

107<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS  
2<sup>D</sup> SESSION

# H. R. 4973

To strengthen democratic institutions and promote good governance overseas  
by contributing to the development of professional legislative staff.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 20, 2002

Mr. CROWLEY (for himself, Mr. LANTOS, Mr. GILMAN, Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania, Mr. LEACH, Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA, Mr. HOYER, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. WEINER, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. HOEFFEL, Ms. LEE, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. DAVIS of Florida, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. MEEKS of New York, Mr. SCHIFF, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. ABERCROMBIE, Mr. WYNN, Mr. BOSWELL, Mr. JEFFERSON, and Ms. CARSON of Indiana) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations

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## A BILL

To strengthen democratic institutions and promote good governance overseas by contributing to the development of professional legislative staff.

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 “Strengthening Demo-  
5        cratic Institutions Act of 2002”.

6        **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7        The Congress makes the following findings:

1           (1) An elected legislature that represents a na-  
2           tion’s citizens is a critical element of a democratic  
3           government that is accountable to its people.

4           (2) The drafting of effective legislation requires  
5           legislative staff who possess substantive expertise in  
6           relevant subject matters.

7           (3) Legislative oversight of governmental poli-  
8           cies, programs, and budgets—steps that are impera-  
9           tive to ensure good governance, prevent waste and  
10          abuse, and guarantee effective use of state re-  
11          sources—similarly requires legislative staff who have  
12          technical expertise needed to exercise effective over-  
13          sight.

14          (4) Many new and emerging democracies, bur-  
15          dened by the legacy of oppressive and autocratic re-  
16          gimes, struggle to reform their government institu-  
17          tions, develop wise laws, implement sound policies,  
18          and ensure that the power of the state is used to en-  
19          hance political freedoms, economic well-being, and  
20          social welfare.

21          (5) It is in the interests of the United States  
22          to promote sound lawmaking and government ac-  
23          countability in countries that have political, eco-  
24          nomic, and security relations with the United States.

1           (6) A cadre of professional legislative staff  
2 trained in public policy, national security affairs,  
3 and legislative procedure is essential for the develop-  
4 ment of sound legislation and the exercise of effec-  
5 tive legislative oversight over government operations.

6           (7) Legislative staff who have developed sub-  
7 stantive expertise in one or more areas of public pol-  
8 icy and gained a thorough understanding of demo-  
9 cratic legislative procedures will raise the level of  
10 public debate in their societies and encourage a more  
11 open discussion of political, economic, and social  
12 issues between and among political leaders and ordi-  
13 nary citizens.

14           (8) Such staff members, even should they leave  
15 the employ of their country's legislature, are likely  
16 to remain active, prominent, and well-informed  
17 members of their nations' civil service, defense es-  
18 tablishments, or political systems and will in this  
19 manner continue to promote democracy in their own  
20 country and thus the national interest of the United  
21 States abroad.

22 **SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT OF INTERNATIONAL LEGISLATIVE**  
23 **STAFF TRAINING PROGRAM.**

24           (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of State shall  
25 establish a program that will encourage the

1 professionalization of legislative staff working for foreign  
2 legislative bodies and elected members of such bodies. The  
3 program shall bring foreign legislative staff to the United  
4 States for seminars, workshops, discussions, and meetings  
5 concerning techniques, standards, and practices of profes-  
6 sional legislative staff work. To the extent possible, the  
7 program shall include close observation of the legislative  
8 process and the role of professional legislative staff in the  
9 Congress of the United States.

10 (b) ACTIVITIES.—

11 (1) The program shall include seminars, work-  
12 shops, discussions, and other activities concerning  
13 the following:

14 (A) The role of a legislature in a demo-  
15 cratic system.

16 (B) Executive-legislative relations.

17 (C) The role of constituents, lobbyists,  
18 nongovernmental organizations, political par-  
19 ties, the media, and other stakeholders in the  
20 legislative process.

21 (D) Contemporary policy issues being ad-  
22 dressed in the United States by Congress.

23 (E) The value of a career as professional  
24 legislative staff.

1           (2) The program shall include meetings and  
2           contact with—

3                   (A) academics, think tank scholars, and  
4                   other appropriate experts on executive-legisla-  
5                   tive relations, policy issues being addressed by  
6                   the Congress, and the role of a legislature in a  
7                   democratic system;

8                   (B) Members of Congress, congressional  
9                   committee staff, congressional staff, and others  
10                  knowledgeable about the legislative process;

11                  (C) officials from executive branch agen-  
12                  cies with experience in policy issues and execu-  
13                  tive-legislative relations;

14                  (D) individuals working in the legislative  
15                  and executive branches of the United States  
16                  Government;

17                  (E) journalists who report on congressional  
18                  activities; and

19                  (F) members and staff of State legisla-  
20                  tures, as appropriate.

21           (c) PARTICIPANTS.—

22                   (1) In the selection of individuals to participate  
23                   in the program under this section, the Secretary of  
24                   State shall consider only individuals from countries  
25                   which—

1 (A) have a legislature whose members have  
2 been elected in elections that are generally re-  
3 garded as having been free and fair;

4 (B) have a legislature that possesses a con-  
5 stitutional or legal authority to draft, approve,  
6 or otherwise substantively affect legislation on a  
7 wide range of policy issues, including budgetary  
8 matters;

9 (C) are not considered state sponsors of  
10 terrorism.

11 (2) The Secretary of State shall give priority  
12 consideration to the participation of individuals from  
13 countries whose legislatures employ relatively few  
14 professional staff and whose nascent democratic in-  
15 stitutions would especially benefit from the  
16 professionalization of the staff.

17 (3) The Secretary of State shall make every ef-  
18 fort to select as participants in this program individ-  
19 uals who demonstrate a commitment to a career in  
20 public policy, international affairs, defense, or public  
21 sector budgetary matters.

22 (d) ADMINISTRATION.—

23 (1) The Secretary of State shall administer the  
24 program under this section through the Assistant  
25 Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Af-

1       fairs in consultation with the Assistant Secretary of  
2       State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor.

3           (2) The Secretary may enter into one or more  
4       contracts with private or nonprofit organizations  
5       having an expertise in the fostering of democratic in-  
6       stitutions for the administration of the program  
7       under this section. The Secretary may enter into  
8       such contracts without regard to any any provision  
9       of law requiring the use of competitive procedures.

10       (e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section the term “elec-  
11       tions that are generally regarded as having been free and  
12       fair” refers to an electoral process that is generally re-  
13       garded by the United States and the international commu-  
14       nity as being open and democratic and governed by the  
15       principles of free and open debate and informed citizen  
16       participation.

17       (f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—For the  
18       fiscal year 2003 and for each subsequent fiscal year, there  
19       are authorized to be appropriated \$3,000,000 to carry out  
20       this section. Funds appropriated pursuant to the author-  
21       ization of appropriations under this subsection are author-  
22       ized to remain available until expended.

23       **SEC. 4. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

24       It is the sense of the Congress that Members of Con-  
25       gress should support the program established under sec-

1 tion 2 to the greatest extent possible by providing for the  
2 involvement of professional legislative staff from their of-  
3 fices in seminars, meetings, and other activities organized  
4 for the benefit of participants in the program.

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