

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2888

To help prevent emerging events exacerbated by climate change, which threaten national and international security, by enhancing United States Government capacities to prevent, mitigate, and respond to such events, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 28, 2021

Mr. KEATING (for himself and Ms. KAPTUR) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To help prevent emerging events exacerbated by climate change, which threaten national and international security, by enhancing United States Government capacities to prevent, mitigate, and respond to such events, 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.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Rapid Response to Cli-
5 mate Impacts Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. CLIMATE IMPACTS TASK FORCE.**

2 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of State shall
3 establish a Climate Impacts Task Force (referred to in
4 this section as the “Task Force”) with the mandate to—

5 (1) monitor climate and related impacted social
6 conditions to anticipate and prevent climate and en-
7 vironmental stressors from evolving into national se-
8 curity risks;

9 (2) strengthen the efforts of the Department of
10 State and the United States Government to act
11 proactively to mitigate the human harms and poten-
12 tial for national security risks resulting from emerg-
13 ing events exacerbated by climate change; and

14 (3) assist other Federal departments and agen-
15 cies, foreign partners, and multilateral organizations
16 in their efforts to do the same.

17 (b) LEADERSHIP.—The Secretary of State shall des-
18 ignate a senior career official, as appropriate, of the De-
19 partment of State to serve as the Chair of the Task Force.
20 Such official shall report to the Secretary of State.

21 (c) RESPONSIBILITIES.—Under the direction of the
22 Chair, the Task Force shall—

23 (1) meet regularly to ensure that events exacer-
24 bated by climate change and the risk of emerging
25 events exacerbated by climate change throughout the
26 world are adequately considered and addressed;

1 (2) facilitate the development and execution of
2 policies and tools to enhance the capacity of the
3 United States to prevent and respond to emerging
4 events exacerbated by climate change worldwide;

5 (3) monitor developments throughout the world
6 that heighten the risk of emerging events exacer-
7 bated by climate change;

8 (4) identify gaps in United States foreign policy
9 related to the prevention of and response to emerg-
10 ing events exacerbated by climate change with re-
11 spect to certain regions or particular countries;

12 (5) incorporate lessons learned from past
13 United States efforts to prevent and respond to
14 emerging events exacerbated by climate change and
15 other impacts that are comparable in scope or sever-
16 ity;

17 (6) provide the Secretary of State with rec-
18 ommendations and potential improvements to poli-
19 cies, programs, resources, and tools related to the
20 prevention of and response to emerging events exac-
21 erbated by climate change;

22 (7) coordinate the Department of State's en-
23 gagement in interagency processes led by the Na-
24 tional Security Council that share the Task Force's
25 objectives;

1 (8) conduct outreach not less frequently than
2 biannually, with representatives of nongovernmental
3 organizations dedicated to the prevention of and re-
4 sponse to emerging events exacerbated by climate
5 change and other appropriate parties, to—

6 (A) receive assistance relating to the Task
7 Force’s efforts to address emerging events exac-
8 erbated by climate change and develop new or
9 improved policies, programs, resources, and
10 tools; and

11 (B) provide a public understanding of the
12 work of the Task Force;

13 (9) in carrying out paragraphs (1) through (8),
14 focus on particular ways for the United States to de-
15 velop, strengthen, and enhance its capabilities to—

16 (A) monitor, receive early warning of, and
17 coordinate responses to potential emerging
18 events exacerbated by climate change;

19 (B) engage allies and partners, including
20 multilateral and regional institutions, to build
21 capacities and mobilize action for preventing
22 and responding to emerging events exacerbated
23 by climate change;

1 (C) encourage the deployment of civilian
2 advisors to prevent and respond to emerging
3 events exacerbated by climate change;

4 (D) increase the capacity of and develop
5 doctrine for the United States Foreign Service,
6 civil service, Armed Forces, development profes-
7 sionals, and other actors to engage in the full
8 spectrum of activities to prevent and respond to
9 emerging events exacerbated by climate change;

10 (E) develop and implement tailored foreign
11 assistance programs that address and mitigate
12 the risks of emerging events exacerbated by cli-
13 mate change;

14 (F) ensure intelligence collection, analysis,
15 and sharing of appropriate information; and

16 (G) address any other issues that the Task
17 Force determines appropriate;

18 (10) in carrying out paragraphs (1) through
19 (8), receive support from bureaus and offices of the
20 Department of State, as the Secretary of State de-
21 termines appropriate; and

22 (11) facilitate annual coordination between the
23 Department of State, the Department of Energy,
24 and the Environmental Protection Agency to ensure

1 international and domestic climate change objectives
2 are aligned.

3 (d) COMPOSITION.—The Task Force shall—

4 (1) seek to ensure that its efforts complement
5 and support interagency processes led by the Na-
6 tional Security Council that share the Task Force’s
7 objectives; and

8 (2) operate with regular consultation and par-
9 ticipation of designated representatives, at the As-
10 sistant Secretary level or higher, of—

11 (A) the Department of State;

12 (B) the United States Agency for Inter-
13 national Development;

14 (C) the Department of Defense;

15 (D) the Department of Commerce;

16 (E) the Department of the Treasury;

17 (F) the Department of Energy;

18 (G) the Central Intelligence Agency;

19 (H) the Office of the Director of National
20 Intelligence;

21 (I) the United States Mission to the
22 United Nations;

23 (J) the National Security Council;

24 (K) the Environmental Protection Agency;

1 (L) the National Oceanic and Atmospheric
2 Administration;

3 (M) the National Aeronautics and Space
4 Administration;

5 (N) the United States Geological Survey;
6 and

7 (O) such other executive departments,
8 agencies, or offices as the Chair may designate.

9 (e) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date
10 of the enactment of this Act and every two years there-
11 after for the following ten years, the Secretary of State,
12 in consultation with the Task Force, shall submit to the
13 Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on
14 Appropriations of the Senate and the Committee on For-
15 eign Affairs and the Committee on Appropriations of the
16 House of Representatives an unclassified report, with a
17 classified annex if necessary, that includes—

18 (1) a review, in consultation with the des-
19 ignated representatives specified in subsection (d),
20 consisting of—

21 (A) an evaluation of the efficacy of current
22 efforts based on United States and locally iden-
23 tified indicators, including capacities and con-
24 straints for United States Government-wide de-
25 tection, early warning and response, informa-

tion-sharing, contingency planning, and coordination of efforts to prevent and respond to emerging events exacerbated by climate change;

(B) an assessment of the funding expended by relevant Federal departments and agencies on emerging events exacerbated by climate change and the legal, procedural, and resource constraints faced by the Department of State and the United States Agency for International Development throughout respective budgeting, strategic planning, and management cycles to support the prevention of and response to emerging events exacerbated by climate change;

(C) current annual global assessments of emerging events exacerbated by climate change;

(D) recommendations to further strengthen United States capabilities described in subparagraph (A); and

(E) consideration of analysis, reporting, and policy recommendations by civil society, academic, and other nongovernmental organizations and institutions to prevent and respond to emerging events exacerbated by climate change;

(2) recommendations to ensure shared responsibility by—

1 (A) enhancing multilateral mechanisms for
2 preventing, mitigating, and responding to
3 emerging events exacerbated by climate change;
4 and

5 (B) strengthening regional organizations;
6 and

7 (3) the implementation status of the rec-
8 ommendations included in the review under para-
9 graph (1).

10 (f) BRIEFINGS AND MATERIALS.—The Chair and
11 members of the Task Force shall, not less frequently than
12 annually, provide briefings and materials to the Com-
13 mittee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Com-
14 mittee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives.

15 (g) REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTEL-
16 LIGENCE.—The Director of National Intelligence is en-
17 couraged to include, in his or her annual (or more often
18 as appropriate) unclassified testimony, accompanied by a
19 classified annex, if necessary, to Congress on threats to
20 United States national security—

21 (1) a review of countries and regions at risk of
22 emerging events exacerbated by climate change; and

23 (2) whenever possible, specific identification of
24 countries and regions at immediate risk of emerging
25 events exacerbated by climate change.

1 (h) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Con-
2 gress that rapid and robust climate change response mech-
3 anisms, including the establishment of the Task Force, are
4 critical for ensuring other countries remain accountable to
5 their climate action commitments as well as preserving the
6 national security and economic interests of the United
7 States.

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