

AMENDMENT TO RULES COMM. PRINT 115–23
OFFERED BY MR. BERA OF CALIFORNIA

At the end of subtitle H of title XII, add the following new section:

1 **SEC. 12__ . STRATEGY TO PROTECT UNITED STATES INTER-**
2 **ESTS IN THE ARCTIC REGION.**

3 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

4 (1) The United States has important economic,
5 security, and national defense interests in the Arctic
6 region.

7 (2) The United States Government has issued
8 several key reports and strategies on the Arctic re-
9 gion over the last four years, including—

10 (A) the Department of Defense Report to
11 Congress on Strategy to Protect United States
12 National Security Interests in the Arctic Region
13 (December 2016);

14 (B) the 2015 Year In Review: Progress
15 Report on the Implementation of the National
16 Strategy for the Arctic Region (March 2016);

17 (C) the Implementation Plan for the Na-
18 tional Strategy for the Arctic Region (January
19 30, 2014); and

1 (D) the National Strategy for the Arctic
2 Region (May 2013), which set forth the United
3 States Government's strategic priorities for the
4 Arctic region.

5 (3) According to the Council on Foreign Rela-
6 tions, the Arctic region is warming at double the
7 rate of the rest of the world, opening new routes for
8 ships and development of natural resources through-
9 out the Arctic region.

10 (4) The rapidly warming Arctic region threat-
11 ens fisheries and wildlife habitat, existing infrastruc-
12 ture and communities throughout Alaska, including
13 increased vulnerability to coastal erosion. Alaska na-
14 tive communities are particularly vulnerable to the
15 changing climate.

16 (5) Given these developments, the United
17 States needs to bolster its infrastructure and assets
18 in the Arctic region to safeguard its strategic inter-
19 ests, defend its national borders, protect the environ-
20 ment, and maintain its scientific and technological
21 leadership.

22 (b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Con-
23 gress that—

24 (1) the President should continue to convene
25 the Arctic Executive Steering Committee established

1 on January 21, 2015, pursuant to Executive Order
2 13689 (80 Fed. Reg. 6425; relating to enhancing co-
3 ordination of national efforts in the Arctic); and

4 (2) the United States should ratify the United
5 Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea in order
6 to allow the United States to secure its claim to off-
7 shore resources present along the Arctic's extended
8 continental shelf.

9 (c) STRATEGY TO PROTECT UNITED STATES INTER-
10 ESTS IN THE ARCTIC REGION.—

11 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days
12 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the
13 President shall develop and submit to Congress a
14 strategy to protect United States interests in the
15 Arctic region.

16 (2) GOALS.—The strategy required under para-
17 graph (1) shall include the following goals:

18 (A) Improve telecommunications, naviga-
19 tion, ocean and coastal mapping, and Coast
20 Guard and other infrastructure to support a
21 sustained security and emergency response
22 presence for the State of Alaska.

23 (B) Direct the United States representa-
24 tive to the Arctic Council to use the voice and
25 vote of the United States to conduct increased

1 confidence-building and cooperative security
2 measures with the other member countries of
3 the Arctic Council.

4 (C) Support climate resilience efforts
5 across the Arctic region.

6 (D) Sustain robust research funding to un-
7 derstand the ongoing climate changes in the
8 Arctic region and the global impact of such
9 changes.

10 (3) USE OF PRIOR REPORTS AND STRATE-
11 GIES.—The strategy required under paragraph (1)
12 shall be informed by the reports and strategies de-
13 scribed in subsection (a)(2) and other relevant
14 United States Government reports and strategies re-
15 garding the Arctic region.

16 (d) COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED
17 STATES REPORT.—

18 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 45 days after
19 the date of the enactment of the this Act, the Comp-
20 troller General of the United States shall submit to
21 the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate
22 and the House of Representatives, the Committee on
23 Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Sen-
24 ate, and the Committee on Transportation and In-
25 frastructure of the House of Representatives a re-

1 port assessing the cost and procurement schedule for
2 new United States icebreakers.

3 (2) ELEMENTS.—The report required in para-
4 graph (1) shall include an analysis of the following:

5 (A) The current status of the efforts of the
6 Coast Guard to acquire new icebreaking capa-
7 bility, including coordination through the Inte-
8 grated Program Office.

9 (B) Actions being taken by the Coast
10 Guard to incorporate key practices from other
11 nations that procure icebreakers to increase
12 knowledge and reduce costs and risks.

13 (C) The extent by which the cost and
14 schedule for building Coast Guard icebreakers
15 differs from those in other countries, if known.

16 (D) The extent that innovative acquisition
17 practices (such as multiyear funding and block
18 buys) may be applied to icebreaker acquisition
19 to reduce the cost and accelerate the schedule.

20 (E) A capacity replacement plan to miti-
21 gate a potential icebreaker capability gap if the
22 Polar Star cannot remain in service.

23 (F) Any other matters the Comptroller
24 General considers appropriate.

