
24 to begin a period of training under section 8(a) shall re-
25 ceive, preparatory to their service, such immunization,

1 dental care, and information regarding prescription op-
2 tions and potential interactions, as may be necessary and
3 appropriate and in accordance with subsection (f).

4 “(3) Returned volunteers shall receive the health ex-
5 aminations described in paragraph (2) during the 6-month
6 period immediately following the termination of their serv-
7 ice, including services provided in accordance with section
8 8B (except that the 6-month limitation shall not apply in
9 the case of such services), as the Director determines nec-
10 essary or appropriate.

11 “(4) Subject to such conditions as the Director may
12 prescribe, the health care described in paragraphs (1)
13 through (3) for serving volunteers, applicants for enroll-
14 ment, or returned volunteers may be provided in any facil-
15 ity of any agency of the United States Government, and
16 in such cases the amount expended for maintaining and
17 operating such facility shall be reimbursed from appro-
18 priations available under this Act. Health care may not
19 be provided under this subsection in a manner that is in-
20 consistent with the Assisted Suicide Funding Restriction
21 Act of 1997 (Public Law 105–12).

22 “(5) Not later than 30 days before the date on which
23 the period of service of a volunteer terminates, or 30 days
24 after such termination date if such termination is the re-
25 sult of an emergency, the Director, in consultation with

1 the Secretary of Health and Human Services, shall pro-
2 vide detailed information to such volunteer regarding op-
3 tions for health care after termination other than health
4 care provided by the Peace Corps, including information
5 regarding—

6 “(A) how to find additional, detailed informa-
7 tion, including information regarding—

8 “(i) the application process and eligibility
9 requirements for medical assistance through a
10 State Medicaid plan under title XIX of the So-
11 cial Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.), or
12 under a waiver of such plan; and

13 “(ii) health care option identification serv-
14 ices available through the public and private
15 sectors;

16 “(B) where detailed information on health plans
17 may be obtained; and

18 “(C) if such volunteer is younger than 26 years
19 of age, the eligibility of such volunteer to enroll as
20 a dependent child in a group health plan or health
21 insurance coverage in which the parent of such vol-
22 unteer is enrolled in such plan or coverage offers
23 such dependent coverage.

24 “(6) Paragraph (5) shall apply to volunteers whose
25 periods of service are subject to early termination.”.

1 **SEC. 6. ACCESS TO ANTIMALARIAL DRUGS AND HYGIENE**
2 **PRODUCTS FOR PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS.**

3 Section 5A of the Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2504a)
4 is amended—

5 (1) by striking subsections (c) and (e);

6 (2) by redesignating subsection (d) as sub-
7 section (e);

8 (3) by inserting after subsection (b) the fol-
9 lowing:

10 “(c) ANTIMALARIAL DRUGS.—

11 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall consult
12 with experts at the Centers for Disease Control and
13 Prevention regarding recommendations for pre-
14 scribing malaria prophylaxis, in order to provide the
15 best standard of care within the context of the Peace
16 Corps environment.

17 “(2) CERTAIN TRAINING.—The Director shall
18 ensure that each Peace Corps medical officer serving
19 in a malaria-endemic country receives training in the
20 recognition of the side effects of such medications.

21 “(3) CONSULTATION.—The Director shall con-
22 sult with the Assistant Secretary of Defense for
23 Health Affairs regarding the policy of using
24 mefloquine in the field as an antimalarial prophyl-
25 lactic.

1 “(d) ACCESS TO HYGIENE PRODUCTS.—Not later
2 than 180 days after the date of the enactment of the
3 Peace Corps Reauthorization Act of 2023, the Director
4 shall establish a comprehensive policy to ensure Peace
5 Corps volunteers who require hygiene products are able
6 to access such products.”.

7 **SEC. 7. CODIFICATION OF CERTAIN EXECUTIVE ORDERS**
8 **RELATING TO EXISTING NONCOMPETITIVE**
9 **ELIGIBILITY FEDERAL HIRING STATUS FOR**
10 **RETURNING VOLUNTEERS AND EXTENSION**
11 **OF THE PERIOD OF SUCH STATUS.**

12 The Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2501 et seq.) is
13 amended by inserting after section 5A the following:

14 **“SEC. 5B. CODIFICATION OF EXECUTIVE ORDERS RELAT-**
15 **ING TO NONCOMPETITIVE ELIGIBILITY FED-**
16 **ERAL HIRING STATUS FOR RETURNING VOL-**
17 **UNTEERS.**

18 “(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsection (b), Execu-
19 tive Order 11103 (22 U.S.C. 2504 note; relating to Pro-
20 viding for the Appointment of Former Peace Corps Volun-
21 teers to the Civilian Career Services), as amended by Ex-
22 ecutive Order 12107 (44 Fed. Reg. 1055; relating to the
23 Civil Service Commission and Labor-Management in the
24 Federal Service), as in effect on the day before the date
25 of the enactment of the Peace Corps Reauthorization Act

1 of 2023, shall remain in effect and have the full force and
2 effect of law.

3 “(b) PERIOD OF ELIGIBILITY.—

4 “(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

5 “(A) EXECUTIVE AGENCY.—the term ‘Ex-
6 ecutive agency’—

7 “(i) has the meaning given such term
8 in section 105 of title 5, United States
9 Code;

10 “(ii) includes the United States Postal
11 Service and the Postal Regulatory Com-
12 mission; and

13 “(iii) does not include the Government
14 Accountability Office.

15 “(B) HIRING FREEZE.—The term ‘hiring
16 freeze’ means any memorandum, Executive
17 order, or other action by the President that
18 prohibits an Executive agency from filling va-
19 cant Federal civilian employee positions or cre-
20 ating new such positions.

21 “(2) IN GENERAL.—The period of eligibility for
22 noncompetitive appointment to the civil service pro-
23 vided to an individual under subsection (a), includ-
24 ing any individual who is so eligible on the date of
25 the enactment of the Peace Corps Reauthorization

1 Act of 2023, shall be extended by the total number
2 of days, during such period, that—

3 “(A) a hiring freeze for civilian employees
4 of the executive branch is in effect by order of
5 the President with respect to any Executive
6 agency at which the individual has applied for
7 employment;

8 “(B) there is a lapse in appropriations
9 with respect to any Executive agency at which
10 the individual has applied for employment; or

11 “(C) the individual is receiving disability
12 compensation under section 8142 of title 5,
13 United States Code, based on the individual’s
14 service as a Peace Corps volunteer, retroactive
15 to the date the individual applied for such com-
16 pensation.

17 “(3) APPLICABILITY.—The period of eligibility
18 for noncompetitive appointment status to the civil
19 service under subsection (a) shall apply to a Peace
20 Corps volunteer—

21 “(A) whose service ended involuntarily as a
22 result of a suspension of volunteer operations
23 by the Director, but may not last longer than
24 1 year after the date on which such service
25 ended involuntarily; or

1 “(B) who re-enrolls as a volunteer in the
2 Peace Corps after completion of a term of serv-
3 ice.”.

4 **SEC. 8. EXTENSION OF PERIOD OF EXISTING NONCOMPETI-**
5 **TIVE ELIGIBILITY FEDERAL HIRING STATUS**
6 **FOR RETURNING VOLUNTEERS.**

7 The Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2501 et seq.) is
8 amended by inserting after section 5B, as added by section
9 7 of this Act, the following:

10 **“SEC. 5C. EXTENSION OF PERIOD OF EXISTING NON-**
11 **COMPETITIVE ELIGIBILITY FEDERAL HIRING**
12 **STATUS FOR RETURNING VOLUNTEERS.**

13 “(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to section 5B, Executive
14 Order 11103 (22 U.S.C. 2504 note; relating to Providing
15 for the Appointment of Former Peace Corps Volunteers
16 to the Civilian Career Services), as amended by Executive
17 Order 12107 (44 Fed. Reg. 1055; relating to the Civil
18 Service Commission and Labor-Management in the Fed-
19 eral Service), as in effect on the day before the date of
20 the enactment of the Peace Corps Reauthorization Act of
21 2023, shall remain in effect and have the full force and
22 effect of law.

23 “(b) NONCOMPETITIVE ELIGIBILITY FEDERAL HIR-
24 ING STATUS.—Subject to subsection (d), any volunteer
25 whose Peace Corps service was terminated after April 1,

1 2020, and who has been certified by the Director as hav-
2 ing satisfactorily completed a full term of service, may be
3 appointed not later than 2 years after completion of quali-
4 fying service to a position in any United States depart-
5 ment, agency, or establishment in the competitive service
6 under title 5, United States Code, without competitive ex-
7 amination, in accordance with such regulations and condi-
8 tions as may be prescribed by the Director of the Office
9 of Personnel Management.

10 “(c) EXTENSION.—The appointing authority may ex-
11 tend the noncompetitive appointment eligibility under sub-
12 section (b) to not more than 3 years after a volunteer’s
13 separation from the Peace Corps if the volunteer, following
14 such service, was engaged in—

15 “(1) military service;

16 “(2) the pursuit of studies at a recognized insti-
17 tution of higher learning; or

18 “(3) other activities which, in the view of the
19 appointing authority, warrant an extension of such
20 eligibility.

21 “(d) EXCEPTION.—The appointing authority may not
22 extend the noncompetitive appointment eligibility under
23 subsection (b) to any volunteer who chooses to be subject
24 to early termination.”.

1 **SEC. 9. COMPREHENSIVE ILLEGAL DRUG USE POLICY WITH**
2 **RESPECT TO PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C.
4 2501 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 8I (22
5 U.S.C. 2507i) the following:

6 **“SEC. 8J. COMPREHENSIVE ILLEGAL DRUG USE POLICY**
7 **WITH RESPECT TO PEACE CORPS VOLUN-**
8 **TEERS.**

9 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall develop and
10 implement a comprehensive drug use policy with respect
11 to Peace Corps volunteers. The policy shall—

12 “(1) establish a zero tolerance policy regarding
13 volunteer or trainee involvement with illegal drugs;
14 and

15 “(2) require that every case of volunteer or
16 trainee illegal drug involvement be brought imme-
17 diately to the attention of relevant Peace Corps lead-
18 ership, including the Director, and be reported expe-
19 ditiously by the Peace Corps to the Office of the In-
20 spector General.

21 “(b) CONSULTATION.—In developing the policy de-
22 scribed in subsection (a), the Director may consult with
23 and incorporate, as appropriate, the recommendations and
24 views of experts in the field of substance abuse, and shall
25 consult with the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the

1 House of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign
2 Relations of the Senate.”.

3 (b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date
4 of the enactment of this Act, the Director shall submit
5 a report to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the
6 Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the
7 House of Representatives describing the illegal drug use
8 policy developed and implemented under section 8J of the
9 Peace Corps Act, as added by subsection (a).

10 **SEC. 10. PROTECTION OF PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS**
11 **AGAINST REPRISAL OR RETALIATION.**

12 Section 8G of the Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2507g)
13 is amended by adding at the end the following:

14 “(d) PROHIBITION AGAINST REPRISAL OR RETALIA-
15 TION.—

16 “(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

17 “(A) COVERED OFFICIAL OR OFFICE.—The
18 term ‘covered official or office’ means—

19 “(i) any Peace Corps employee, in-
20 cluding an employee of the Office of In-
21 spector General;

22 “(ii) a Member of Congress or a des-
23 ignated representative of a committee of
24 Congress;

1 “(iii) an Inspector General (other
2 than the Inspector General for the Peace
3 Corps);

4 “(iv) the Government Accountability
5 Office;

6 “(v) any authorized official of the De-
7 partment of Justice or other Federal law
8 enforcement agency; and

9 “(vi) a United States court, including
10 any Federal grand jury.

11 “(B) RELIEF.—The term ‘relief’ includes
12 all affirmative relief necessary to make a volun-
13 teer whole, including monetary compensation,
14 equitable relief, compensatory damages, and at-
15 torney fees and costs.

16 “(C) REPRISAL OR RETALIATION.—The
17 term ‘reprisal or retaliation’ means taking,
18 threatening to take, or initiating adverse ad-
19 ministrative action against a volunteer because
20 the volunteer made a report described in sub-
21 section (a) or otherwise disclosed to a covered
22 official or office any information pertaining to
23 waste, fraud, abuse of authority, misconduct,
24 mismanagement, violations of law, or a signifi-
25 cant threat to health and safety, if the activity

1 “(B) RELIEF.—The Director of the Peace
2 Corps—

3 “(i) may order any relief for an af-
4 firmative finding of a proposed or final res-
5 olution of a complaint or allegation of re-
6 prisal or retaliation in accordance with
7 policies, rules, and procedures of the Peace
8 Corps; and

9 “(ii) shall ensure that such relief is
10 promptly provided to the volunteer.

11 “(4) APPEAL.—

12 “(A) IN GENERAL.—A volunteer may sub-
13 mit an appeal to the Director of the Peace
14 Corps of any proposed or final resolution of a
15 complaint or allegation of reprisal or retaliation.

16 “(B) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing
17 in this paragraph may be construed to affect
18 any other right of recourse a volunteer may
19 have under any other provision of law.

20 “(5) NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS AND REM-
21 EDIES.—The Director of the Peace Corps shall en-
22 sure that volunteers are informed in writing of the
23 rights and remedies provided under this section.

24 “(6) DISPUTE MEDIATION.—The Director of
25 the Peace Corps shall offer the opportunity for vol-

1 unteers to resolve disputes concerning a complaint
2 or allegation of reprisal or retaliation through medi-
3 ation in accordance with procedures developed by the
4 Peace Corps.

5 “(7) VOLUNTEER COOPERATION.—The Director
6 of the Peace Corps may take such disciplinary or
7 other administrative action, including termination of
8 service, with respect to a volunteer who unreason-
9 ably refuses to cooperate with an investigation into
10 a complaint or allegation of reprisal or retaliation
11 conducted by the Inspector General of the Peace
12 Corps.”.

13 **SEC. 11. PEACE CORPS NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL.**

14 Section 12 of the Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2511)
15 is amended—

16 (1) in subsection (b)(2)—

17 (A) in the matter preceding subparagraph
18 (A), by striking “(subject to subsection (d)(1))
19 conduct on-site inspections, and make examina-
20 tions, of the activities of the Peace Corps in the
21 United States and in other countries in order
22 to”;

23 (B) in subparagraph (C), by striking
24 “and” at the end;

1 (C) by redesignating subparagraph (D) as
2 subparagraph (G); and

3 (D) by inserting after subparagraph (C)
4 the following:

5 “(D) make recommendations for utilizing
6 the expertise of returned Peace Corps volun-
7 teers in fulfilling the goals of the Peace Corps;

8 “(E) make recommendations on strength-
9 ening diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessi-
10 bility principles in the workforce and daily work
11 of the Peace Corps, including by—

12 “(i) increasing the recruitment of vol-
13 unteers from diverse backgrounds and bet-
14 ter supporting such volunteers during their
15 training and enrollment in the Peace
16 Corps;

17 “(ii) increasing and sustaining a di-
18 verse and inclusive workforce through data
19 collection, anti-harassment and anti-dis-
20 crimination measures, recruitment, reten-
21 tion, professional development, and pro-
22 motion and leadership initiatives that also
23 consider the work and roles of contractors;

1 “(iii) ensuring that advisory commit-
2 tees and boards represent the diversity of
3 the agency; and

4 “(iv) increasing opportunities in oper-
5 ations, programming, and procurement
6 through work with partners and commu-
7 nities that are underrepresented or tradi-
8 tionally marginalized;

9 “(F) make recommendations to reduce any
10 financial barriers to application, training, or en-
11 rollment in the Peace Corps, including medical
12 expenses and other out-of-pocket costs; and”;

13 (2) in subsection (c), by amending paragraph
14 (2) to read as follows:

15 “(2)(A) The Council shall be composed of 7 members
16 who are United States citizens and are not being paid as
17 officers or employees of the Peace Corps or of any other
18 United States Government entity.

19 “(B) Of the 7 members of the Council—

20 “(i) 1 member shall be appointed by the Presi-
21 dent;

22 “(ii) 3 members shall be appointed by the
23 President pro tempore of the Senate, of which—

24 “(I) 2 members shall be appointed upon
25 the recommendation of the leader in the Senate

1 of the political party that is not the political
2 party of the President;

3 “(II) 1 member shall be appointed upon
4 the recommendation of the leader in the Senate
5 of the political party of the President; and

6 “(III) at least 2 members shall be former
7 Peace Corps volunteers; and

8 “(iii) 3 members shall be appointed by the
9 Speaker of the House of Representatives, of which—

10 “(I) 2 members shall be appointed upon
11 the recommendation of the leader in the House
12 of Representatives of the political party that is
13 not the political party of the President;

14 “(II) 1 member shall be appointed upon
15 the recommendation of the leader in the House
16 of Representatives of the political party of the
17 President; and

18 “(III) at least 2 members shall be former
19 Peace Corps volunteers.

20 “(C) Council members shall be appointed to 2-year
21 terms. No member of the Council may serve for more than
22 2 consecutive 2-year terms.

23 “(D) Not later than 30 days after any vacancy occurs
24 on the Council, the Director shall appoint an individual
25 to fill such vacancy. Any Council member appointed to fill

1 a vacancy occurring before the expiration of the term for
2 which the member's predecessor was appointed—

3 “(i) shall be appointed for the remainder of
4 such term; and

5 “(ii) may only serve on the Council for 1 addi-
6 tional 2-year term.

7 “(E)(i) Except as provided in clause (ii), Council
8 members shall not be subject to laws relating to Federal
9 employment, including laws relating to hours of work,
10 rates of compensation, leave, unemployment compensa-
11 tion, and Federal employee benefits.

12 “(ii) Notwithstanding clause (i), Council members
13 shall be deemed to be Federal employees for purposes of—

14 “(I) chapter 81 of title 5, United States Code
15 (relating to compensation for work-related injuries);

16 “(II) chapter 11 of title 18, United States Code
17 (relating to conflicts of interest);

18 “(III) chapter 171 of title 28, United States
19 Code (relating to tort claims); and

20 “(IV) section 3721 of title 31 (relating to
21 claims for damage to, or loss of, personal property
22 incident to service).

23 “(F) Council members shall serve at the pleasure of
24 the Director. The Council may remove a member from the

1 Council by a vote of 5 members if the Council determines
2 that such member—

3 “(i) committed malfeasance in office;

4 “(ii) persistently neglected, or was unable to
5 successfully discharge, his or her duties on the
6 Council; or

7 “(iii) committed an offense involving moral tur-
8 pitude.”;

9 (3) in subsection (g)—

10 (A) by striking “and at its first regular
11 meeting in each calendar year thereafter” and
12 inserting “at its first meeting each subsequent
13 calendar year”; and

14 (B) by adding at the end the following:
15 “The Chair and Vice Chair shall each serve in
16 such capacity for a period not to exceed 2
17 years. The Director may renew the term of
18 members appointed as Chair and Vice Chair
19 under this subsection.”;

20 (4) in subsection (h), by amending paragraph
21 (1) to read as follows:

22 “(1) The Council shall hold 1 regular meeting per
23 quarter of each calendar year at a date and time to be
24 determined by the Chair of the Council or at the call of
25 the Director.”; and

1 (5) by adding at the end the following:

2 “(k) INDEPENDENCE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL.—
3 None of the activities or functions of the Council author-
4 ized under subsection (b)(2) may undermine the independ-
5 ence or supersede the duties of the Inspector General of
6 the Peace Corps.”.

7 **SEC. 12. MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT WITH BUREAU OF**
8 **DIPLOMATIC SECURITY OF THE DEPART-**
9 **MENT OF STATE.**

10 (a) QUINQUENNIAL REVIEW AND UPDATE.—Not
11 later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of
12 this Act, and at least once every 5 years thereafter, the
13 Director of the Peace Corps and the Assistant Secretary
14 of State for Diplomatic Security shall—

15 (1) review the Memorandum of Agreement be-
16 tween the Bureau of Diplomatic Security of the De-
17 partment of State and the Peace Corps regarding
18 security support and protection of Peace Corps vol-
19 unteers, and staff members abroad; and

20 (2) update such Memorandum of Agreement, as
21 appropriate.

22 (b) NOTIFICATION.—

23 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Director of the Peace
24 Corps and the Assistant Secretary of State for Dip-
25 lomatic Security shall jointly submit any update to

1 the Memorandum of Agreement under subsection (a)
2 to—

3 (A) the Committee on Foreign Relations of
4 the Senate; and

5 (B) the Committee on Foreign Affairs of
6 the House of Representatives.

7 (2) **TIMING OF NOTIFICATION.**—Each written
8 notification submitted pursuant to paragraph (1)
9 shall be submitted not later than 30 days before the
10 update referred to in such paragraph takes effect.

11 **SEC. 13. CLARIFICATION REGARDING ELIGIBILITY OF**
12 **UNITED STATES NATIONALS.**

13 The Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2501 et seq.), as
14 amended by this Act, is further amended—

15 (1) in section 7(a)(5) (22 U.S.C. 2506(a)(5)),
16 by striking “United States citizens” each place such
17 term appears and inserting “United States nationals
18 of American Samoa and citizens of the United
19 States”;

20 (2) in section 8(b) (22 U.S.C. 2507(b)), by in-
21 serting “United States nationals of American Samoa
22 and” after “training for”;

23 (3) in section 10(b) (22 U.S.C. 2509(b)), strik-
24 ing “any person not a citizen or resident of the
25 United States” and inserting “any person who is not

1 a United States national of American Samoa nor a
2 citizen or resident of the United States”; and

3 (4) in section 12(g) (22 U.S.C. 2511(g), by in-
4 serting “United States nationals of American Samoa
5 or” after “who are”.

6 **SEC. 14. SEXUAL ASSAULT ADVISORY COUNCIL.**

7 (a) REPORT AND EXTENSION OF THE SEXUAL AS-
8 SAULT ADVISORY COUNCIL.—Section 8D of the Peace
9 Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2507d) is amended—

10 (1) by amending subsection (d) to read as fol-
11 lows:

12 “(d) REPORTS.—On an annual basis through the
13 date specified in subsection (g), the Council shall submit
14 a report to the Director of the Peace Corps, the Com-
15 mittee on Foreign Relations of the Senate, the Committee
16 on Appropriations of the Senate, the Committee on For-
17 eign Affairs of the House of Representatives, and the
18 Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representa-
19 tives that describes its findings based on the reviews con-
20 ducted pursuant to subsection (c) and includes relevant
21 recommendations. Each such report shall be made publicly
22 available.”; and

23 (2) in subsection (g), by striking “October 1,
24 2023” and inserting “October 1, 2028”.

1 **SEC. 15. SUSPENSION WITHOUT PAY.**

2 Section 7 of the Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2506)
3 is amended by inserting after subsection (a) the following:

4 “(b) SUSPENSION WITHOUT PAY.—(1) The Peace
5 Corps may suspend (without pay) any employee appointed
6 or assigned under this section if the Director has deter-
7 mined that the employee engaged in serious misconduct
8 that could impact the efficiency of the service and could
9 lead to removal for cause.

10 “(2) Any employee for whom a suspension without
11 pay is proposed under this subsection shall be entitled
12 to—

13 “(A) written notice stating the specific reasons
14 for such proposed suspension;

15 “(B)(i) up to 15 days to respond orally or in
16 writing to such proposed suspension if the employee
17 is assigned in the United States; or

18 “(ii) up to 30 days to respond orally or in writ-
19 ing to such proposed suspension if the employee is
20 assigned outside of the United States;

21 “(C) representation by an attorney or other
22 representative, at the employee’s own expense;

23 “(D) a written decision, including the specific
24 reasons for such decision, as soon as practicable;

25 “(E) a process through which the employee may
26 submit an appeal to the Director of the Peace Corps

1 not later than 10 business days after the issuance of
2 a written decision; and

3 “(F) a final decision personally rendered by the
4 Director of the Peace Corps not later than 30 days
5 after the receipt of such appeal.

6 “(3) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a
7 final decision under paragraph (2)(F) shall be final and
8 not subject to further review.

9 “(4) If the Director fails to establish misconduct by
10 an employee under paragraph (1) and no disciplinary ac-
11 tion is taken against such employee based upon the alleged
12 grounds for the suspension, the employee shall be entitled
13 to reinstatement, back pay, full benefits, and reimburse-
14 ment of attorney fees of up to \$20,000.”.

15 **SEC. 16. OCEANIA PEACE CORPS PARTNERSHIPS.**

16 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the
17 date of the enactment of this Act, the Director of the
18 Peace Corps shall submit a report to Congress containing
19 strategies for reasonably and safely expanding the number
20 of Peace Corps volunteers in the Indo-Pacific countries of
21 Oceania, with the goals of—

22 (1) expanding the presence of the Peace Corps
23 to all currently feasible locations in the Indo-Pacific
24 countries of Oceania; and

1 (2) working with regional and international
2 partners of the United States to expand the presence
3 of Peace Corps volunteers in low-income commu-
4 nities in the Indo-Pacific countries of Oceania in
5 support of climate resilience initiatives.

6 (b) ELEMENTS.—The report required under sub-
7 section (a) shall—

8 (1) assess the factors contributing to the cur-
9 rent absence of the Peace Corps and its volunteers
10 in the Indo-Pacific countries of Oceania;

11 (2) examine potential remedies that include
12 working with United States Government agencies
13 and regional governments, including governments of
14 United States allies—

15 (A) to increase the health infrastructure
16 and medical evacuation capabilities of the Indo-
17 Pacific countries of Oceania to better support
18 the safety of Peace Corps volunteers while in
19 those countries;

20 (B) to address physical safety concerns
21 that have decreased the ability of the Peace
22 Corps to operate in the Indo-Pacific countries
23 of Oceania; and

24 (C) to increase transportation infrastruc-
25 ture in the Indo-Pacific countries of Oceania to

1 better support the travel of Peace Corps volun-
2 teers and their access to necessary facilities;

3 (3) evaluate the potential to expand the deploy-
4 ment of Peace Corps Response volunteers to help the
5 Indo-Pacific countries of Oceania address social, eco-
6 nomic, and development needs of their communities
7 that require specific professional expertise; and

8 (4) explore potential new operational models to
9 address safety and security needs of Peace Corps
10 volunteers in the Indo-Pacific countries of Oceania,
11 including—

12 (A) changes to volunteer deployment dura-
13 tions; and

14 (B) scheduled redeployment of volunteers
15 to regional or United States-based healthcare
16 facilities for routine physical and behavioral
17 health evaluation.

18 (c) VOLUNTEERS IN LOW-INCOME OCEANIA COMMU-
19 NITIES.—

20 (1) IN GENERAL.—In examining the potential
21 to expand the presence of Peace Corps volunteers in
22 low-income communities in the Indo-Pacific coun-
23 tries of Oceania under subsection (a)(2), the Direc-
24 tor of the Peace Corps shall consider the develop-
25 ment of initiatives described in paragraph (2).

1 (2) INITIATIVES DESCRIBED.—Initiatives de-
2 scribed in this paragraph are volunteer initiatives
3 that help the Indo-Pacific countries of Oceania ad-
4 dress social, economic, and development needs of
5 their communities, including by—

6 (A) addressing, through appropriate resil-
7 ience-based interventions, the vulnerability that
8 communities in the Indo-Pacific countries of
9 Oceania face as result of extreme weather, se-
10 vere environmental change, and other climate
11 related trends; and

12 (B) improving, through smart infrastruc-
13 ture principles, access to transportation and
14 connectivity infrastructure that will help ad-
15 dress the economic and social challenges that
16 communities in the Indo-Pacific countries of
17 Oceania confront as a result of poor or non-
18 existent infrastructure.

19 (d) INDO-PACIFIC COUNTRIES OF OCEANIA DE-
20 FINED.—The term “Indo-Pacific countries of Oceania”
21 means Fiji, Kiribati, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Mi-
22 cronesia, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Sol-
23 omon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.

1 **SEC. 17. REPORTS.**

2 (a) REPORT ON MENTAL HEALTH EVALUATION
3 STANDARDS.—

4 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after
5 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Director
6 of the Peace Corps shall submit a report to the
7 Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and
8 the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of
9 Representatives containing the guidelines and stand-
10 ards used to evaluate the mental health of Peace
11 Corps applicants prior to their Peace Corps service.

12 (2) ELEMENTS.—The report required under
13 paragraph (1) shall include the following elements:

14 (A) A detailed description of mental health
15 screening guidelines and evaluation standards
16 used by the Peace Corps to determine medical
17 eligibility of applicants for service, including a
18 description of the most common mental health
19 conditions of applicants.

20 (B) Specific standards in the mental health
21 screening process that could lead to an appli-
22 cant's disqualification from service, and a de-
23 scription of how these determinations are made.

24 (C) A description of any expedited mental
25 health clearance process for severe or recent
26 symptom presentation.

1 (D) A description of periods of stability re-
2 lated to certain mental health conditions and
3 symptoms recommended prior to an applicant's
4 clearance to serve.

5 (E) An assessment of the impact of up-
6 dated mental health evaluation guidance, in-
7 cluding a comparison of mental health related
8 volunteer medevacs in years before and after
9 updated guidelines were implemented.

10 (F) A review of these screening guidelines,
11 conducted by a panel of certified and qualified
12 medical professionals in the United States, that
13 evaluates these standards based on scientific
14 evidence and mental health research and pro-
15 poses relevant updates or additions to current
16 guidance.

17 (b) REPORT ON VOLUNTEER MEDICAL EVACU-
18 ATIONS.—

19 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than the first May
20 1 occurring after the date of the enactment of this
21 Act, and annually thereafter for 5 years, the Direc-
22 tor of the Peace Corps shall submit a report to the
23 Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and
24 the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of

1 Representatives regarding volunteer medical and
2 mental health evacuations.

3 (2) ELEMENTS.—The report required under
4 paragraph (1) shall include the following elements:

5 (A) The number of Peace Corps volunteer
6 medical and mental health evacuations during
7 the previous year.

8 (B) A breakdown of these evacuations into
9 medical and mental health evacuation cat-
10 egories.

11 (C) The estimated cost of these evacu-
12 ations for each year, including a breakdown of
13 costs between medical and mental health evacu-
14 ation categories.

15 **SEC. 18. TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.**

16 The Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2501 et seq.), as
17 amended by this Act, is further amended—

18 (1) by amending section 1 to read as follows:

19 **“SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.**

20 “(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the
21 ‘Peace Corps Act’.

22 “(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents
23 for this Act is as follows:

“TITLE I—THE PEACE CORPS

“Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

“Sec. 2. Declaration of purpose.

“Sec. 2A. Peace Corps as an independent agency.

1 (B) by striking “manpower” and inserting
2 “individuals”;

3 (3) in section 3 (22 U.S.C. 2502)—

4 (A) by redesignating subsection (h) as sub-
5 section (e); and

6 (B) in subsection (e), as redesignated, by
7 striking “disabled people” each place such term
8 appears and inserting “people with disabilities”;

9 (4) in section 4(b) (22 U.S.C. 2503(b))—

10 (A) by striking “him” and inserting “the
11 President”;

12 (B) by striking “he” and inserting “the
13 Director”; and

14 (C) by striking “of his subordinates” and
15 all that follows through “functions.” and insert-
16 ing “subordinate of the Director the authority
17 to perform any such function.”;

18 (5) in section 5 (22 U.S.C. 2504)—

19 (A) in subsection (e), by striking “: *Pro-*
20 *vided, however,*” and all that follows through
21 “the amount” and inserting “. Under such cir-
22 cumstances as the President may determine,
23 the accrued readjustment allowance, or any
24 part thereof, may be paid to the volunteer,
25 members of the volunteer’s family, or others,

1 during the period of the volunteer’s service, or
2 prior to the volunteer’s return to the United
3 States. In the event of the volunteer’s death
4 during the period of his service, the amount”;

5 (B) in subsection (h), by striking “he may
6 determine” and inserting “the President may
7 determine”; and

8 (C) in subsection (o) by striking “the date
9 of his departure” and all that follows and in-
10 sserting “the date of the volunteer’s departure
11 from the volunteer’s place of residence to enter
12 training until not later than 3 months after the
13 termination of the volunteer’s service.”;

14 (6) in section 6(3) (22 U.S.C. 2505(3)), by
15 striking by striking “he may determine” and insert-
16 ing “the President may determine”;

17 (7) in section 7 (22 U.S.C. 2506)—

18 (A) in subsection (a), by moving para-
19 graphs (7) and (8) 2 ems to the left; and

20 (B) in subsection (b), as redesignated, by
21 striking “in his discretion” and inserting “in
22 the President’s discretion”;

23 (8) in section 8A (22 U.S.C. 2507a)—

24 (A) in subsection (c), by striking “his or
25 her” and inserting “the volunteer’s”;

1 (B) in subsection (d)(2), by inserting
2 “the” before “information”; and

3 (C) in subsection (f)—

4 (i) in paragraph (2)(A), by striking
5 “his or her” each place such phrase ap-
6 pears and inserting “the volunteer’s”; and

7 (ii) in paragraph (4)(A), by striking
8 “his or her” and inserting “the person’s”;

9 (9) in section 8C(a) (22 U.S.C. 2507c(a)), in
10 the subsection heading, by striking “VICTIMS” and
11 inserting “VICTIM”;

12 (10) in section 8E (22 U.S.C. 2507e)—

13 (A) in subsection (b), by striking “sub-
14 section (c),” and inserting “subsection (c),”;
15 and

16 (B) in subsection (e)(1)(F), by striking
17 “Peace Corp’s mission” and inserting “Peace
18 Corps’ mission”;

19 (11) in section 9 (22 U.S.C. 2508)—

20 (A) by striking “under which he was ad-
21 mitted or who fails to depart from the United
22 States at the expiration of the time for which
23 he was admitted” and inserting “under which
24 such person was admitted or who fails to depart
25 from the United States at the expiration of the

1 period for which such person was admitted”;
2 and

3 (B) by striking “Act proceedings” and in-
4 serting “Act. Removal proceedings”;
5 (12) in section 10 (22 U.S.C. 2509)—

6 (A) in subsection (b), by striking “he may
7 prescribe” and inserting “the President may
8 prescribe”;

9 (B) in subsection (d), by striking “section
10 3709 of the Revised Statutes of the United
11 States, as amended, section 302 of the Federal
12 Property and Administrative Services Act of
13 1949”; and by inserting “sections 3101(a),
14 3101(c), 3104, 3106, 3301(b)(2), and 6101 of
15 title 41, United States Code”; and

16 (C) in subsection (j), by striking “of this
17 section.”;

18 (13) in section 12(d)(1)(b) (22 U.S.C.
19 2511(d)(1)(b)), by striking “his or her” and insert-
20 ing “the member’s”;

21 (14) in section 14 (22 U.S.C. 2513)—

22 (A) in subsection (a), by striking “his
23 agency” and inserting “such agency”; and

24 (B) in subsection (b)—

1 (i) by striking “his allowance” and in-
2 serting “the”; and

3 (ii) by striking “he”;

4 (15) in section 15 (22 U.S.C. 2514)—

5 (A) in subsection (c), by striking “that
6 Act” and inserting “that subchapter”; and

7 (B) in subsection (d)(7), by striking “his
8 designee” and inserting “the Director’s des-
9 ignee”;

10 (16) in section 19(a) (22 U.S.C. 2518(a)), by
11 striking “he shall determine” and inserting “the
12 President shall determine”;

13 (17) in section 23 (22 U.S.C. 2520)—

14 (A) in the section heading, by striking
15 “UNIVERSAL MILITARY TRAINING AND SERV-
16 ICE” and inserting “MILITARY SELECTIVE
17 SERVICE”; and

18 (B) by striking “Universal Military Train-
19 ing and Service Act” and inserting “Military
20 Selective Service Act (50 U.S.C. 3801 et seq.)”;

21 (18) in section 24—

22 (A) by striking “he” each place such term
23 appears and inserting “the volunteer”; and

24 (B) by striking “his” and inserting “the
25 volunteer’s”;

1 (19) in section 26—

2 (A) by redesignating paragraphs (2)
3 through (9) as paragraphs (3) through (10), re-
4 spectively;

5 (B) by inserting after paragraph (1) the
6 following:

7 “(2) The term ‘Director’ means the Director of
8 the Peace Corps.”;

9 (C) in paragraph (5), as redesignated, by
10 striking “he or she” and inserting “the medical
11 officer”;

12 (D) in paragraph (7), as redesignated, by
13 striking “5(m)” and inserting “5(n)”; and

14 (E) in paragraph (10), as redesignated—

15 (i) by redesignating clauses (i) and
16 (ii) as subparagraphs (A) and (B), respec-
17 tively; and

18 (ii) in subparagraph (A), as redesign-
19 nated, by striking “section 5(f)” and in-
20 serting “section 5(e)”; and

21 (20) in section 301(a), by striking “manpower”
22 each place such term appears and inserting “individ-
23 uals”.