

AMENDMENT TO RULES COMMITTEE PRINT 116-

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OFFERED BY MR. BERA OF CALIFORNIA

At the end of title XIII, add the following new section:

1 **SEC. 13___ . SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING BIOLOGICAL**
2 **THREAT REDUCTION AND COOPERATIVE BIO-**
3 **LOGICAL ENGAGEMENT OF THE COOPERA-**
4 **TIVE THREAT REDUCTION PROGRAM.**

5 It is the sense of Congress that—

6 (1) keeping Americans safe means ensuring
7 that global health security is prioritized as a na-
8 tional security issue;

9 (2) as highlighted by the 2017 National Secu-
10 rity Strategy of the United States, biological threats,
11 whether “deliberate attack, accident, or a natural
12 outbreak”, are growing threats and “require actions
13 to address them at their source” through programs
14 carried out by cooperative engagement, such as
15 working “with partners to ensure that laboratories
16 that handle dangerous pathogens have in place safe-
17 ty and security measures”;

1 (3) the 2017 National Security Strategy of the
2 United States appropriately affirms the importance
3 of supporting advancements in biomedical innovation
4 while mitigating harm caused by advanced bio-
5 weapons and capabilities;

6 (4) the intrinsically linked nature of biological
7 threats, whether naturally occurring, accidental, or
8 deliberate, underscores the relationship between the
9 Global Health Security Strategy of the United
10 States and the National Biodefense Strategy, and
11 the national security tools used to prevent and miti-
12 gate these threats must be similarly connected;

13 (5) biological threats are a critical emerging
14 threat against the United States and addressing
15 these threats through cooperative programs is an op-
16 portunity to achieve long-standing nonproliferation
17 goals;

18 (6) cooperative programs to address biological
19 threats through improved global capacity in the
20 areas of biosafety, biosecurity, bio-surveillance, re-
21 search oversight, and related legislative and regu-
22 latory frameworks have become even more important
23 as the world faces increasing availability of and ad-
24 vancements in biotechnology, which has broad dual-
25 use and proliferation implications;

1 (7) under the Cooperative Threat Reduction
2 Program of the Department of Defense established
3 under the Department of Defense Cooperative
4 Threat Reduction Act (50 U.S.C. 3701 et seq.),
5 Congress authorized the Secretary of Defense to ad-
6 dress such threats through activities to prevent, de-
7 tect, and report on highly pathogenic diseases or
8 other diseases, “regardless of whether such diseases
9 are caused by biological weapons”;

10 (8) in 2014, President Obama declared the
11 Ebola virus disease epidemic a national security pri-
12 ority and exercised the authority under such Pro-
13 gram to build capacity that mitigated the imminent
14 threat posed by the Ebola virus disease and estab-
15 lished capabilities required to prevent future out-
16 breaks;

17 (9) many of the prevention, detection, and re-
18 sponse capacities built in response to the Ebola virus
19 disease epidemic are also those used to prevent, de-
20 tect, and respond to the use of biological weapons
21 abroad;

22 (10) continuing to use cooperative engagement
23 programs is in the national security interests of the
24 United States because of the important relationships
25 established between the United States and partner

1 countries, which are based on ideals such as trans-
2 parency, information sharing, and a shared responsi-
3 bility in advancing global security;

4 (11) the recent coronavirus disease 2019
5 (COVID-19) global pandemic has illustrated the
6 dire consequences resulting from a single disease
7 that knows no boundaries, impacting the United
8 States economy and the health of United States citi-
9 zens and members of the Armed Forces, both do-
10 mesticallly and abroad;

11 (12) in light of the impacts caused by COVID-
12 19, and following two congressionally mandated re-
13 ports that call for better implementation of the bio-
14 logical cooperative engagement programs of the
15 United States and the National Biodefense Strategy
16 (the report published by the Government Account-
17 ability Office on March 11, 2020, titled “National
18 Biodefense Strategy: Opportunities and Challenges
19 with Early Implementation” and the report pub-
20 lished by the National Academies of Sciences, Engi-
21 neering, and Medicine on April 14, 2020, titled “A
22 Strategic Vision for Biological Threat Reduction:
23 The U.S. Department of Defense and Beyond”), it
24 is of utmost importance that such programs are

1 given due and increased prioritization for national
2 security purposes; and

3 (13) the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary
4 of State should make every effort to prioritize and
5 advance the determination, concurrence, and notifi-
6 cation processes under the Department of Defense
7 Cooperative Threat Reduction Act (50 U.S.C. 3701
8 et seq.) to provide for necessary new country deter-
9 minations in a timely manner and be responsive to
10 emerging biological threats.

