



Co-Sponsor the State Department Diversity and Inclusion Act! (H.R. 4589) (House legislation only)

Our Request To Lawmakers

For Your House of Representatives Meetings:

- [Use this link](#) to see if your Rep is a co-sponsor of H.R. 4589
- If your Rep is a co-sponsor, say thank you! If they are not, ask them to become a co-sponsor of H.R. 4589

Background

- This legislation (H.R. 4589) was introduced on July 21, 2021 by Congressman Joaquin Castro (D-TX), a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee.
- As of March 10, 2022, 48 members of the House are co-sponsors of the legislation. At this time, all of the co-sponsors are Democrats.
- Read this [press release](#) from Congressman Castro about this legislation.

Content of the Legislation

This is the text of [H.R. 4589](#). H.R. 4589 would do the following:

- **Senior Level Position:** H.R. 4589 establishes the senior level position of Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer (the officer) to advocate for diversity within the State Department.
- **Strategic Planning:** The work of the officer would include developing, implementing, and updating a diversity and inclusion strategic plan of the Department of State to eliminate barriers to the recruitment, promotion, and retention of traditionally underrepresented groups and to promote the implementation of diversity and inclusion practices and policies throughout the Department.
- **Goal Setting:** The officer would establish criteria and goals for individual State Department offices and bureaus regarding assignments of personnel, in coordination with the Director General of the Foreign Service, to promote diversity and inclusion at

the Department of State, and conduct annual reviews of individual bureaus on their actions taken to satisfy such criteria and goals.

- **Seat at the Table:** The officer would serve as a permanent member of any departmental committees responsible for the selection of chiefs of mission and deputy chiefs of mission. The officer would have a rank equivalent to an Assistant Secretary of State.
- **Leadership Council:** This bill also establishes the Diversity and Inclusion Leadership Council within the State Department, accountable for implementing diversity and inclusion initiatives.
- **Opportunity:** H.R. 4589 changes promotion practices to improve retention and fairness, establishes a formal mentoring program for civil and foreign service members, and expands offerings of the Senior Executive Service Candidate Development Program.
- **Mentorship:** H.R. 4589 would establish a State Department mentorship program.

Key Talking Points

- **Diversity Makes Us Stronger – Quotes:** Former Kansas Republican Senator and Governor Sam Brownback is quoted as saying “A democracy thrives on diversity. Tyranny oppresses it.” The Reverend Jesse Jackson is quoted as saying “Inclusion is not a matter of political correctness. It is the key to growth.” And, historian Doris Kearns Goodwin notes that “Good leadership requires you to surround yourself with people of diverse perspectives who can disagree with you without fear of retaliation.”
- **U.S. Representation Overseas:** Our diplomats and foreign service officers can be found in virtually every nation around the world, representing the United States of America. As the nations of the world reflect the diversity of our planet, our representatives overseas only benefit international relations if they similarly reflect our own diversity.
- **Progress in the Peace Corps:** In recent briefings with staff of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, the Peace Corps has received high praise for its current diversity initiatives. During an October 27, 2021 hearing, committee chairman Gregory Meeks stated “I understand...that the Peace Corps has instituted this robust program that you’ve talked about in your opening statement, intercultural competence, diversity, equity, and inclusion, and that you’ve been leading these efforts. You know, and you probably, from my examination, are ahead of a lot of other agencies”.
- **Sustained Diversity Requires Intentionality:** The Peace Corps’ 2022 Strategic Plan will include a robust strategy to advance diversity and inclusion that is intentional. H.R. 4589 puts forth important, structural steps that would similarly advance intentional diversity and inclusion.
- **Other Groups Endorse this Legislation:** A number of organizations engaged in our foreign policy endorse this legislation, including the American Foreign Service Association; the Truman National Security Project; Women of Color Advancing Peace, Security, and Conflict Transformation; and Foreign Policy for America.
- **Share Your Story:** If you have a brief story to share that is representative of the importance of reflecting the diversity of our nation in our service overseas, please be sure to incorporate the story into your talking points.