

SEC. ____ . Assessment of the strategic value of undersea telecommunications connecting the United States to South America, Central America, the Caribbean, and Mexico.

- (a) Report – Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the heads of other Federal departments and agencies as necessary, shall submit to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and House of Representatives a report containing a holistic assessment of the strategic value of undersea communications connecting the United States to South America, Central America, the Caribbean, and Mexico.

- (b) Elements – The report required by subsection (a) shall include -
 - a. assessments of the lifespan of existing links between the United States and nations in the region;
 - b. recommendations for future strategic investments in the development of telecommunications infrastructure in South America, Central America, the Caribbean, and Mexico;
 - c. the digital security and national security opportunities and advantages associated with such undersea communications connections;
 - d. the value, cost, and feasibility of establishing a data center and high-security cloud services facility, with independent power generation, in the United States Virgin Islands for military and national security communications; and
 - e. any other related matters the Secretary determines are appropriate.

- (c) FORM – The report required by subsection (a) shall be submitted in unclassified form without any designation relating to dissemination control, but may include a classified annex.