117TH CONGRESS 2D Session

To require certain nonprofit and not-for-profit social welfare organizations to submit disclosure reports on foreign funding to the Attorney General, and for other purposes.

## IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. GRASSLEY introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on \_\_\_\_\_

# A BILL

- To require certain nonprofit and not-for-profit social welfare organizations to submit disclosure reports on foreign funding to the Attorney General, 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 "Think Tank Trans-

5 parency Act".

### 6 SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

- 7 Congress finds the following:
- 8 (1) Think tanks have provided Congress and9 the executive branch with a wealth of research and

1 scholarship that largely has benefitted the public in 2 the United States by improving the drafting, enact-3 ment, and enforcement of policy in the United 4 States. (2) There is broad bipartisan agreement that 5 6 think tanks possess enormous influence on the pas-7 sage and enforcement of policies, particularly those 8 that relate to foreign policy. 9 (3) In recent years, foreign funding of think 10 tanks has increased substantially. 11 (4) Congress, the executive branch, and espe-12 cially the people of the United States have a right 13 to----14 (A) know which think tanks receive foreign 15 funds; and 16 (B) assess for themselves the extent that 17 foreign influence should be considered when 18 analyzing the credibility and value of research 19 and scholarship produced by such think tanks 20 that receive foreign funds. 21 (5) The United States House of Representa-22 tives has already recognized the national security 23 issues inherent in undue foreign influence of entities 24 with covert sources of foreign funding that testify 25 before Congress. Since 2015, representatives of enti-

ties who testify before the United States House of
Representatives have been required to disclose relevant foreign funding sources directed to them or
their employers in Truth-in-Testimony disclosure
forms required under clause 2(g)(5) of rule XI of
the United States House of Representatives.

7 (6) Almost 30 years ago, Congress enacted sec-8 tion 117 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20) 9 U.S.C. 1011f) (hereinafter referred to as "section 10 117") in light of concerns about the growing finan-11 cial relationship between universities in the United 12 States and foreign sources. In enacting that legisla-13 tion, Congress balanced academic freedom and na-14 tional security by mandating financial transparency 15 through required reporting of contracts with, and 16 gifts from, any foreign source.

17 (7) Section 117 does not prohibit institutions of 18 higher education from taking foreign money, but 19 rather mandates accurate and transparent disclo-20 sures of sources and amounts received by those in-21 stitutions to the Department of Education. In 2019, 22 the Department of Education took concrete steps to 23 enforce section 117 by ensuring the integrity of re-24 porting requirements, confirming the correct report-25 ing and categorization of donations, and prohibiting

the use of domestic conduits and intermediaries to
 avoid the disclosures of foreign gifts.

3 (8) Between 2011 and 2021, the Russian Fed-4 eration (hereinafter referred to as "Russia") has 5 given not less than \$160,000,000 to universities in 6 the United States. The People's Republic of China 7 (hereinafter referred to as "China") alone has given 8 not less than \$2,700,000,000 to universities in the 9 United States during the same time frame. Further, 10 during that span, the State of Qatar (hereinafter re-11 ferred to as "Qatar") has given not less than 12 \$5,000,000,000 to universities in the United States.

(9) Russia, China, and Qatar each have repressive and deeply troubling records relating to human
rights, and all 3 have engaged in cyber espionage
targeting individuals in the United States.

(10) Russia, China, and Qatar all pose grave
threats to the national security interests of the
United States, yet those countries have successfully
lavished billions of dollars to cultivate strong ties
with institutions of higher education and research
across the United States.

(11) There is also evidence suggesting that
Qatar encouraged, and potentially facilitated, universities in the United States receiving the largess of

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Qatar to flout disclosure requirements of the United
 States under section 117.
 (12) Although the Center for International Pol-

(12) Although the Center for International Policy conducted a study in 2020 that concluded that
think tanks focused on Federal policy received not
less than \$174,000,000 in funding from foreign governmental entities between 2014 and 2018, there is
currently no means to determine the actual level or
extent of foreign influence on those think tanks.

(13) What is clear is the vast amount of foreign
funding that United States-based think tanks receive, and that such foreign funding affects the direction of their policy recommendations.

(14) One prominent think tank, the EastWest
Institute, received substantial funding from the People's Liberation Army of China, which conducts
cyber espionage attacks, including against individuals in the United States).

(15) The Stimson Center worked to significantly alter the Homeland and Cyber Threat Act
(H.R. 1607, 117th Congress, as introduced on
March 8, 2021) (hereinafter referred to as the
"HACT Act"). The HACT Act, which would provide
an exception to chapter 97 of title 28, United States
Code (commonly known as the "Foreign Sovereign

1 Immunities Act of 1976"), to allow United States 2 persons harmed by foreign-government sponsored 3 cyberattacks to bring civil claims for damages. The 4 changes advocated by the Stimson Center would gut 5 the bill and render it completely ineffective in hold-6 ing foreign nations and their agents responsible for 7 cyberattacks on and in the United States.

8 (16) One of the main sources of the funding of 9 the Stimson Center is Qatar, a major sponsor of ter-10 rorism worldwide and one of the most notorious 11 sponsors of cyberattacks against entities in the 12 United States. In 2019 alone (the last year for 13 which public figures are available) the Stimson Cen-14 ter received over \$600,000 in contributions from the 15 government of Qatar.

16 (17) The Brookings Institution has received at
17 least \$22,000,000 from Qatar from 2013 through
18 2021, but the exact amount has not been disclosed
19 publicly.

(18) There is also significant concern in Congress about potential contractual stipulations tied to
foreign funding that could be leveraged by foreign
powers to exert even greater influence over the research and policy recommendations of think tanks
that the Federal Government and the public in the

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United States would otherwise believe to be inde pendent.

3 (19) In a 2007 "Establishment Agreement" be-4 tween the Brookings Institution and the Ministry of 5 Foreign Affairs of Qatar—which appears to have 6 been in place in its original form through the end of 2021—the Doha "branch" of the Brookings Institu-7 8 tion, called Brookings Doha Center, was effectively 9 owned and controlled by the Emir of Qatar. Under 10 the terms of the contract, the role of the Brookings 11 Institution in the Brookings Doha Center was lim-12 ited to that of a "promoter".

(20) As only revealed publicly in June 2022,
the Brookings Doha Center was a separate and distinct legal entity from the Brookings Institution,
specifically a Private Foundation for the Public Benefit, the same incorporation status as the propaganda arm of Qatar, Al Jazeera.

(21) Pursuant to the 2007 Establishment
Agreement, the Director of the Brookings Doha
Center was required to report directly to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Qatar, including to "engage in regular consultation . . . regarding the development and ongoing operations" and for prior ap-

proval of "programs that will be developed by the
 [Brookings Doha] Center.".

3 (22) The Brookings Doha Center was renamed 4 the Middle East Council on Global Affairs, and evi-5 dence indicates that the Middle East Council on 6 Global Affairs is now entirely under the control of 7 the Qatari government. According to a January 8 2022 amendment to the 2007 articles of incorpora-9 tion of the Brookings Doha Center, the Brookings 10 Institution ceded the "promoter" role for Brookings 11 Doha Center to a senior employee of Ministry of 12 Foreign Affairs of Qatar, Majed Al-Ansari. This 13 amendment also called on the Middle East Council 14 on Global Affairs to assume control of intellectual 15 property rights that had been under the "Brookings" 16 Institution" brand, including the content from and 17 followers of the "@BrookingsDoha" Twitter ac-18 count.

(23) Congress currently is unable to determine
what other agreements that the Brookings Institution or other influential think tanks have with foreign governmental entities, a void which has already
been exploited by at least Qatar in obtaining prior
approval of budgets and research projects conducted
under the branding of the Brookings Institution and

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the Brookings Doha Center in the aforementioned
 2007 contract, or the transference of valuable intel lectual property to the Qatari government pursuant
 to the 2022 amendment to the articles of incorpora tion of the Middle East Council on Global Affairs.

6 (24) There is broad bipartisan agreement that 7 undue foreign influence obscured through the use of 8 proxies—or hidden by the powerful brand of a highly 9 respected think tank—threatens the national secu-10 rity interests of the United States. There is also 11 broad agreement that transparency is the most im-12 portant and effective tool for reducing the harm of 13 foreign influence targeting United States public pol-14 icy or public opinion.

(25) As such, this bill aims to provide critical
transparency regarding the foreign funding provided
to, and the related contractual agreements with,
think tanks whose work includes influencing United
States policies or public opinion.

20 SEC. 3. CONTEMPORANEOUS DISCLOSURE REPORTS.

21 (a) Reporting Conditions.—

22 (1) GIFTS, DONATIONS, OR CONTRIBUTIONS.—

23 (A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in
24 section 6, a covered entity that receives a gift,
25 donation, or contribution from a foreign prin-

	10
1	cipal during a calendar year in an aggregate
2	amount of \$10,000 or greater shall file a disclo-
3	sure report with the Attorney General in ac-
4	cordance with subsection (b) not later than 90
5	days after each disclosure date.
6	(B) DISCLOSURE DATE DEFINED.—In this
7	paragraph, the term "disclosure date" means—
8	(i) the first date during any calendar
9	year by which a covered entity has received
10	a gift, donation, or contribution from a
11	foreign principal in an aggregate amount
12	of \$10,000 or greater; and
13	(ii) any other date during such cal-
14	endar year by which a covered entity has
15	received a gift, donation, or contribution
16	from a foreign principal in an aggregate
17	amount of \$10,000 or greater since the
18	most recent disclosure date for such cal-
19	endar year.
20	(2) Contract, memorandum of under-
21	STANDING, OR AGREEMENT.—Except as provided in
22	section 6, a covered entity that enters into or modi-
23	fies a contract, memorandum of understanding, or
24	agreement with a foreign principal shall file a disclo-
25	sure report with the Attorney General in accordance

1	with subsection (b) within 90 days of the entering
2	into or modification of such contract, memorandum,
3	or agreement.
4	(b) Contents of Contemporaneous Disclosure
5	Report.—
6	(1) GIFTS, DONATIONS, OR CONTRIBUTIONS
7	ONLY.—The report required under subsection $(a)(1)$
8	shall detail the following:
9	(A) The identities of the foreign principal
10	and the primary point of contact of the foreign
11	principal for engaging with the covered entity,
12	including the name and title of such point of
13	contact.
14	(B) The date on which the foreign prin-
15	cipal provided a gift, donation, or contribution
16	to the covered entity.
17	(C) The aggregate dollar amount of such
18	gift, donation, or contribution attributable to a
19	particular foreign principal.
20	(D) A description of any conditions or re-
21	strictions regarding any of the disclosed gifts,
22	donations, or contributions.
23	(E) The aggregate amount of such gifts,
24	donations, or contributions received from each
25	foreign principal.

1	(F) A description of any decisions made
2	because of the foreign principal to the structure
3	of the organization or to the research, pro-
4	grams, or content intended to be or actually
5	published, disseminated, or promoted by the
6	covered entity.
7	(2) Contract, memorandum of under-
8	STANDING, OR AGREEMENT ONLY.—The report re-
9	quired under subsection $(a)(2)$ shall detail the fol-
10	lowing:
11	(A) The identities of the foreign principal
12	and the primary point of contact of the foreign
13	principal for engaging with the covered entity,
14	including the name and title of such point of
15	contact.
16	(B) The date on which the covered entity
17	entered into or modified a contract, memo-
18	randum of understanding, or agreement with a
19	foreign principal.
20	(C) Copies of all written contracts, agree-
21	ments, or memoranda of understanding the cov-
22	ered entity entered into or modified with any
23	foreign principal.
24	(D) Copies of all internal and external doc-
25	uments, research materials, and publications

produced as a result of the contract, memo randum of understanding, or agreement.
 (E) A description of any decisions made

because of the foreign principal to the structure
of the organization or to the research, programs, or content intended to be or actually
published, disseminated, or promoted by the
covered entity.

#### 9 SEC. 4. INITIAL DISCLOSURE REPORTS.

10 (a) IN GENERAL.—A covered entity shall file an ini-11 tial disclosure report, in accordance with subsections (b) 12 or (c), with the Attorney General not later than 180 days 13 after the date of enactment of this Act if, during the pe-14 riod beginning on January 1 of the most recent calendar 15 year that ended before the date of enactment of this Act 16 and ending on the effective date of this Act—

17 (1) the covered entity received a gift, donation,
18 or contribution from a foreign principal in an aggre19 gate amount of \$10,000 or greater;

20 (2) the covered entity entered into or modified
21 a contract, memorandum of understanding, or agree22 ment with a foreign principal; or

(3) the covered entity had previously entered
into a contract, agreement, or memorandum of understanding with a foreign principal that was still

1	valid or enforceable on or after January 1 of the						
2	most recent calendar year that ended before the date						
3	of enactment of this Act.						
4	(b) Prior Gifts, Donations, or Contribu-						
5	TIONS.—The report required under subsection $(a)(1)$ shall						
6	detail the following:						
7	(1) The name of the foreign principal.						
8	(2) The country of citizenship of the foreign						
9	principal.						
10	(3) The amount and date of such gifts, dona-						
11	tions, or contributions.						
12	(4) The description of any conditions or restric-						
13	tions attached to, or placed on, the gifts, donations,						
14	or contributions.						
15	(5) A description of any decisions made because						
16	of the foreign principal to the structure of the orga-						
17	nization or to the research, programs, or content in-						
18	tended to be or actually published, disseminated, or						
19	promoted by the covered entity.						
20	(c) Contract, Memorandum of Understanding,						
21	OR AGREEMENT.—The report required under subsection						
22	(a)(2) shall detail the following:						
23	(1) The name of the foreign principal.						
24	(2) The country of citizenship of the foreign						
25	principal.						

1	(3) Copies of each written contract, memo-						
2	randum of understanding, or agreement.						
3	(4) Any modification of each such written con-						
4	tract, memorandum, or agreement.						
5	(5) The terms and conditions of each oral						
6	agreement						
7	(6) Any modification of each such oral agree-						
8	ment.						
9	(7) A comprehensive statement of—						
10	(A) the nature and method of performance						
11	of each item described in paragraphs (3)						
12	through (6); and						
13	(B) the actions taken by the covered entity						
14	at the request or suggestion of each such for-						
15	eign principal.						
16	(8) A description of any decisions made because						
17	of the foreign principal to the structure of the orga-						
18	nization or to the research, programs, or content in-						
19	tended to be or actually published, disseminated, or						
	tended to be of actually published, disseminated, of						
20	promoted by the covered entity.						
20 21							
	promoted by the covered entity.						
21	promoted by the covered entity. SEC. 5. BRIEFINGS, TESTIMONY, OR SIMILAR FORMS OF						
21 22	promoted by the covered entity. SEC. 5. BRIEFINGS, TESTIMONY, OR SIMILAR FORMS OF PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH.						

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1 Congress, or to an executive branch official, the covered 2 entity shall identify prominently on any written materials 3 provided to the member or employee of Congress, or to 4 the executive branch official, the name of the relevant for-5 eign principal and the country of citizenship, if the foreign principal is not a government, who provided funding for 6 7 such briefing, testimony, or similar form of presentation 8 of research.

9 (b) Addendum to Briefing, Testimony, Presen-10 TATION.—In the event that no written materials are provided in a briefing, testimony, or similar form of presen-11 12 tation of research described in subsection (a), the covered 13 entity shall convey the information required under sub-14 section (a) in writing to the member or employee of Con-15 gress, or executive branch official, before or not later than 10 days after the date of the briefing, testimony, or pres-16 17 entation.

18 SEC. 6. RELATION TO OTHER REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.

19 (a) STATE REPORTS.—

(1) REQUIREMENTS OF A COVERED ENTITY.—
If a covered entity has its headquarters in a State
that has enacted requirements for public disclosure
of gifts, donations, or contributions from, or contracts or agreements with, a foreign principal that
are substantially similar to the requirements of this

Act, a copy of the disclosure report filed with that
 State may be filed with the Attorney General in lieu
 of a report required under this Act.

4 (2) REQUIREMENTS OF THE STATE.—The State 5 in which a covered entity has its headquarters shall 6 provide to the Attorney General such assurances as 7 the Attorney General may require to establish that 8 the covered entity has met the requirements for pub-9 lic disclosure under State law if the State-mandated 10 disclosure report is filed.

11 (b) FEDERAL REPORTS.—If a covered entity receives 12 a gift, donation, or contribution from, or enters into a con-13 tract or agreement with, a foreign principal, and if any other department, agency, or bureau of the executive 14 15 branch requires a report containing requirements substantially similar to those required under this Act, a copy of 16 17 the report may be filed with the Attorney General in lieu 18 of a report required under this Act.

#### 19 SEC. 7. ADMINISTRATION AND ENFORCEMENT.

20 (a) BOOKS AND RECORDS.—

(1) RETENTION PERIOD.—For a period of not
less than 5 years, a covered entity shall retain the
necessary materials required to comply with the requirements of this Act, including books of account,
all communications with any foreign principal, and

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other records regarding the activities of the covered
 entity related to any contracts, memorandum of un derstandings, or agreements with, or gifts, dona tions, or contributions from, a foreign principal.

5 (2) INSPECTION.—

6 (A) ATTORNEY GENERAL.—Upon request 7 of the Attorney General, each covered entity 8 shall furnish to the Attorney General all infor-9 mation and records in the possession of the cov-10 ered entity that the Attorney General may de-11 termine to be necessary to comply with the re-12 quirements under this Act.

13 (B) CONGRESS.—Upon request of Con-14 gress or a committee of Congress, a covered en-15 tity shall furnish to Congress or the relevant 16 committee of Congress such information and 17 records as Congress or the relevant committee 18 of Congress may request to determine the ex-19 tent to which the covered entity is in compli-20 ance with the requirements of this Act.

21 (3) PUBLICATION.—Any information or records
22 furnished pursuant to paragraph (2)(A) shall be
23 made available in the database required under sub24 section (b).

(4) PROHIBITION.—It shall be unlawful for any
 person willfully to conceal, destroy, obliterate, muti late, or falsify, or to attempt to conceal, destroy, ob literate, mutilate, or falsify, or to cause to be con cealed, destroyed, obliterated, mutilated, or falsified,
 any books or records required to be kept under the
 provisions of this section.

8 (b) PUBLICATION.—All disclosure reports required by 9 this Act and the information and records required to be 10 furnished pursuant to subsection (a)(2)(A) shall be made 11 available to the public through a database maintained on 12 the official website of the Department of Justice.

13 (c) CIVIL MONETARY PENALTY.—Any covered entity 14 that fails to comply with the requirements of this Act, in-15 cluding any rule or regulation promulgated thereunder, shall be subject, in addition to any other penalties that 16 17 may be prescribed by law, to a civil money penalty of not 18 less than \$1,000 for each day of the failure described by 19 this Act -- during which the covered entity is in violation 20 of this Act.

21 (d) CIVIL ACTION.—

(1) COURT ORDERS.—Whenever it appears that
a covered entity has failed to comply with the requirements of this Act, including any rule or regulation promulgated under this Act, a civil action may

be brought by the Attorney General in an appropriate district court of the United States, or the appropriate United States court of any territory or
other place subject to the jurisdiction of the United
States, to request such court to compel compliance
with the requirements of this Act.

7 (2) COSTS.—For knowing or willful failure to
8 comply with the requirements of this Act, including
9 any rule or regulation promulgated thereunder, a
10 covered entity shall pay to the Treasury of the
11 United States the full costs to the United States of
12 obtaining compliance, including all associated costs
13 of investigation and enforcement.

(e) REGULATIONS.—The Attorney General may promulgate such regulations as the Attorney General considers necessary to implement the requirements of this
Act.

- 18 SEC. 8. DEFINITIONS.
- 19 In this Act:

(1) CONDUCT INTENDING TO DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY INFLUENCE PUBLIC POLICY OR PUBLIC
OPINION.—The term "conduct intending to directly
or indirectly to influence public policy or public opinion" means, with respect to a covered entity, any activity that the covered entity engaging in believes

1	will, or that the covered entity intends to, in any
2	way influence any agency or official of the Govern-
3	ment of the United States, or any section of the
4	public within the United States, with respect to—
5	(A) formulating, adopting, or changing the
6	domestic or foreign policies of the United
7	States; or
8	(B) the political or public interests, poli-
9	cies, or relations of a government of a foreign
10	country or a foreign political party.
11	(2) CONTRACT.—The term "contract" means
12	any agreement for the acquisition by purchase, lease,
13	or barter of property or services by the foreign prin-
14	cipal, for the direct benefit or use of either of the
15	parties.
16	(3) Country of citizenship.—The term
17	"country of citizenship", with respect to a foreign
18	principal, includes—
19	(A) the principal residence for a foreign
20	principal who is a natural person; or
21	(B) the country of incorporation or the
22	principal place of business for a foreign prin-
23	cipal which is a legal entity.
24	(4) COVERED ENTITY.—The term "covered en-
25	tity"—

1	(A) means a nonprofit organization or a
2	not-for-profit social welfare organization that—
3	(i) spends more than 20 percent of
4	the resources of the organization within
5	any given calendar year on conduct intend-
6	ing to directly or indirectly influence public
7	policy or public opinion; or
8	(ii) is affiliated with, or is a subunit,
9	of an institution , as defined in section 117
10	of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20
11	U.S.C. 1011f), that is subject to that sec-
12	tion and that—
13	(I) engages in or publishes sub-
14	stantial policy-related research or
15	scholarship; or
16	(II) hosts, sponsors, or otherwise
17	promotes annual, or on a more fre-
18	quent basis, events featuring report-
19	ers, journalists, or United States or
20	foreign government officials; and
21	(B) excludes—
22	(i) an "institution", as defined in sec-
23	tion 117 of the Higher Education Act of
24	1965 (20 U.S.C. 1011f), that is subject to
25	that section; and

1	(ii) an entity organized and operated
2	exclusively for religious purposes.
3	(5) FOREIGN PRINCIPAL.—The term "foreign
4	principal" includes—
5	(A) a government of a foreign country or
6	a foreign political party;
7	(B) a person outside of the United States,
8	unless it is established that—
9	(i) the person is an individual and a
10	citizen of the United States; or
11	(ii) the person—
12	(I) is not an individual and is or-
13	ganized under or created by the laws
14	of the United States or of any State
15	or other place subject to the jurisdic-
16	tion of the United States; and
17	(II) has its principal place of
18	business within the United States;
19	and
20	(C) a partnership, association, corporation,
21	organization, or other combination of persons
22	organized under the laws of or having its prin-
23	cipal place of business in a foreign country.
24	(6) GIFT, DONATION, OR CONTRIBUTION.—The
25	term "gift, donation, or contribution" means any

gift of money, property, or in-kind contribution given
 directly or indirectly to a covered entity by a foreign
 principal.

4 (7) NOT-FOR-PROFIT SOCIAL WELFARE ORGANI5 ZATION.—The term "not-for-profit social welfare or6 ganization" means an organization described in sec7 tion 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986
8 and exempt from tax under section 501(a) of such
9 Code.

10 (8) NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION.—The term
11 "nonprofit organization" means an organization de12 scribed in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue
13 Code of 1986 and exempt from tax under section
14 501(a) of such Code.

(9) RESTRICTED OR CONDITIONAL GIFT OR
CONTRACT.—The term "restricted or conditional gift
or contract" means any endowment, gift, grant, contract, award, present, or property of any kind that
includes provisions regarding—

20 (A) the employment, assignment, com21 pensation, or termination of researchers, schol22 ars, or experts;

23 (B) the earmarking of funds for depart24 ments, centers, research or lecture programs, or

1	new	positions	for	researchers,	scholars,	or	ex-
2	perts	8;					

3 (C) the subject matter, nature, or contents
4 of research, analysis or any information pub5 lished or disseminated to officials of the United
6 States Federal Government, the media, or the
7 public; or

8 (D) any other condition or expectation re-9 garding either the ability of the foreign prin-10 cipal to review in advance, approve, veto, or 11 modify budgets, programs, events, or presen-12 tations, or the contents of information or mate-13 rials to be published or disseminated.

### 14 SEC. 9. EFFECTIVE DATE.

15 This Act shall take effect on the date that is 120 days16 after the date of enactment of this Act.