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(Original Signature of Member)

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. _____

To make certain improvements relating to the coordination of efforts to promote internet freedom and access to information in Iran, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. SWALWELL introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To make certain improvements relating to the coordination of efforts to promote internet freedom and access to information in Iran, 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 “Internet Reach and
5 Access Now Act” or the “IRAN Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS; SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

7 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the followings:

1 (1) The Government of Iran has repeatedly dis-
2 rupted, throttled, or shut down internet connectivity,
3 impeding the ability of the Iranian people to commu-
4 nicate during emergencies and to exercise inter-
5 nationally recognized human rights.

6 (2) Satellite-based residential and Direct-to-Cell
7 (DTC) communications, Virtual Private Networks
8 (VPNs), embedded-SIM (eSIM) technology, and
9 other circumvention tools can mitigate those shut-
10 downs, but Iranian users face high costs, sanctions-
11 related equipment barriers, and pervasive digital
12 surveillance.

13 (3) Clarifying United States policy and sup-
14 porting secure connectivity tools will materially en-
15 hance internet resilience for the people of Iran.

16 (b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Con-
17 gress that United States policy should—

18 (1) promote the deployment of DTC commu-
19 nications, VPNs, eSIM technology, and other secure
20 communications tools that enhance open access to
21 the internet in Iran; and

22 (2) ensure that sanctions and export-control
23 regulations are implemented in a manner that does
24 not unintentionally hinder access to such tools by
25 the Iranian people.

1 **SEC. 3. IMPROVED COORDINATION OF EFFORTS TO PRO-**
2 **MOTE INTERNET FREEDOM IN IRAN.**

3 (a) DUTIES OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE.—The
4 Secretary of State shall be the Federal official with pri-
5 mary responsibility for—

6 (1) promoting widespread internet freedom in
7 Iran and expanding access to information for Ira-
8 nian citizens;

9 (2) coordinating all efforts carried out by Fed-
10 eral departments and agencies that relate to digital-
11 freedom initiatives in Iran; and

12 (3) serving as the principal official responsible
13 for updating and carrying out the strategy required
14 under section 414 of the Iran Threat Reduction and
15 Syria Human Rights Act of 2012 (22 U.S.C. 8754).

16 (b) UPDATES TO COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY TO
17 PROMOTE INTERNET FREEDOM AND ACCESS TO INFOR-
18 MATION IN IRAN.—

19 (1) UPDATES.—Section 414 of the Iran Threat
20 Reduction and Syria Human Rights Act of 2012 (22
21 U.S.C. 8754) is amended—

22 (A) by striking “Not later than” and in-
23 serting “(A) INITIAL STRATEGY.—Not later
24 than”;

25 (B) by redesignating paragraphs (11) and
26 (12) as paragraphs (14) and (15), respectively;

1 (C) by inserting after paragraph (10) the
2 following new paragraphs:

3 “(11) evaluate the use of virtual private net-
4 works and direct-to-cell satellite technologies by civil
5 society and human rights activists in Iran and de-
6 velop strategies for increasing the accessibility of
7 such networks and technologies;

8 “(12) work with the Department of the Treas-
9 ury and the Department of Commerce to ensure en-
10 forcement of sanctions does not impede companies
11 providing to Iranian civilians the technology and
12 other tools necessary to access the open internet;

13 “(13) assess the ability of the Iranian regime to
14 cut off all access to the internet and develop a strat-
15 egy to circumvent internet blackouts for Iranian civil
16 society;”; and

17 (D) by adding at the end the following new
18 subsection:

19 “(b) UPDATES.—The Secretary of State, in consulta-
20 tion with the Secretary of Treasury, the Secretary of Com-
21 merce, and the heads of other Federal departments and
22 agencies as appropriate shall review the strategy under
23 subsection (a) on an ongoing basis and update the strategy
24 as appropriate, taking into account the results of such re-
25 view.”.

1 (2) SUBMISSION OF FIRST UPDATES.—

2 (A) SUBMISSION.—Not later than 120
3 days after the date of the enactment of this
4 Act, the Secretary of State shall—

5 (i) review and update the strategy
6 pursuant to section 414(b) of the Iran
7 Threat Reduction and Syria Human
8 Rights Act of 2012 (22 U.S.C. 8754), as
9 amended by paragraph (1); and

10 (ii) submit such updated strategy to
11 the appropriate congressional committees.

12 (B) FORM.—The strategy under subpara-
13 graph (A) shall be submitted in unclassified
14 form, but may include a classified annex.

15 **SEC. 4. SATELLITE AND DIRECT-TO-CELL (DTC) COVERAGE**
16 **SAFEGUARDS.**

17 (a) NON-EXCLUSION CONDITION FOR NEW LI-
18 CENSES.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the
19 Federal Communications Commission (FCC) shall, as a
20 condition of any license, license modification, or market-
21 access grant issued on or after the date of enactment of
22 this Act, require that the licensee shall refrain from inten-
23 tionally disabling, degrading, or geo-blocking satellite or
24 DTC coverage over the land territory of Iran, except—

1 (1) to the extent specifically required by Fed-
2 eral law, an order of the FCC, or an international
3 coordination agreement designed solely to prevent
4 harmful interference; or

5 (2) for limited periods necessary to mitigate an
6 imminent threat to the integrity or security of the
7 licensee's network, provided that normal coverage is
8 restored as soon as practicable.

9 (b) INTERNATIONAL ADVOCACY.—The Secretary of
10 State, in coordination with the Secretary of Commerce and
11 the FCC, shall oppose at the International Telecommuni-
12 cation Union (ITU) or any successor body any proposal
13 that would compel or encourage geographic exclusion of
14 Iran specifically from satellite or DTC coverage provided
15 by United States–licensed operators.

16 (c) REPORTING REQUIREMENT.—Not later than 180
17 days after the date of enactment of this Act, and annually
18 thereafter for 5 years, the Secretary of State shall submit
19 to the appropriate congressional committees a report de-
20 scribing—

21 (1) actions taken pursuant to subsection (b);
22 and

23 (2) any instances in which a satellite or DTC
24 operator intentionally excluded coverage of Iran and
25 the basis for such exclusion.

1 (d) SAVING CLAUSE.—Nothing in this section may
2 be construed to—

3 (1) authorize any transaction or service that is
4 prohibited under United States sanctions laws or
5 regulations, including those administered by the Of-
6 fice of Foreign Assets Control of the Department of
7 the Treasury; or

8 (2) require a licensee to market, sell, activate,
9 or collect payment for services in Iran.

10 **SEC. 5. CYBERSECURITY CAPACITY FOR CIVIL SOCIETY IN**
11 **IRAN.**

12 (a) TRAINING AND TOOLS.—The Secretary of State,
13 acting through the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights,
14 and Labor, shall, not later than 180 days after the date
15 of the enactment of this Act, establish programs to—

16 (1) deliver remote or in-person cybersecurity
17 training to journalists, human-rights defenders, and
18 civil-society actors in Iran;

19 (2) furnish vetted open-source or commercially
20 available digital-safety tools, including VPN services
21 and end-to-end encrypted messaging applications;
22 and

23 (3) provide multilingual educational materials
24 that warn Iranian users about regime-controlled ap-
25 plications and phishing campaigns.

1 (b) REPORTING AND EVALUATION.—

2 (1) QUARTERLY METRICS.—The Secretary of
3 State shall track and, on a quarterly basis, make
4 available to the appropriate congressional commit-
5 tees aggregate metrics on the number of trainees, in-
6 cident-response cases, and unique users of supported
7 digital-safety tools.

8 (2) INDEPENDENT EVALUATION.—Not later
9 than 3 years after the date of the enactment of this
10 Act, the Comptroller General of the United States
11 shall submit to the appropriate congressional com-
12 mittees an evaluation of the effectiveness of the pro-
13 grams carried out under this section.

14 (c) SAVINGS CLAUSE.—Nothing in this section may
15 be construed to supersede or limit existing authority under
16 section 404 of the Iran Threat Reduction and Syria
17 Human Rights Act of 2012 (22 U.S.C. 8754) or any other
18 provision of law related to internet freedom programming
19 in Iran.

20 **SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

21 (a) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be appro-
22 priated to the Secretary of State \$15,000,000 for each of
23 fiscal years 2027 and 2028 to carry out sections 5 and
24 6 of this Act, including programs that expand access to
25 secure VPN services for individuals in Iran..

1 (b) AVAILABILITY.—Amounts appropriated pursuant
2 to subsection (a) shall remain available until expended.

3 **SEC. 7. RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**

4 Nothing in this Act shall be construed to—

5 (1) limit the authority of the President under
6 the International Emergency Economic Powers Act
7 (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.);

8 (2) authorize any transaction prohibited under
9 United States sanctions or export-control laws; or

10 (3) require any United States person to provide
11 goods, services, or technology in violation of such
12 laws

13 **SEC. 8. DEFINITIONS.**

14 In this Act:

15 (1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMIT-
16 TEES.—The term “appropriate congressional com-
17 mittees” means—

18 (A) the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the
19 Committee on Energy and Commerce, the Per-
20 manent Select Committee on Intelligence, and
21 the Committee on Appropriations of the House
22 of Representatives; and

23 (B) the Committee on Foreign Relations,
24 the Committee on Commerce, Science, and
25 Transportation, the Select Committee on Intel-

1 ligence, and the Committee on Appropriations
2 of the Senate.

3 (2) ESIM TECHNOLOGY.—The term “eSIM
4 technology” means embedded subscriber-identity-
5 module technology that allows a user to remotely ac-
6 tivate cellular service on a compatible device without
7 a physical SIM card.

8 (3) VPN SERVICES.—The term “VPN services”
9 means encrypted internet connections designed to
10 bypass a government’s censorship and surveillance,
11 enabling secure and unrestricted access to the open
12 internet.