

§ 6416. Equal access to United States missions abroad for conducting religious activities

(a) In general

Subject to this section, the Secretary of State shall permit, on terms no less favorable than that accorded other nongovernmental activities unrelated to the conduct of the diplomatic mission, access to the premises of any United States diplomatic mission or consular post by any United States citizen seeking to conduct an activity for religious purposes.

(b) Timing and location

The Secretary of State shall make reasonable accommodations with respect to the timing and location of such access in light of—

- (1) the number of United States citizens requesting the access (including any particular religious concerns regarding the time of day, date, or physical setting for services);
- (2) conflicts with official activities and other nonofficial United States citizen requests;
- (3) the availability of openly conducted, organized religious services outside the premises of the mission or post;
- (4) availability of space and resources; and
- (5) necessary security precautions.

(c) Discretionary access for foreign nationals

The Secretary of State may permit access to the premises of a United States diplomatic mission or consular post to foreign nationals for the purpose of attending or participating in religious activities conducted pursuant to this section.

(Pub. L. 105-292, title I, §107, Oct. 27, 1998, 112 Stat. 2796.)

§ 6417. Prisoner lists and issue briefs on religious freedom concerns

(a) Sense of Congress

To encourage involvement with religious freedom concerns at every possible opportunity and by all appropriate representatives of the United States Government, it is the sense of the Congress that officials of the executive branch of Government should promote increased advocacy on such issues during meetings between foreign dignitaries and executive branch officials or Members of Congress.

(b) Prisoner lists and issue briefs on religious freedom concerns

The Secretary of State, in consultation with the Ambassador at Large, the Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, United States chiefs of mission abroad, regional experts, and nongovernmental human rights and religious groups, shall prepare and maintain issue briefs on religious freedom, on a country-by-country basis, consisting of lists of persons believed to be imprisoned, detained, or placed under house arrest for their religious faith, together with brief evaluations and critiques of the policies of the respective country restricting religious freedom. In considering the inclusion of names of prisoners on such lists, the Secretary of State shall exercise appropriate discretion, including concerns regarding the safety, security, and benefit to such prisoners.

(c) Availability of information

The Secretary shall, as appropriate, provide religious freedom issue briefs under subsection (b) of this section to executive branch officials and Members of Congress in anticipation of bilateral contacts with foreign leaders, both in the United States and abroad.

(Pub. L. 105-292, title I, §108, Oct. 27, 1998, 112 Stat. 2796.)

SUBCHAPTER II—COMMISSION ON INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

§ 6431. Establishment and composition

(a) In general

There is established the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom.

(b) Membership

(1) Appointment

The Commission shall be composed of—

(A) the Ambassador at Large, who shall serve ex officio as a nonvoting member of the Commission; and

(B) Nine¹ other members, who shall be United States citizens who are not being paid as officers or employees of the United States, and who shall be appointed as follows:

(i) Three members of the Commission shall be appointed by the President.

(ii) Three members of the Commission shall be appointed by the President pro tempore of the Senate, of which two of the members shall be appointed upon the recommendation of the leader in the Senate of the political party that is not the political party of the President, and of which one of the members shall be appointed upon the recommendation of the leader in the Senate of the other political party.

(iii) Three members of the Commission shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, of which two of the members shall be appointed upon the recommendation of the leader in the House of the political party that is not the political party of the President, and of which one of the members shall be appointed upon the recommendation of the leader in the House of the other political party.

(2) Selection

(A) In general

Members of the Commission shall be selected among distinguished individuals noted for their knowledge and experience in fields relevant to the issue of international religious freedom, including foreign affairs, direct experience abroad, human rights, and international law.

(B) Security clearances

Each member of the Commission shall be required to obtain a security clearance.

(3) Time of appointment

The appointments required by paragraph (1) shall be made not later than 120 days after October 27, 1998.

¹ So in original. Probably should not be capitalized.