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

Mr. Menendez (for himself, Mr. Risch, Mr. Cardin, Mr. Crapo, Mrs. Feinstein, and Mr. Young) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on

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.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the “Peace Corps Reauthorization Act of 2023”.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for 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. 13. Clarification regarding eligibility of United States nationals.
Sec. 15. Suspension without pay.
Sec. 16. Oceania Peace Corps partnerships.
Sec. 17. Reports.
Sec. 18. Technical and conforming amendments.

SEC.  2. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

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

(1) in subparagraph (b)—

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

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

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking “that fiscal year and the subsequent fiscal year” and inserting “obligation until the last day of the subsequent fiscal year”; and

(2) by redesignating subsection (h) as subsection (e).
SEC. 3. READJUSTMENT ALLOWANCES FOR VOLUNTEERS

AND VOLUNTEER LEADERS.

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

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

(2) in subsection (c)—

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

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

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

(3) by redesignating subsection (e) as subsection (d);

(4) by inserting after subsection (d), as redesignated, the following:

“(e) The Director shall consult with health experts outside of the Peace Corps, including experts licensed in the field of mental health, and follow guidance by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention regarding the prescription of medications to volunteers.”;

(5) in subsection (h), by striking “he” and inserting “the President”;

(6) in subsection (n)(2)—
(A) by striking “subsection (e)” each place such term appears and inserting “subsection (d)”; and

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

(7) in subsection (o), by striking “his” each place such term appears and inserting “the volunteer’s”.

SEC. 4. RESTORATION OF VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES FOR MAJOR DISRUPTIONS TO VOLUNTEER SERVICE.

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

“(q) Disruption of Service Protocols.—

“(1) In general.—The Director shall establish processes for the safe return to service of returning Peace Corps volunteers whose service is interrupted due to mandatory evacuations of volunteers due to catastrophic events or global emergencies of unknowable duration, which processes shall include—

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

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

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

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

“(B) to continue their service in the most
needed sectors within the country in which they
had been serving immediately before their evac-
uation due to a catastrophic event or global
emergency, except for Peace Corps missions in
China.”.

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

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(e) Volunteer Leaders.—Section 6 of the Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2505) is amended—

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

(2) in paragraph (3), by striking “he” and inserting “the President”.

SEC. 5. HEALTH CARE CONTINUATION FOR PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS.

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

“(d)(1) Volunteers shall receive such health care during their service as the Director considers necessary or appropriate, including, if necessary, services described in section 8B.

“(2) Applicants for enrollment shall receive such health examinations preparatory to their service, and applicants for enrollment who have accepted an invitation to begin a period of training under section 8(a) shall receive, preparatory to their service, such immunization, dental care, and information regarding prescription options and potential interactions, as may be necessary and appropriate and in accordance with subsection (f).

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

“(4) Subject to such conditions as the Director may prescribe, the health care described in paragraphs (1) through (3) for serving volunteers, applicants for enrollment, or returned volunteers may be provided in any facility of any agency of the United States Government, and in such cases the amount expended for maintaining and operating such facility shall be reimbursed from appropriations available under this Act. Health care may not be provided under this subsection in a manner that is inconsistent with the Assisted Suicide Funding Restriction Act of 1997 (Public Law 105–12).

“(5) Not later than 30 days before the date on which the period of service of a volunteer terminates, or 30 days after such termination date if such termination is the result of an emergency, the Director, in consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services, shall provide detailed information to such volunteer regarding options for health care after termination other than health care provided by the Peace Corps, including information regarding—
“(A) how to find additional, detailed information, including information regarding—

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

“(ii) health care option identification services available through the public and private sectors;

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

“(C) if such volunteer is younger than 26 years of age, the eligibility of such volunteer to enroll as a dependent child in a group health plan or health insurance coverage in which the parent of such volunteer is enrolled in such plan or coverage offers such dependent coverage.

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

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

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

(1) by striking subsections (e) and (e);
(2) by redesignating subsection (d) as subsection (e);

(3) by inserting after subsection (b) the following:

“(c) Antimalarial Drugs.—

“(1) In general.—The Director shall consult with experts at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention regarding recommendations for prescribing malaria prophylaxis, in order to provide the best standard of care within the context of the Peace Corps environment.

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

“(3) Consultation.—The Director shall consult with the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs regarding the policy of using mefloquine in the field as an antimalarial prophylactic.

“(d) Access to hygiene products.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of the Peace Corps Reauthorization Act of 2023, the Director shall establish a comprehensive policy to ensure Peace
Corps volunteers who require hygiene products are able to access such products.’’.

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.

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

“SEC. 5B. CODIFICATION OF EXECUTIVE ORDERS RELATING TO NONCOMPETITIVE ELIGIBILITY FEDERAL HIRING STATUS FOR RETURNING VOLUNTEERS.

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

“(b) PERIOD OF ELIGIBILITY.—

“(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:
“(A) Executive agency.—the term ‘Executive agency’—

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

“(ii) includes the United States Postal Service and the Postal Regulatory Commission; and

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

“(B) Hiring freeze.—The term ‘hiring freeze’ means any memorandum, Executive order, or other action by the President that prohibits an Executive agency from filling vacant Federal civilian employee positions or creating new such positions.

“(2) In general.—The period of eligibility for noncompetitive appointment to the civil service provided to an individual under subsection (a), including any individual who is so eligible on the date of the enactment of the Peace Corps Reauthorization Act of 2023, shall be extended by the total number of days, during such period, that—

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

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

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

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

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

“(B) who re-enrolls as a volunteer in the Peace Corps after completion of a term of service.”.
SEC. 8. EXTENSION OF PERIOD OF EXISTING NONCOMPETITIVE ELIGIBILITY FEDERAL HIRING STATUS FOR RETURNING VOLUNTEERS.

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

“SEC. 5C. EXTENSION OF PERIOD OF EXISTING NONCOMPETITIVE ELIGIBILITY FEDERAL HIRING STATUS FOR RETURNING VOLUNTEERS.

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

“(b) NONCOMPETITIVE ELIGIBILITY FEDERAL HIRING STATUS.—Subject to subsection (d), any volunteer whose Peace Corps service was terminated after April 1, 2020, and who has been certified by the Director as having satisfactorily completed a full term of service, may be appointed not later than 2 years after completion of qualifying service to a position in any United States depart-
ment, agency, or establishment in the competitive service
under title 5, United States Code, without competitive ex-
amination, in accordance with such regulations and condi-
tions as may be prescribed by the Director of the Office
of Personnel Management.

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

“(1) military service;

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

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

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

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

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


“SEC. 8J. COMPREHENSIVE ILLEGAL DRUG USE POLICY WITH RESPECT TO PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS.

“(a) In General.—The Director shall develop and implement a comprehensive drug use policy with respect to Peace Corps volunteers. The policy shall—

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

“(2) require that every case of volunteer or trainee illegal drug involvement be brought immediately to the attention of relevant Peace Corps leadership, including the Director, and be reported expeditiously by the Peace Corps to the Office of the Inspector General.

“(b) Consultation.—In developing the policy described in subsection (a), the Director may consult with and incorporate, as appropriate, the recommendations and views of experts in the field of substance abuse, and shall consult with the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate.”.

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

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

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

“(d) Prohibition Against Reprisal or Retaliation.—

“(1) Definitions.—In this subsection:

“(A) Covered official or office.—The term ‘covered official or office’ means—

“(i) any Peace Corps employee, including an employee of the Office of Inspector General;

“(ii) a Member of Congress or a designated representative of a committee of Congress;

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

“(iv) the Government Accountability Office;
“(v) any authorized official of the Department of Justice or other Federal law enforcement agency; and

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

“(B) RELIEF.—The term ‘relief’ includes all affirmative relief necessary to make a volunteer whole, including monetary compensation, equitable relief, compensatory damages, and attorney fees and costs.

“(C) REPRISAL OR RETALIATION.—The term ‘reprisal or retaliation’ means taking, threatening to take, or initiating adverse administrative action against a volunteer because the volunteer made a report described in subsection (a) or otherwise disclosed to a covered official or office any information pertaining to waste, fraud, abuse of authority, misconduct, mismanagement, violations of law, or a significant threat to health and safety, if the activity or occurrence complained of is based upon the reasonable belief of the volunteer.

“(2) IN GENERAL.—The Director of the Peace Corps shall take all reasonable measures, including through the development and implementation of a
comprehensive policy, to prevent and address re-
prisal or retaliation against a volunteer by any Peace
Corps officer or employee, or any other person with
supervisory authority over the volunteer during the
volunteer’s period of service.

“(3) REPORTING AND INVESTIGATION; RE-
LIEF.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—A volunteer may re-
port a complaint or allegation of reprisal or re-
taliation—

“(i) directly to the Inspector General
of the Peace Corps, who may conduct such
investigations and make such recommenda-
tions with respect to the complaint or alle-
gation as the Inspector General considers
appropriate; and

“(ii) through other channels provided
by the Peace Corps, including through the
process for confidential reporting imple-
mented pursuant to subsection (a).

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

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

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

“(4) APPEAL.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—A volunteer may submit an appeal to the Director of the Peace Corps of any proposed or final resolution of a complaint or allegation of reprisal or retaliation.

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

“(5) NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS AND REMEDIES.—The Director of the Peace Corps shall ensure that volunteers are informed in writing of the rights and remedies provided under this section.

“(6) DISPUTE MEDIATION.—The Director of the Peace Corps shall offer the opportunity for volunteers to resolve disputes concerning a complaint or allegation of reprisal or retaliation through mediation in accordance with procedures developed by the Peace Corps.
“(7) VOLUNTEER COOPERATION.—The Director of the Peace Corps may take such disciplinary or other administrative action, including termination of service, with respect to a volunteer who unreasonably refuses to cooperate with an investigation into a compliant or allegation of reprisal or retaliation conducted by the Inspector General of the Peace Corps.”.

SEC. 11. PEACE CORPS NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL.

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

(1) in subsection (b)(2)—

(A) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking “(subject to subsection (d)(1)) conduct on-site inspections, and make examinations, of the activities of the Peace Corps in the United States and in other countries in order to”;

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

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

(D) by inserting after subparagraph (C) the following:
“(D) make recommendations for utilizing the expertise of returned Peace Corps volunteers in fulfilling the goals of the Peace Corps;

“(E) make recommendations on strengthening diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility principles in the workforce and daily work of the Peace Corps, including by—

“(i) increasing the recruitment of volunteers from diverse backgrounds and better supporting such volunteers during their training and enrollment in the Peace Corps;

“(ii) increasing and sustaining a diverse and inclusive workforce through data collection, anti-harassment and anti-discrimination measures, recruitment, retention, professional development, and promotion and leadership initiatives that also consider the work and roles of contractors;

“(iii) ensuring that advisory committees and boards represent the diversity of the agency; and

“(iv) increasing opportunities in operations, programming, and procurement through work with partners and commu-
nities that are underrepresented or tradi-

tionally marginalized;

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

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

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

“(B) Of the 7 members of the Council—

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

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

“(I) 2 members shall be appointed upon
the recommendation of the leader in the Senate
of the political party that is not the political
party of the President;

“(II) 1 member shall be appointed upon
the recommendation of the leader in the Senate
of the political party of the President; and
“(III) at least 2 members shall be former Peace Corps volunteers; and
“(iii) 3 members shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, of which—
“(I) 2 members shall be appointed upon the recommendation of the leader in the House of Representatives of the political party that is not the political party of the President;
“(II) 1 member shall be appointed upon the recommendation of the leader in the House of Representatives of the political party of the President; and
“(III) at least 2 members shall be former Peace Corps volunteers.
“(C) Council members shall be appointed to 2-year terms. No member of the Council may serve for more than 2 consecutive 2-year terms.
“(D) Not later than 30 days after any vacancy occurs on the Council, the Director shall appoint an individual to fill such vacancy. Any Council member appointed to fill a vacancy occurring before the expiration of the term for which the member’s predecessor was appointed—
“(i) shall be appointed for the remainder of such term; and
“(ii) may only serve on the Council for 1 additional 2-year term.

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

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

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

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

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

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

“(F) Council members shall serve at the pleasure of the Director. The Council may remove a member from the Council by a vote of 5 members if the Council determines that such member—

“(i) committed malfeasance in office;
“(ii) persistently neglected, or was unable to successfully discharge, his or her duties on the Council; or

“(iii) committed an offense involving moral turpitude.”;

(3) in subsection (g)—

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

(B) by adding at the end the following:

“The Chair and Vice Chair shall each serve in such capacity for a period not to exceed 2 years. The Director may renew the term of members appointed as Chair and Vice Chair under this subsection.”;

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

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

(5) by adding at the end the following:

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

SEC. 12. MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT WITH BUREAU OF
DIPLOMATIC SECURITY OF THE DEPART-
MENT OF STATE.

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

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

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

(b) NOTIFICATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director of the Peace
Corps and the Assistant Secretary of State for Dip-
lomatic Security shall jointly submit any update to
the Memorandum of Agreement under subsection (a)
to—
(A) the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate; and

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

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

SEC. 13. CLARIFICATION REGARDING ELIGIBILITY OF UNITED STATES NATIONALS.

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

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

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

(3) in section 10(b) (22 U.S.C. 2509(b)), striking “any person not a citizen or resident of the United States” and inserting “any person who is not a United States national of American Samoa nor a citizen or resident of the United States”; and
(4) in section 12(g) (22 U.S.C. 2511(g), by inserting “United States nationals of American Samoa or” after “who are”.

SEC. 14. SEXUAL ASSAULT ADVISORY COUNCIL.

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

(1) by amending subsection (d) to read as follows:

“(d) REPORTS.—On an annual basis through the date specified in subsection (g), the Council shall submit a report to the Director of the Peace Corps, the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate, the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate, the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives that describes its findings based on the reviews conducted pursuant to subsection (c) and includes relevant recommendations. Each such report shall be made publicly available.”; and

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

SEC. 15. SUSPENSION WITHOUT PAY.

Section 7 of the Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2506) is amended by inserting after subsection (a) the following:
“(b) Suspension Without Pay.—(1) The Peace Corps may suspend (without pay) any employee appointed or assigned under this section if the Director has determined that the employee engaged in serious misconduct that could impact the efficiency of the service and could lead to removal for cause.

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

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

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

“(ii) up to 30 days to respond orally or in writing to such proposed suspension if the employee is assigned outside of the United States;

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

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

“(E) a process through which the employee may submit an appeal to the Director of the Peace Corps not later than 10 business days after the issuance of a written decision; and
“(F) a final decision personally rendered by the Director of the Peace Corps not later than 30 days after the receipt of such appeal.

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

“(4) If the Director fails to establish misconduct by an employee under paragraph (1) and no disciplinary action is taken against such employee based upon the alleged grounds for the suspension, the employee shall be entitled to reinstatement, back pay, full benefits, and reimbursement of attorney fees of up to $20,000.”

SEC. 16. OCEANIA PEACE CORPS PARTNERSHIPS.

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

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

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

(b) ELEMENTS.—The report required under subsection (a) shall—

(1) assess the factors contributing to the current absence of the Peace Corps and its volunteers in the Indo-Pacific countries of Oceania;

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

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

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

(C) to increase transportation infrastructure in the Indo-Pacific countries of Oceania to better support the travel of Peace Corps volunteers and their access to necessary facilities;
(3) evaluate the potential to expand the deployment of Peace Corps Response volunteers to help the Indo-Pacific countries of Oceania address social, economic, and development needs of their communities that require specific professional expertise; and

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

(A) changes to volunteer deployment durations; and

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

(e) VOLUNTEERS IN LOW-INCOME OCEANIA COMMUNITIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In examining the potential to expand the presence of Peace Corps volunteers in low-income communities in the Indo-Pacific countries of Oceania under subsection (a)(2), the Director of the Peace Corps shall consider the development of initiatives described in paragraph (2).

(2) INITIATIVES DESCRIBED.—Initiatives described in this paragraph are volunteer initiatives
that help the Indo-Pacific countries of Oceania address social, economic, and development needs of their communities, including by—

(A) addressing, through appropriate resilience-based interventions, the vulnerability that communities in the Indo-Pacific countries of Oceania face as result of extreme weather, severe environmental change, and other climate related trends; and

(B) improving, through smart infrastructure principles, access to transportation and connectivity infrastructure that will help address the economic and social challenges that communities in the Indo-Pacific countries of Oceania confront as a result of poor or nonexistent infrastructure.

(d) Indo-Pacific Countries of Oceania Defined.—The term “Indo-Pacific countries of Oceania” means Fiji, Kiribati, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.

Sec. 17. Reports.

(a) Report on Mental Health Evaluation Standards.—
(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Director of the Peace Corps shall submit a report to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives containing the guidelines and standards used to evaluate the mental health of Peace Corps applicants prior to their Peace Corps service.

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

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

(B) Specific standards in the mental health screening process that could lead to an applicant’s disqualification from service, and a description of how these determinations are made.

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

(D) A description of periods of stability related to certain mental health conditions and
symptoms recommended prior to an applicant’s clearance to serve.

(E) An assessment of the impact of updated mental health evaluation guidance, including a comparison of mental health related volunteer medevacs in years before and after updated guidelines were implemented.

(F) A review of these screening guidelines, conducted by a panel of certified and qualified medical professionals in the United States, that evaluates these standards based on scientific evidence and mental health research and proposes relevant updates or additions to current guidance.

(b) REPORT ON VOLUNTEER MEDICAL EVACUATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than the first May 1 occurring after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter for 5 years, the Director of the Peace Corps shall submit a report to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives regarding volunteer medical and mental health evacuations.
(2) ELEMENTS.—The report required under paragraph (1) shall include the following elements:

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

(B) A breakdown of these evacuations into medical and mental health evacuation categories.

(C) The estimated cost of these evacuations for each year, including a breakdown of costs between medical and mental health evacuation categories.

SEC. 18. TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.

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

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

"SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the 'Peace Corps Act'.

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

"TITLE I—THE PEACE CORPS"
"Sec. 5B. Codification of Executive orders relating to noncompetitive eligibility Federal hiring status for returning volunteers.
"Sec. 5C. Extension of period of existing noncompetitive eligibility Federal hiring status for returning volunteers.
"Sec. 6. Peace Corps volunteer leaders.
"Sec. 7. Peace Corps employees.
"Sec. 8. Volunteer training.
"Sec. 8A. Sexual assault risk-reduction and response training.
"Sec. 8B. Sexual assault policy.
"Sec. 8C. Office of Victim Advocacy.
"Sec. 8D. Establishment of Sexual Assault Advisory Council.
"Sec. 8E. Volunteer feedback and Peace Corps review.
"Sec. 8F. Establishment of a policy on stalking.
"Sec. 8G. Establishment of a confidentiality protection policy.
"Sec. 8H. Removal and assessment and evaluation.
"Sec. 8I. Reporting requirements.
"Sec. 8J. Comprehensive illegal drug use policy with respect to Peace Corps volunteers.
"Sec. 9. Participation of foreign nationals.
"Sec. 10. General powers and authorities.
"Sec. 11. Reports.
"Sec. 13. Experts and consultants.
"Sec. 14. Detail of personnel to foreign governments and international organizations.
"Sec. 15. Utilization of funds.
"Sec. 16. Foreign Currency Fluctuations Account.
"Sec. 17. Use of foreign currencies.
"Sec. 18. Activities promoting Americans' understanding of other peoples.
"Sec. 19. Exclusive right to seal and name.
"Sec. 22. Security investigations.
"Sec. 23. Universal Military Training and Service Act.
"Sec. 24. Foreign language proficiency.
"Sec. 25. Nonpartisan appointments.
"Sec. 27. Construction.
"Sec. 28. Effective date.

"TITLE II—AMENDMENT OF INTERNAL REVENUE CODE AND SOCIAL SECURITY ACT

"TITLE III—ENCOURAGEMENT OF VOLUNTARY SERVICE PROGRAMS

"Sec. 301. ”;

1 (2) in section 2(a) (22 U.S.C. 2501(a))—

2 (A) by striking “help the peoples” and inserting “partner with the peoples”; and

3 (B) by striking “manpower” and inserting “individuals”;
(3) in section 3 (22 U.S.C. 2502)—

(A) by redesignating subsection (h) as subsection (e); and

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

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

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

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

(C) by striking “of his subordinates” and all that follows through “functions.” and inserting “subordinate of the Director the authority to perform any such function.”;

(5) in section 5 (22 U.S.C. 2504)—

(A) in subsection (e), by striking “: Provided, however,” and all that follows through “the amount” and inserting “. Under such circumstances as the President may determine, the accrued readjustment allowance, or any part thereof, may be paid to the volunteer, members of the volunteer’s family, or others, during the period of the volunteer’s service, or prior to the volunteer’s return to the United
States. In the event of the volunteer's death
during the period of his service, the amount’’;

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

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

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

(7) in section 7 (22 U.S.C. 2506)—

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

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

(8) in section 8A (22 U.S.C. 2507a)—

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

(B) in subsection (d)(2), by inserting
“the” before “information”; and
40 (C) in subsection (f)—

   (i) in paragraph (2)(A), by striking “his or her” each place such phrase appears and inserting “the volunteer’s”; and

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

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

(10) in section 8E (22 U.S.C. 2507e)—

   (A) in subsection (b), by striking “subsection (c),,” and inserting “subsection (c),”; and

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

(11) in section 9 (22 U.S.C. 2508)—

   (A) by striking “under which he was admitted or who fails to depart from the United States at the expiration of the time for which he was admitted” and inserting “under which such person was admitted or who fails to depart from the United States at the expiration of the period for which such person was admitted”; and
(B) by striking “Act proceedings” and inserting “Act. Removal proceedings”;

(12) in section 10 (22 U.S.C. 2509)—

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

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

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

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

(14) in section 14 (22 U.S.C. 2513)—

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

(B) in subsection (b)—

(i) by striking “his allowance” and inserting “the”; and

(ii) by striking “he”;
(15) in section 15 (22 U.S.C. 2514)—
(A) in subsection (c), by striking “that Act” and inserting “that subchapter”; and
(B) in subsection (d)(7), by striking “his designee” and inserting “the Director’s designee”;
(16) in section 19(a) (22 U.S.C. 2518(a)), by striking “he shall determine” and inserting “the President shall determine”;
(17) in section 23 (22 U.S.C. 2520)—
(A) in the section heading, by striking “UNIVERSAL MILITARY TRAINING AND SERVICE” and inserting “MILITARY SELECTIVE SERVICE”; and
(B) by striking “Universal Military Training and Service Act” and inserting “Military Selective Service Act (50 U.S.C. 3801 et seq.)”;
(18) in section 24—
(A) by striking “he” each place such term appears and inserting “the volunteer”; and
(B) by striking “his” and inserting “the volunteer’s”;
(19) in section 26—
(A) by redesignating paragraphs (2) through (9) as paragraphs (3) through (10), respectively;

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

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

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

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

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

(i) by redesignating clauses (i) and (ii) as subparagraphs (A) and (B), respectively; and

(ii) in subparagraph (A), as redesignated, by striking “section 5(f)” and inserting “section 5(e)”;

(20) in section 301(a), by striking “manpower” each place such term appears and inserting “individuals”.