

Blackburn 14

AMENDMENT NO. _____ Calendar No. _____

Purpose: To direct the Comptroller General of the United States to conduct a study to evaluate the activities of sister city partnerships operating within the United States, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES—117th Cong., 1st Sess.

S. 1260

To establish a new Directorate for Technology and Innovation in the National Science Foundation, to establish a regional technology hub program, to require a strategy and report on economic security, science, research, innovation, manufacturing, and job creation, to establish a critical supply chain resiliency program, and for other purposes.

Referred to the Committee on _____ and ordered to be printed

Ordered to lie on the table and to be printed

AMENDMENT intended to be proposed by Mrs. BLACKBURN

Viz:

- 1 At the appropriate place, insert the following:
- 2 **SEC. ____ . STUDY OF SISTER CITY PARTNERSHIPS OPER-**
- 3 **ATING WITHIN THE UNITED STATES INVOLV-**
- 4 **ING FOREIGN COMMUNITIES IN COUNTRIES**
- 5 **WITH SIGNIFICANT PUBLIC SECTOR CORRUP-**
- 6 **TION.**

7 (a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the
8 “Sister City Transparency Act”

1 (b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

2 (1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMIT-
3 TEES.—The term “appropriate congressional com-
4 mittees” means—

5 (A) the Committee on Foreign Relations of
6 the Senate;

7 (B) the Committee on Health, Education,
8 Labor, and Pensions of the Senate;

9 (C) the Committee on Armed Services of
10 the Senate;

11 (D) the Committee on Foreign Affairs of
12 the House of Representatives;

13 (E) the Committee on Education and
14 Labor of the House of Representatives; and

15 (F) the Committee on Armed Services of
16 the House of Representatives.

17 (2) FOREIGN COMMUNITY.—The term “foreign
18 community” means any subnational unit of govern-
19 ment outside of the United States.

20 (3) SISTER CITY PARTNERSHIP.—The term
21 “sister city partnership” means a formal agreement
22 between a United States community and a foreign
23 community that—

24 (A) is recognized by Sister Cities Inter-
25 national; and

1 (B) is operating within the United States.

2 (4) UNITED STATES COMMUNITY.—The term
3 “United States community” means a State, county,
4 city, or other unit of local government in the United
5 States.

6 (e) STUDY OF SISTER CITY PARTNERSHIPS OPER-
7 ATING WITHIN THE UNITED STATES INVOLVING FOR-
8 EIGN COMMUNITIES IN COUNTRIES WITH SIGNIFICANT
9 PUBLIC SECTOR CORRUPTION.—

10 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General of
11 the United States shall conduct a study of the activi-
12 ties of sister city partnerships involving foreign com-
13 munities in countries receiving a score of 45 or less
14 on Transparency International’s 2019 Corruption
15 Perceptions Index.

16 (2) ELEMENTS OF THE STUDY.—The study
17 conducted under paragraph (1) shall—

18 (A) identify—

19 (i) the criteria by which foreign com-
20 munities identify United States commu-
21 nities as candidates for sister city partner-
22 ships, including themes with respect to the
23 prominent economic activities and demo-
24 graphics of such United States commu-
25 nities;

1 (ii) the activities conducted within sis-
2 ter city partnerships;

3 (iii) the economic and educational out-
4 comes of such activities;

5 (iv) the types of information that sis-
6 ter city partnerships make publicly avail-
7 able, including information relating to con-
8 tracts and activities;

9 (v) the means by which United States
10 communities safeguard freedom of expres-
11 sion within sister city partnerships; and

12 (vi) the oversight practices that
13 United States communities implement to
14 mitigate the risks of foreign espionage and
15 economic coercion within sister city part-
16 nerships;

17 (B) assess—

18 (i) the extent to which United States
19 communities ensure transparency regard-
20 ing sister city partnership contracts and
21 activities;

22 (ii) the extent to which sister city
23 partnerships involve economic arrange-
24 ments that make United States commu-

1 nities vulnerable to malign market prac-
2 tices;

3 (iii) the extent to which sister city
4 partnerships involve educational arrange-
5 ments that diminish the freedom of expres-
6 sion;

7 (iv) the extent to which sister city
8 partnerships allow foreign nationals to ac-
9 cess local commercial, educational, and po-
10 litical institutions;

11 (v) the extent to which foreign com-
12 munities could use sister city partnerships
13 to realize strategic objectives that do not
14 conduce to the economic and national secu-
15 rity interests of the United States;

16 (vi) the extent to which sister city
17 partnerships could enable or otherwise con-
18 tribute to foreign communities' malign ac-
19 tivities globally, including activities relating
20 to human rights abuses and academic and
21 industrial espionage; and

22 (vii) the extent to which United States
23 communities seek to mitigate foreign na-
24 tionals' potentially inappropriate use of

1 visa programs to participate in activities
2 relating to sister city partnerships; and

3 (C) review—

4 (i) the range of activities conducted
5 within sister city partnerships, including
6 activities relating to cultural exchange and
7 economic development;

8 (ii) how such activities differ between
9 sister city partnerships; and

10 (iii) best practices to ensure trans-
11 parency regarding sister city partnerships'
12 agreements, activities, and employees.

13 (3) REPORT.—

14 (A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 6
15 months after initiating the study required under
16 paragraph (1), the Comptroller General shall
17 submit a report to the appropriate congres-
18 sional committees that contains the results of
19 such study, including the findings, conclusions,
20 and recommendations (if any) of the study.

21 (B) FORM.—The report required under
22 subparagraph (A) may include a classified
23 annex, if necessary.