

117TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. _____

To establish the position of Special Envoy to the Pacific Islands Forum.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. KENNEDY (for himself and Mr. SCHATZ) introduced the following bill;
which was read twice and referred to the Committee on

A BILL

To establish the position of Special Envoy to the Pacific
Islands Forum.

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 “U.S. and Pacific Is-
5 lands Forum Partnership Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) The Pacific Islands Forum (referred to in
9 this Act as “PIF”) was established in 1971.

1 (2) PIF is committed to accelerating economic
2 growth, social progress, cultural development, and
3 regional peace and stability.

4 (3) The United States is committed to a free
5 and open Indo-Pacific and to peace, security, and
6 prosperity in the region.

7 (4) The United States seeks to maintain and
8 further develop a constructive and cordial relation-
9 ship with PIF and its member nations, including the
10 Freely Associated States (the Marshall Islands, Mi-
11 cronesia, and Palau), which have special economic
12 and security ties with the United States.

13 (5) The United States seeks to contribute to re-
14 gional stability in the Pacific region through assist-
15 ance efforts to combat illegal fishing, enhance mari-
16 time security, build resilient infrastructure, and pro-
17 mote sound, just, and responsive governance within
18 the Pacific region to empower citizens, help combat
19 corruption, and strengthen nations' autonomy.

20 (6) The Smaller Island States of the Pacific Is-
21 lands Forum represent the most vulnerable of
22 Forum Island Countries.

23 (7) Increased United States diplomatic engage-
24 ment and developmental assistance can help alleviate
25 the vulnerabilities linked to the small size of the

1 Smaller Island States, their lack of natural re-
2 sources, remoteness, and the range of development
3 challenges that limit their capacity to ensure demo-
4 cratic, economic, and environmental resilience and
5 long-term sustainable development.

6 (8) It is in the long-term interest of the United
7 States to maintain and expand a relationship with
8 PIF and its member nations.

9 (9) The United States does not have an Amba-
10 sador or Special Envoy to PIF, which limits the abil-
11 ity of the United States and PIF to respond quickly
12 and appropriately to events of mutual interest.

13 **SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

14 It is the sense of Congress that—

15 (1) the United States must increase its diplo-
16 matic activity and presence in the Pacific, particu-
17 larly among Pacific Island nations; and

18 (2) the Special Envoy to the Pacific Islands
19 Forum—

20 (A) should be used to coordinate policies
21 across the Pacific region with like-minded de-
22 mocracies; and

23 (B) should have a direct line to the Presi-
24 dent and the Secretary of State to communicate

1 regarding the unique and particular needs of
2 Pacific partner nations.

3 **SEC. 4. SPECIAL ENVOY TO THE PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM.**

4 Section 1 of the State Department Basic Authorities
5 Act of 1956 (22 U.S.C. 2651a) is amended—

6 (1) by redesignating subsection (h) (as added
7 by section 361(a)(1) of division FF of Public Law
8 116–260) as subsection (k); and

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

10 “(1) SPECIAL ENVOY TO THE PACIFIC ISLANDS
11 FORUM.—

12 “(1) APPOINTMENT.—The President shall ap-
13 point, by and with the advice and consent of the
14 Senate, either the United States Ambassador to a
15 country that is a member of the Pacific Islands
16 Forum or another qualified individual to serve as
17 Special Envoy to the Pacific Islands Forum (re-
18 ferred to in this section as the ‘Special Envoy’). If
19 an Ambassador is appointed to serve as the Special
20 Envoy pursuant this paragraph, he or she may not
21 begin such service until after Senate confirmation to
22 such position and shall serve concurrently as an Am-
23 bassador and as the Special Envoy without receiving
24 additional compensation.

25 “(2) DUTIES.—The Special Envoy shall—

1 “(A) represent the United States in its role
2 as dialogue partner to the Pacific Islands
3 Forum; and

4 “(B) carry out such other duties as the
5 President or the Secretary of State may pre-
6 scribe.”.