IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. DODD introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on ________________________________

A BILL

To amend the Peace Corps Act to promote global acceptance of the principles of international peace and nonviolent coexistence among peoples of diverse cultures and systems of government, 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,
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4 SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.
5 This Act may be cited as the “Peace Corps Charter for the 21st Century Act”.
6
7 SEC. 2. FINDINGS.
8 Congress makes the following findings:
1. The Peace Corps was established in 1961 to promote world peace and friendship through the service of American volunteers abroad.

2. The three goals codified in the Peace Corps Act which have guided the Peace Corps and its volunteers over the years, can work in concert to promote global acceptance of the principles of international peace and nonviolent coexistence among peoples of diverse cultures and systems of government.

3. The Peace Corps has operated in 135 countries with 165,000 Peace Corps volunteers since its establishment.

4. The Peace Corps has sought to fulfill three goals, as follows: to help people in developing nations meet basic needs, to promote understanding of America’s values and ideals abroad, and to promote an understanding of other peoples by Americans.

5. After more than 40 years of operation, the Peace Corps remains the world’s premier international service organization dedicated to promoting grassroots development.

6. The Peace Corps remains committed to sending well trained and well supported Peace Corps
volunteers overseas to promote world peace, friendship, and grassroots development.

(7) The Peace Corps is an independent agency, and therefore no Peace Corps personnel or volunteers should have any relationship with any United States intelligence agency or be used to accomplish any other goal than the goals established by the Peace Corps Act.

(8) The Crisis Corps has been an effective tool in harnessing the skills and talents for returned Peace Corps volunteers and should be expanded to utilize to the maximum extent the pool of talent from the returned Peace Corps volunteer community.

(9) The Peace Corps is currently operating with an annual budget of $275,000,000 in 70 countries with 7,000 Peace Corps volunteers.

(10) There is deep misunderstanding and misinformation about American values and ideals in many parts of the world, particularly those with substantial Muslim populations, and a greater Peace Corps presence in such places could foster greater understanding and tolerance of those countries.
(11) Congress has declared that the Peace Corps should be expanded to sponsor a minimum of 10,000 Peace Corps volunteers.

(12) President George W. Bush has called for the doubling of the number of Peace Corps volunteers in service in a fiscal year to 15,000 volunteers in service by the end of fiscal year 2007.

(13) Any expansion of the Peace Corps shall not jeopardize the quality of the Peace Corps volunteer experience, and therefore can only be accomplished by an appropriate increase in field and headquarters support staff.

(14) It would be extremely useful for the Peace Corps to establish an office of strategic planning to evaluate existing programs and undertake long-term planning in order to facilitate the orderly expansion of the Peace Corps from its current size to the stated objective of 15,000 volunteers in the field by the end of fiscal year 2007.

(15) The Peace Corps would benefit from the advice and council of a streamlined bipartisan National Peace Corps Advisory Council composed of distinguished returned Peace Corps volunteers.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:
(1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term “appropriate congressional committees” means the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on International Relations of the House of Representatives.

(2) DIRECTOR.—The term “Director” means the Director of the Peace Corps.

(3) PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEER.—The term “Peace Corps volunteer” means a volunteer or a volunteer leader under the Peace Corps Act.

(4) RETURNED PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEER.—The term “returned Peace Corps volunteer” means a person who has been certified by the Director as having served satisfactorily as a Peace Corps volunteer.

SEC. 4. RESTATEMENT OF INDEPENDENCE OF THE PEACE CORPS.

Section 2A of the Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2501–1) is amended by adding at the end the following new sentence: “As an independent agency, all recruiting of volunteers shall be undertaken solely by the Peace Corps.”.

SEC. 5. REPORTS TO CONGRESS.

(a) CONSULTATIONS AND REPORTS CONCERNING NEW INITIATIVES.—Section 11 of the Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2510) is amended—
(1) by inserting “(a) ANNUAL REPORTS.—” immediately before “The President shall transmit”;
and

(2) by adding at the end thereof the following:

“(b) CONSULTATIONS AND REPORTS ON NEW INITIATIVES.—Thirty days prior to implementing any new initiative, the Director shall consult with the Peace Corps National Advisory Council established in section 12 and shall submit to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on International Relations of the House of Representatives a report describing the objectives that such initiative is intended to fulfill, an estimate of any costs that may be incurred as a result of the initiative, and an estimate of any impact on existing programs, including the impact on the safety of volunteers under this Act”.

(b) COUNTRY SECURITY REPORTS.—Section 11 of the Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2510), as amended by subsection (a), is further amended by adding at the end the following:

“(c) COUNTRY SECURITY REPORTS.—The Director of the Peace Corps shall submit to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on International Relations of the House of Representatives a report annually on the status of security procedures in any
country in which the Peace Corps operates programs or is considering doing so. Each report shall include recommenda-
tions when appropriate as to whether security conditions would be enhanced by colocating volunteers with international or local nongovernmental organizations, or with the placement of multiple volunteers in one location.”.

(c) REPORT ON STUDENT LOAN FORGIVENESS PRO-
GRAMS.—Not later than 30 days after the date of enact-
m-ch of this Act, the Director of the Peace Corps shall submit to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Sen-
ate and the Committee on International Relations of the House of Representatives a report—

(1) describing the student loan forgiveness pro-
gams currently available to Peace Corps volunteers upon completion of their service; and

(2) comparing such programs with other Gov-
ernment-sponsored student loan forgiveness pro-
grams.
SEC. 6. SPECIAL VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT AND PLACEMENT FOR COUNTRIES WHOSE GOVERNMENTS ARE SEEKING TO FOSTER GREATER UNDERSTANDING BY AND ABOUT THEIR CITIZENS.

(a) REPORT.—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director shall submit a report to the appropriate congressional committees describing the initiatives that the Peace Corps intends to pursue in order to solicit requests from eligible countries where the presence of Peace Corps volunteers would facilitate a greater understanding that there exists a universe of commonly shared human values and aspirations and would dispel unfounded fears and suspicion among peoples of diverse cultures and systems of government, including peoples from countries with substantial Muslim populations. Such report shall include—

(1) a description of the recruitment strategies to be employed by the Peace Corps to recruit and train volunteers with the appropriate language skills and interest in serving in such countries; and

(2) a list of the countries that the Director has determined should be priorities for special recruitment and placement of Peace Corps volunteers.

(b) USE OF RETURNED PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the
Director is authorized and strongly urged to utilize the services of returned Peace Corps volunteers having language and cultural expertise, including those returned Peace Corps volunteers who may have served previously in countries with substantial Muslim populations, in order to open or reopen Peace Corps programs in such countries.

(c) ALLOCATION OF FUNDS.—In addition to amounts authorized to be appropriated to the Peace Corps by section 11 for the fiscal years 2003, 2004, 2005, and 2006, there is authorized to be appropriated for the Peace Corps $5,000,000 each such fiscal year solely for the recruitment, training, and placement of Peace Corps volunteers in countries whose governments are seeking to foster greater understanding by and about their citizens.

SEC. 7. GLOBAL INFECTIOUS DISEASES INITIATIVE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Director, in cooperation with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Institutes of Health, the World Health Organization and the Pan American Health Organization, local public health officials, shall develop a program of training for all Peace Corps volunteers in the areas of education, prevention, and treatment of infectious diseases in order to ensure that all Peace Corps volunteers make a contribution to the global campaign against such diseases.
(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) AIDS.—The term “AIDS” means the acquired immune deficiency syndrome.

(2) HIV.—The term “HIV” means the human immunodeficiency virus, the pathogen that causes AIDS.

(3) HIV/AIDS.—The term “HIV/AIDS” means, with respect to an individual, an individual who is infected with HIV or living with AIDS.

(4) INFECTIOUS DISEASES.—The term “infectious diseases” means HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria.

SEC. 8. PEACE CORPS ADVISORY COUNCIL.

Section 12 of the Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2511; relating to the Peace Corps National Advisory Council) is amended—

(1) by amending subsection (b)(2)(D) to read as follows:

“(D) make recommendations for utilizing the expertise of returned Peace Corps volunteers in fulfilling the goals of the Peace Corps.”;

(2) in subsection (c)—

(A) by striking paragraph (1);

(B) in paragraph (2)
(i) in subparagraph (A)—

(I) by striking “fifteen” and inserting “seven”;

(II) by striking the second sentence and inserting the following: “All of the members shall be former Peace Corps volunteers, and not more than four shall be members of the same political party.”; and

(ii) by striking subparagraphs (B), (D), (E), and (H); and

(iii) by redesignating subparagraphs (C), (F), (G), and (I) as subparagraphs (B), (C), (D), and (E), respectively;

(3) by amending subsection (g) to read as follows:

“(g) CHAIR.—The President shall designate one of the voting members of the Council as Chair, who shall serve in that capacity for a period not to exceed two calendar years.”;

(4) by amending subsection (h) to read as follows:

“(h) MEETINGS.—The Council shall hold a regular meeting during each calendar quarter at a date and time to be determined by the Chair of the Council.”; and
(5) by amending subsection (i) to read as follows:

“(i) REPORT.—Not later than July 30, 2003, and annually thereafter, the Council shall submit a report to the President and the Director of the Peace Corps describing how the Council has carried out its functions under subsection (b)(2).”.

SEC. 9. READJUSTMENT ALLOWANCES.

The Peace Corps Act is amended—

(1) in section 5(c) (22 U.S.C. 2504(c)), by striking “$125” and inserting “$200”; and

(2) in section 6(1) (22 U.S.C. 2505(1)), by striking “$125” and inserting “$200”.

SEC. 10. PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS OF RETURNED PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS TO PROMOTE THE GOALS OF THE PEACE CORPS.

(a) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this section is to provide support for returned Peace Corps volunteers to develop programs and projects to promote the objectives of the Peace Corps, as set forth in section 2 of the Peace Corps Act.

(b) GRANTS TO CERTAIN NONPROFIT CORPORATIONS.—

(1) GRANT AUTHORITY.—To carry out the purpose of this section, and subject to the availability
of appropriations, the Director of the Corporation for National and Community Service shall award grants on a competitive basis to private nonprofit corporations that are established in the District of Columbia for the purpose of serving as incubators for returned Peace Corps volunteers seeking to use their knowledge and expertise to undertake community-based projects to carry out the goals of the Peace Corps Act.

(2) ELIGIBILITY FOR GRANTS.—To be eligible to compete for grants under this section, a nonprofit corporation must have a board of directors composed of returned Peace Corps volunteers with a background in community service, education, or health. The director of the corporation (who may also be a board member of the nonprofit corporation) shall also be a returned Peace Corps volunteer with demonstrated management expertise in operating a nonprofit corporation. The stated purpose of the nonprofit corporation shall be to act solely as an intermediary between the Corporation for National and Community Service and individual returned Peace Corps volunteers seeking funding for projects consistent with the goals of the Peace Corps. The nonprofit corporation may act as the accountant for in-
individual volunteers for purposes of tax filing and audit responsibilities.

(c) Grant Requirements.—Such grants shall be made pursuant to a grant agreement between the Director and the nonprofit corporation that requires that—

(1) grant funds will only be used to support programs and projects described in subsection (a) pursuant to proposals submitted by returned Peace Corps volunteers (either individually or cooperatively with other returned volunteers);

(2) the nonprofit corporation give consideration to funding individual projects or programs by returned Peace Corps volunteers up to $100,000;

(3) not more than 20 percent of funds made available to the nonprofit corporation will be used for the salaries, overhead, or other administrative expenses of the nonprofit corporation; and

(4) the nonprofit corporation will not receive grant funds under this section for more than two years unless the corporation has raised private funds, either in cash or in kind for up to 40 percent of its annual budget.

(d) Funding.—Of the funds available to the Corporation for National and Community Service for fiscal year 2003 or any fiscal year thereafter, not to exceed
$10,000,000 shall be available for each such fiscal year
to carry out the grant program established under this sec-
tion.

(e) Status of the Fund.—Nothing in this section
shall be construed to make any nonprofit corporation sup-
ported under this section an agency or establishment of
the United States Government or to make the members
of the board of directors or any officer or employee of such
corporation an officer or employee of the United States.

(f) Factors in Awarding Grants.—In deter-
mining the number of private nonprofit corporations to
award grants to in any fiscal years, the Director should
balance the number of organizations against the overhead
costs that divert resources from project funding.

(g) Congressional Oversight.—Grant recipients
under this section shall be subject to the appropriate over-
sight procedures of Congress.

SEC. 11. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

(a) In General.—Section 3(b)(1) of the Peace
Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2502(b)(1)) is amended—

(1) by striking “2002, and” and inserting

“2002,”; and

(2) by inserting before the period the following:

“, $465,000,000 for fiscal year 2004, $500,000,000
for fiscal year 2005, $560,000,000 for fiscal year 2006, and $560,000,000 for fiscal year 2007”.

(b) INCREASE IN PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEER STRENGTH.—Section 3(c) of the Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2502(c)) is amended by adding the following new subsection at the end thereof:

“(d) In addition to the amounts authorized to be appropriated in this section, there are authorized to be appropriated such additional sums as may be necessary to achieve a volunteer corps of 15,000 as soon as practicable taking into account the security of volunteers and the effectiveness of country programs.”.