

110TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 2609

To establish a Global Service Fellowship Program, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 7 (legislative day, FEBRUARY 6), 2008

Mr. FEINGOLD (for himself, Mr. COLEMAN, Mr. CASEY, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. KERRY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. VOINOVICH) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

A BILL

To establish a Global Service Fellowship Program, 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 “Global Service Fellow-
5 ship Program Act of 2008”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress makes the following findings:

8 (1) Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has
9 said that a critical component of the war on terror
10 is changing opinions and minds.

1 (2) Polling data from Terror Free Tomorrow
2 indicates that nearly 60 percent of the people of In-
3 donesia and 75 percent of the people of Pakistan
4 held more favorable views of the United States fol-
5 lowing humanitarian assistance after their tsunami
6 and earthquake tragedies, respectively, and these
7 changes in perception of the United States were sus-
8 tained beyond the initial period of aid and service.

9 (3) International volunteering opportunities are
10 effective means of addressing critical human needs,
11 building bridges across cultures, and promoting mu-
12 tual understanding.

13 (4) Current volunteer programs, such as the
14 Peace Corps, remain an important part of Federal
15 efforts to promote volunteer service and provide re-
16 lated programming.

17 (5) Financial limitations are a common obstacle
18 to volunteering overseas, and awarding financial fel-
19 lowships would reduce barriers for many individuals
20 otherwise unable to afford travel overseas.

21 (6) Allowing flexibility in the duration of volun-
22 teering opportunities would reduce another barrier
23 to volunteering.

24 (7) A global service fellowship program would
25 provide funding and programmatic flexibility for vol-

1 unteers of all backgrounds, ages, and geographical
2 locations.

3 (8) Eligible organizations willing to participate
4 in the fellowship program as sponsoring organiza-
5 tions would be in a better position to recruit volun-
6 teers for their programs overseas.

7 (9) The United States Agency for International
8 Development has taken important steps towards en-
9 couraging this kind of a program through the cre-
10 ation of Volunteers for Prosperity.

11 **SEC. 3. GLOBAL SERVICE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM.**

12 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of State, in
13 conjunction with the Administrator of the United States
14 Agency for International Development, shall establish a
15 program to be known as the Global Service Fellowship
16 Program (in this section referred to as the “Program”),
17 which will be administered by the United States Agency
18 for International Development.

19 (b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the Program is to
20 fund fellowships to promote international volunteering op-
21 portunities as a means of building bridges across cultures,
22 addressing critical human needs, and promoting mutual
23 understanding.

24 (c) FELLOWSHIPS.—Grants awarded under the Pro-
25 gram shall be used to fund fellowships as follows:

1 (1) Fellowships lasting 90 days or less in dura-
2 tion may be funded at levels of up to \$2,500.

3 (2) Fellowships lasting between 91 days and
4 180 days may be funded at levels up to \$5,000.

5 (3) Fellowships lasting between 181 days and
6 one year may be funded at levels up to \$7,500.

7 (d) COORDINATION WITH SPONSORING ORGANIZA-
8 TIONS.—

9 (1) IN GENERAL.—Fellowships funded under
10 the Program shall be coordinated and supervised by
11 participating volunteer sponsoring organizations.
12 The sponsoring organizations shall be registered
13 with the Secretary of State and shall collaborate
14 with host country organizations in developing pro-
15 grams that appropriately address local needs for the
16 transfer of volunteer skills, capacity building, and
17 cross-cultural service organizations.

18 (2) PRIORITIZATION OF PROJECTS.—Spon-
19 soring organizations shall recommend and prioritize
20 fellowship projects based on one or more of the fol-
21 lowing objectives:

22 (A) Eradication of extreme poverty in con-
23 junction with the United Nations Millennium
24 Development Goals.

1 (B) Achievement of universal primary edu-
2 cation.

3 (C) Promotion of gender equality and the
4 empowerment of women and families.

5 (D) Reducing child mortality and improv-
6 ing maternal health.

7 (E) Providing medical and dental health
8 care and prevention.

9 (F) Providing assistance for the elderly,
10 orphans, people with disabilities, and refugees.

11 (G) Promoting environmental sustain-
12 ability.

13 (H) Providing economic and social oppor-
14 tunities for youth in countries with growing co-
15 horts of young people.

16 (I) Promoting youth service by building re-
17 lated volunteer-sector capacity in host countries.

18 (J) Combating HIV/AIDS, malaria, and
19 other infectious diseases.

20 (K) Helping to build or provide decent
21 housing.

22 (L) Providing disaster and humanitarian
23 response, preparedness, and reconstruction.

24 (M) Promoting cross-cultural exchange,
25 conflict resolution, and peace.

1 (N) Developing global partnerships for de-
2 velopment in the areas of economic growth,
3 microenterprise, asset development, and agricul-
4 tural and rural development.

5 (O) Advancing access to information tech-
6 nology and strengthening civil society.

7 (P) Carrying out additional activities in
8 impact areas designated by the Secretary of
9 State and the Administrator of the United
10 States Agency for International Development in
11 accordance with the purposes of this Act.

12 (e) APPLICATION PROCESS.—

13 (1) SUBMISSION AND REVIEW OF APPLICA-
14 TIONS.—Applicants shall submit applications for fel-
15 lowships under the Program to the Administrator of
16 the United States Agency for International Develop-
17 ment.

18 (2) SELECTION.—The Secretary of State, in
19 consultation with the Administrator of the United
20 States Agency for International Development, shall
21 determine the eligibility of candidates and, in con-
22 sultation with sponsoring organizations, award and
23 administer fellowships under the Program.

24 (3) CRITERIA.—The Secretary of State, in con-
25 sultation with the Administrator of the United

1 States Agency for International Development, shall
2 develop and publish criteria for fellowships in ac-
3 cordance with the following guidelines:

4 (A) SPONSORING ORGANIZATIONS.—Appli-
5 cants for Global Service Fellowships must be
6 registered with qualified sponsoring organiza-
7 tions such as—

8 (i) nongovernmental organizations
9 based in the United States that sponsor
10 international volunteer service;

11 (ii) faith-based organizations engaged
12 in the delivery of nonsectarian services;

13 (iii) universities and colleges operating
14 international service learning and volunteer
15 service programs; and

16 (iv) nongovernmental organizations
17 based in the United States that collaborate
18 with local or national host government
19 agencies or nongovernmental organizations
20 in promoting volunteer capacity and na-
21 tional and community service in impact
22 areas designated by the Secretary of State
23 and the Administrator of the United States
24 Agency for International Development
25 under subsection (d)(2)(P).

1 (B) APPLICANTS.—Applicants shall be se-
2 lected for Global Service Fellowships as follows:

3 (i) Applicants shall have clearly de-
4 fined and structured goals for their pro-
5 posed fellowships, including a plan for as-
6 sessing and monitoring progress toward
7 such goals with sponsoring organizations
8 and a basis for follow-up and review by the
9 Secretary of State, in conjunction with the
10 Administrator of the United States Agency
11 for International Development.

12 (ii) Priority should be given to—

13 (I) applicants from households
14 with an income that is less than 200
15 percent of the poverty level estab-
16 lished pursuant to current census fig-
17 ures;

18 (II) applicants who have dem-
19 onstrated prior community service ex-
20 perience;

21 (III) applicants with skills and
22 experience suited to the specific needs
23 of host countries;

24 (IV) applicants who demonstrate
25 a clear plan to communicate their vol-

1 unteer experiences to their community
2 upon their return; and

3 (V) applicants whose physical
4 residence would ensure a diverse geo-
5 graphical distribution of awardees
6 across the United States.

7 (f) REPORTING REQUIREMENT.—

8 (1) NOTIFICATION OF AWARDS.—The Secretary
9 of State and the Administrator of the United States
10 Agency for International Development shall jointly
11 notify Members of Congress of the decision to award
12 a fellowship to their constituents at least 2 business
13 days prior to notification to the awardee. Members
14 of Congress may choose to notify the constituent of
15 the award upon receiving such notification.

16 (2) PROJECT SUMMARIES.—Individuals receiv-
17 ing Global Service Fellowships shall notify their
18 Members of Congress of their intended travel dates
19 and provide project summaries prior to their depar-
20 tures.

21 (3) REPORTS.—Not later than 90 days after re-
22 turning from their Global Service Fellowships, fel-
23 lows shall submit such reports as the Secretary of
24 State, in conjunction with the Administrator of the
25 United States Agency for International Develop-

1 ment, may require, including post-fellowship reports
2 prepared for their home communities, to the Sec-
3 retary of State, the Administrator of the United
4 States Agency for International Development, and
5 their congressional representatives.

6 (g) ELIGIBLE COSTS.—

7 (1) IN GENERAL.—Funds awarded under this
8 section may be used to cover the following costs as-
9 sociated with Global Service Fellowships:

10 (A) Airfare, accommodations, and trans-
11 portation within the host country.

12 (B) Fees assessed by sponsoring organiza-
13 tions to defray international service program
14 costs and administrative costs.

15 (C) Subsistence allowance in accordance
16 with local market conditions.

17 (D) Program materials and tools used for
18 service-related purposes.

19 (E) Seed funding for local service projects.

20 (F) Language and cultural training and
21 other costs associated with pre-service project
22 orientation.

23 (2) TUITION NOT COVERED.—Funds awarded
24 under this section may not be used for tuition costs.

25 (h) NONDISCRIMINATION REQUIREMENTS.—

1 (1) SELECTION OF APPLICANTS.—The selection
2 of applicants under subsection (e) shall be without
3 regard to race, religion, color, national origin, sex,
4 age, political affiliation, sexual orientation, or dis-
5 ability.

6 (2) SPONSORING ORGANIZATIONS.—

7 (A) IN GENERAL.—A sponsoring organiza-
8 tion shall not discriminate against a Global
9 Service Fellowship Program participant or ap-
10 plicant, a beneficiary of any project in which a
11 Global Service Fellow participates, or, except as
12 provided in subparagraph (B), an employee of
13 the organization who is paid with Program
14 funds on the basis of race, religion, color, na-
15 tional origin, sex, age, political affiliation, sex-
16 ual orientation, or disability.

17 (B) LIMITED EXCEPTION FOR EMPLOYEES
18 OF SPONSORING ORGANIZATIONS EMPLOYED AT
19 TIME OF AWARDING OF FUNDS.—The prohibi-
20 tion under subparagraph (A) on discrimination
21 on the basis of religion shall not apply to the
22 employment, with assistance provided under
23 this Program, of any employee who was em-
24 ployed with the sponsoring organization on the
25 date that the funds were awarded.

1 **SEC. 4. EVALUATION AND REPORT.**

2 (a) **EVALUATION OF GLOBAL SERVICE FELLOWSHIP**
3 **PROGRAM.**—The Secretary of State, in conjunction with
4 the Administrator of the United States Agency for Inter-
5 national Development, shall establish and implement an
6 evaluation process for determining the effectiveness of the
7 Global Service Fellowship Program.

8 (b) **REPORT.**—Not later than March 31, 2011, the
9 Secretary of State, in conjunction with the Administrator
10 of the United States Agency for International Develop-
11 ment, shall submit to Congress a report on the Global
12 Service Fellowships Program established under section 3.
13 The report shall describe—

14 (1) the identity and location of sponsoring orga-
15 nizations;

16 (2) for each impact issue areas identified by
17 sponsoring organizations, the number of volunteer
18 opportunities and the number of related Global Serv-
19 ice Fellowships that have been funded;

20 (3) the number of local volunteers recruited or
21 engaged with Global Service Fellows and their spon-
22 soring organizations or local host organizations;

23 (4) the locations of volunteer services;

24 (5) the effectiveness of such services based upon
25 findings of the evaluation process; and

1 (6) the total numbers of applications for Global
2 Service Fellowships that have been received and ac-
3 cepted to the Program.

4 **SEC. 5. FELLOWSHIPS EXCLUDED FROM GROSS INCOME.**

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—Part III of subchapter B of chap-
6 ter 1 of subtitle A of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986
7 (relating to items specifically excluded from gross income)
8 is amended by inserting after section 139A the following
9 new section:

10 **“SEC. 139B. GLOBAL SERVICE FELLOWSHIPS.**

11 “Gross income does not include amounts received
12 under the Global Service Fellowship Program (within the
13 meaning of section 3 of the Global Service Fellowship Pro-
14 gram Act of 2008).”.

15 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections
16 at the beginning of such part is amended by inserting after
17 the item relating to section 139A the following new item:

 “Sec. 139B. Global Services Fellowships.”.

18 (c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by
19 this section shall apply to taxable years ending after the
20 date of the enactment of this Act.

21 **SEC. 6. REGULATIONS.**

22 The Secretary of State shall prescribe regulations to
23 carry out the provisions of this Act.

1 **SEC. 7. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

2 (a) **FUNDING.**—There is authorized to be appro-
3 priated to the Secretary of State \$50,000,000 for each of
4 fiscal years 2009 through 2011 for purposes of estab-
5 lishing and implementing the Global Service Fellowship
6 Program.

7 (b) **OFFSET.**—In order to provide an offset for
8 amounts appropriated pursuant to subsection (a), the In-
9 ternal Revenue Service shall deposit in the Treasury as
10 miscellaneous receipts all of the fees it receives for serv-
11 ices.

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