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PEACE CORPS IMPROVEMENT AND EXPANSION ACT
OF 2010

JUNE 29, 2010.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. KERRY, from the Committee on Foreign Relations,
submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany S. 1382]

The Committee on Foreign Relations, having had under consideration the bill (S. 1382) to improve and expand the Peace Corps for the 21st century, and for other purposes, reports favorably thereon with an amendment in the nature of a substitute and recommends that the bill do pass.

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I. PURPOSE

The purpose of S. 1382 is to authorize funding for the Peace Corps and improve and expand the Peace Corps for the 21st century.

II. COMMITTEE ACTION

S.1382 was introduced by Senator Dodd on June 25, 2009, and has 14 cosponsors.

In the last year, the committee held two nomination hearings that focused on issues addressed in this legislation. On July 29, 2009, the committee held a hearing on the nomination of Aaron Williams to be Director of the Peace Corps and on March 11, 2010,

the committee held a hearing on the nomination of Carolyn Hessler Radelet to be Deputy Director of the Peace Corps. In considering new leadership for the Peace Corps in these hearings, the committee discussed some of the policy choices related to expanding and strengthening the Peace Corps that underlie the funding and the authorities contained in this legislation.

On April 13, 2010, the committee considered S. 1382 and ordered it reported, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute, by voice vote.

III. DISCUSSION

S. 1382, the Peace Corps Improvement and Expansion Act of 2010, outlines some of the Committee on Foreign Relations' major priorities and concerns for the Peace Corps as the agency goes into its 50th year of existence. The last time the U.S. Congress passed authorizing legislation for the Peace Corps was in 1999, and that authorization ran through 2003. While the Peace Corps has seen significant growth in recent years, the agency is set to grow even more in the coming years and the committee seeks to ensure that Peace Corps grows with the necessary strategic focus. This legislation promotes that aim by supporting increased volunteer numbers, recruitment efforts and entry of Peace Corps into new countries, while also mandating important reporting initiatives.

Founded in 1961, the Peace Corps strives to promote world peace and friendship by sending American volunteers to serve at the grassroots level in villages and towns in all corners of the globe. The Peace Corps provides practical assistance to developing countries by having volunteers contribute in a variety of capacities—including as teachers, environmental specialists, health promoters, and small business advisors—to improve the lives of those they serve and to help others understand American culture.

Nearly 200,000 Americans have served as Peace Corps volunteers in 139 countries since the agency's establishment, and about 7,851 volunteers currently serve in 76 countries.

Today, the importance and necessity is greater than ever for the Peace Corps to promote global economic and social development; to promote understanding and friendship; and to foster collaboration with nongovernmental organizations (NGOs).

The three goals of the Peace Corps have not changed since the Agency's founding. They remain:

1. To help the people of interested countries in meeting their need for trained men and women.
2. To help promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the peoples served.
3. To help promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans.

As the Peace Corps reaches its 50th anniversary in 2010, this legislation seeks to improve the Peace Corps so that the Agency will be able to better achieve these worthy goals.

The Peace Corps has been the recipient of a dramatic increase in funding in recent years, with a rising budget of \$340 million in FY 2009, \$400 million in FY 2010, and a budget request of \$446 million for FY 2011. This significant increase in budget requires thoughtful expenditure to ensure productive and sustainable

growth. This growth must be strategic and done with serious consideration for the safety, training, and support of volunteers.

An ongoing area of concern for the committee has been how the Peace Corps chooses to expand. Namely, does the Peace Corps choose to expand the number of host countries where volunteers serve or does it add volunteers to programs in existing host countries? The committee recognizes that there are tradeoffs in this decisionmaking, but calls for the Peace Corps to report on strategies for distributing volunteers to countries in which they have maximum value-added for the host country, for the United States, and for volunteers themselves. Equally, the committee intends for the Peace Corps to systematically identify countries with strategic value to Peace Corps goals—including new countries and countries with dormant programs—and to identify countries where Peace Corps is currently active where it may make sense to close the program.

Another area of emphasis for the committee is the so-called “third goal” of the Peace Corps, namely “to promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans.” It is the committee’s view that this goal has not been given enough priority in recent years by the Peace Corps, and the committee supports the recent increase in funding given to “third-goal” initiatives. Returned Peace Corps volunteers are often the loudest advocates for the Peace Corps as an agency as well as trustworthy ambassadors who can bring ideas and perspectives gained internationally to family, colleagues, friends, and others in the United States. The Peace Corps should strive to find ways to keep returned Peace Corps volunteers involved in the agency, involved in public service either in the United States or internationally, and involved in promoting the messages of understanding, world peace, and friendship. The experience of being a Peace Corps Volunteer should not end after the 2-year international tour of duty.

A further area of concern is the prospect for partnerships with international and host country nongovernmental organizations and other entities. Within the traditional Peace Corps grassroots and community-based model of involvement, the committee is supportive of the Peace Corps exploring additional partnerships with local NGOs and community-based organizations. Involvement with such organizations can help promote continuity of programs in communities beyond the 2-year service of Peace Corps Volunteers. Such an approach is also consistent with the promotion of community-ownership of development, a principle which the committee supports wholeheartedly.

Another area of committee interest considered in this bill is that of volunteer recruitment, selection, and placement. While volunteer applications have increased dramatically, the volunteer corps will need to be greatly expanded if the Peace Corps is to achieve its targeted growth. Within this expansion, the committee would like to ensure that the Peace Corps recruits effectively and efficiently from a diverse pool of candidates—including ethnically, socioeconomically and geographically. Equally important, Peace Corps recruits must have the skills necessary for the job for which they are applying, and Peace Corps must provide adequate training to improve those skills, including country familiarization and language training. The committee also emphasizes the importance of human

resources and management support for volunteers, including access to adequate medical care and confidential methods of providing feedback to management including whistleblower protection. Finally, the committee underscores that volunteer safety must be a top priority and expects the Peace Corps to stringently review safety precautions for volunteers and to devote adequate resources and training for safety concerns.

Section 3 of S. 1382, The Peace Corps Improvement and Expansion Act of 2010, addresses many of the above concerns by requiring the Director of the Peace Corps to complete a thorough assessment, not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of the Act, to determine how best to strengthen the management capabilities and program effectiveness of the Peace Corps; to expand opportunities for Peace Corps volunteers; and to increase the size of the Peace Corps.

Specifically, the Act requires the Director's assessment to consider the program model of the Peace Corps; current and future distribution of Peace Corps volunteers throughout the world; partnership opportunities and operations of the Peace Corps; and recruitment, training, and management practices of the Peace Corps.

The legislation also calls on the Director of the Peace Corps to develop a strategic plan based upon the findings of this assessment within 180 days of the enactment of this Act. This strategic plan should include 1-year and 5-year goals and benchmarks as well as strategies for distributing volunteers to countries and consideration of ways to maintain Peace Corps independence while still remaining relevant to broader U.S. foreign policy goals.

Section 4 of the legislation expresses a Sense of Congress that the President should not make more than 15 concurrent appointments under the Peace Corps Act.

Finally, Section 5 of the legislation amends Section 3(b)(1) of the Peace Corps Act to authorize to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of the Peace Corps Act.

IV. COST ESTIMATE

APRIL 28, 2010.

Hon. JOHN F. KERRY,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the enclosed cost estimate for S. 1382, the Peace Corps Improvement and Expansion Act of 2010.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them. The CBO staff contact is John Chin.

Sincerely,

DOUGLAS W. ELMENDORF,
Director.

Enclosure.

S. 1382—The Peace Corps Improvement and Expansion Act of 2010

S. 1382 would indefinitely authorize the appropriation of such sums as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of the Peace Corps. In 2010, the Congress appropriated \$400 million for the Peace Corps; the President has requested \$446 million for the

Peace Corps for 2011. CBO expects that funding in subsequent years would increase pursuant to the President's initiative to increase the number of Peace Corps volunteers serving abroad from over 7,600 today to 9,400 by the end of 2012 and 11,000 by the end of 2016. On that basis, CBO estimates that implementing the bill would cost about \$2.5 billion over the 2011–2015 period, assuming that the estimated amounts are appropriated and that outlays follow historical spending patterns for Peace Corps programs.

The estimated budgetary impact of S. 1382 is shown in the following table. The costs of this legislation fall within budget function 150 (international affairs).

	By fiscal year, in millions of dollars					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2011-2015
CHANGES IN SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION ^a						
Estimated Authorization Level	446	524	536	576	621	2,703
Estimated Outlays	335	493	525	561	605	2,519

^aThe Congress appropriated \$400 million for the Peace Corps for fiscal year 2010, enacted in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2010 (Public Law 111-117) on December 16, 2009. CBO assumes no additional funding will be provided for the Peace Corps for this year.

Enacting S. 1382 would not affect direct spending or revenues; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures would not apply. S. 1382 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would not affect the budgets of state, local, or tribal governments.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is John Chin. This estimate was approved by Theresa Gullo, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

V. EVALUATION OF REGULATORY IMPACT

Pursuant to Rule XXVI, paragraph 11(b) of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the committee has determined that there is no regulatory impact as a result of this legislation.

VI. CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW

In compliance with Rule XXVI, paragraph 12 of the Standing Rules of the Senate, changes in existing law made by the bill, as reported, are shown as follows (existing law proposed to be omitted is enclosed in black brackets, new matter is printed in italic, existing law in which no change is proposed is shown in roman).

FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1961

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TITLE 22—FOREIGN RELATIONS AND INTERCOURSE

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Chapter 32—Foreign Assistance

Subchapter I—International Development

PART I—.DECLARATION OF POLICY; DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE AUTHORIZATIONS

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THE PEACE CORPS ACT**SEC. 2502. PRESIDENTIAL AUTHORIZATION; APPROPRIATIONS AND FINANCIAL READJUSTMENTS.**

(a) TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF AUTHORIZATION.—The President is authorized to carry out programs in furtherance of the purposes of this chapter, on such terms and conditions as he may determine.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—(1) There **[**are authorized to be appropriated to carry out the purposes of this chapter \$270,000,000 for fiscal year 2000, \$298,000,000 for fiscal year 2001, \$327,000,000 for fiscal year 2002, and \$365,000,000 for fiscal year 2003.**]** *is authorized to be appropriated to carry out the purposes of this chapter such sums as may be necessary for such purposes.*

(2) Amounts authorized to be appropriated under paragraph (1) for a fiscal year are authorized to remain available for that fiscal year and the subsequent fiscal year.