

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 10333

To establish a hackathon program in the Department of Defense, and for
other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DECEMBER 10, 2024

Mr. BACON introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee
on Armed Services

A BILL

To establish a hackathon program in the Department of
Defense, 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 “Defense Hackathon
5 Act of 2024”.

6 **SEC. 2. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DE-**
7 **FENSE HACKATHON PROGRAM.**

8 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the
9 date of the enactment of this Act, the Chief Digital and
10 Artificial Intelligence Officer of the Department of De-

1 fense, in coordination with the Chairman of the Joint
2 Chiefs of Staff and the Chief Information Officer of the
3 Department of Defense, shall establish a program (to be
4 known as the “Department of Defense Hackathon Pro-
5 gram”) under which the commanders of combatant com-
6 mands and the Secretaries of the military departments
7 shall carry out not fewer than four Hackathons each year.

8 (b) PROGRAM MANAGEMENT.—The Chief Digital and
9 Artificial Intelligence Officer of the Department of De-
10 fense shall develop and implement standards for carrying
11 out Hackathons, provide supporting technical infrastruc-
12 ture to the host of each Hackathon, and determine the
13 hosts each year under subsection (c)(1).

14 (c) HOSTS.—(1)(A) Each year, two commanders of
15 combatant commands shall each carry out a Hackathon
16 and two Secretaries of military departments shall each
17 carry out a Hackathon, as determined by the Chief Digital
18 and Artificial Intelligence Officer of the Department of
19 Defense in accordance with this subsection.

20 (B) The commanders of combatant com-
21 mands and the Secretaries of military depart-
22 ments carrying out Hackathons pursuant to
23 subparagraph (A) shall change each year.

24 (C) Each host of a Hackathon shall—

1 (i) provide to the participants invited
2 to participate in such Hackathon a per
3 diem allowance in accordance with section
4 5702 of title 5, United States Code, or sec-
5 tion 452 of title, United States Code, as
6 applicable; and

7 (ii) not later than 60 days after the
8 completion of such Hackathon, make avail-
9 able to the Department of Defense a re-
10 port on such Hackathon.

11 (2) Any commander of a combatant command or Sec-
12 retary of a military department may carry out a
13 Hackathon in addition to the Hackathons required under
14 paragraph (1).

15 (d) HACKATHON OBJECTIVES.—(1) The host of each
16 Hackathon shall establish objectives for the Hackathon
17 that address a critical, technical challenge of the combat-
18 ant command or military department of the host, as appli-
19 cable, through the use of individuals with specialized and
20 relevant skills, including data scientists, developers, soft-
21 ware engineers, and other specialists as determined appro-
22 priate by the Chief Digital and Artificial Intelligence Offi-
23 cer of the Department of Defense or the host.

1 (2) In addition to the objectives established by the
2 host of a Hackathon under paragraph (1), the objectives
3 for each Hackathon shall include—

4 (A) fostering innovation across the Department
5 of Defense, including in military departments and
6 the combatant commands; and

7 (B) creating repeatable processes enabling the
8 commanders of combatant commands and the Secre-
9 taries of the military departments to more rapidly
10 identify and develop solutions to critical, technical
11 challenges across the Department of Defense.

12 (e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

13 (1) the term “Hackathon” means an event car-
14 ried out under the Program at which employees
15 across the Department of Defense meet to collabo-
16 ratively attempt to develop functional software or
17 hardware solutions during the event to solve a crit-
18 ical, technical challenge determined by the host;

19 (2) the term “host”, with respect to a
20 Hackathon, means the commander of the combatant
21 command or the Secretary of the military depart-
22 ment carrying out the Hackathon;

23 (3) the term “military department” has the
24 meaning given such term in section 101(a) of title
25 10, United States Code; and

- 1 (4) the term “Program” means the program es-
- 2 tablished under subsection (a).

