

AMENDMENT TO RULES COMM. PRINT 115-70
OFFERED BY MR. ENGEL OF NEW YORK

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

1 **SEC. 12 ____ . OFFICE FOR PEACE AND RECONCILIATION IN**
2 **AFGHANISTAN.**

3 (a) STATEMENT OF POLICY.—Congress declares the
4 following:

5 (1) It is in the national security interests of the
6 United States that the Government of the Islamic
7 Republic of Afghanistan and the Afghan Taliban
8 conclude, through inclusive negotiations, a political
9 settlement in which the Taliban—

10 (A) renounces violence;

11 (B) breaks ties to international terrorism;

12 and

13 (C) accepts the Constitution of Afghani-
14 stan, including its safeguards to respect human
15 rights, especially the rights of women, girls, and
16 ethnic and religious minorities;

17 (2) There is no military solution to the conflict
18 in Afghanistan and the only way to achieve lasting
19 stability is through a negotiated settlement.

1 (3) A negotiated settlement remains critical to
2 providing effective incentives for the Taliban to
3 break from international terrorism.

4 (4) The United States should engage in direct
5 talks with the Taliban as an essential step toward a
6 comprehensive settlement of the conflict in Afghani-
7 stan that includes all Afghan stakeholders, and
8 should work with the Government of the Islamic Re-
9 public of Afghanistan toward that end.

10 (5) The United States should use all of the
11 tools at its disposal in seeking a political settlement
12 to the conflict in Afghanistan, including the diplo-
13 matic and development expertise at the Department
14 of State and United States Agency for International
15 Development.

16 (6) In order to mount a sufficiently robust dip-
17 lomatic initiative, the Secretary of State should es-
18 tablish an office of senior officials based in the De-
19 partment of State to focus solely on promoting a ne-
20 gotiated settlement to the conflict in Afghanistan.

21 (b) ESTABLISHMENT.—

22 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after
23 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary
24 of State shall establish an office within the Bureau
25 of South and Central Asian Affairs, to be headed by

1 a senior employee at the level of Deputy Assistant
2 Secretary or an equivalent position, to exclusively
3 pursue a negotiated settlement between the Govern-
4 ment of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the
5 Taliban by—

6 (A) leading United States efforts in seek-
7 ing a negotiated peace to end the war in Af-
8 ghanistan;

9 (B) coordinating within the Department of
10 State and with the Department of Defense and
11 other relevant Federal departments and agen-
12 cies to develop and implement a strategy to cre-
13 ate an environment enabling a negotiated settle-
14 ment to such war;

15 (C) supporting and coordinating inter-
16 national efforts at establishing a peace process
17 in Afghanistan; and

18 (D) working with the Government of the
19 Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, the Taliban
20 political commission, and regional partners to
21 encourage a peaceful settlement to such war.

22 (2) PERSONNEL.—The office established pursu-
23 ant to paragraph (1) shall consist of at least three
24 full-time employees.

1 (3) STATUS AS SPECIAL ENVOY.—The head of
2 the office established pursuant to paragraph (1) may
3 be elevated to a Special Envoy or equivalent rank.

4 (4) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 120
5 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the
6 Secretary of State shall submit to the congressional
7 defense committees, the Committee on Foreign Rela-
8 tions of the Senate, and the Committee on Foreign
9 Affairs of the House of Representatives a report de-
10 scribing the strategy of the Department, developed
11 through the office established pursuant to paragraph
12 (1), to pursue peace and reconciliation in Afghani-
13 stan.

