

(2) the preparation of a written description of prioritized actions that the Commission is required to complete to fulfill the strategic plan required under subsection (d);

(3) a review of the scope, content, and timing of the Commission's annual report and any required changes; and

(4) a review of the personnel policies set forth in section 6432b of this title and any required changes to such policies.

**(c) Unanimous agreement**

**(1) In general**

To the greatest extent possible, the Chair, Vice Chair, and all of the Commissioners shall ensure that this section is implemented in a manner that results in unanimous agreement among the Commissioners with regard to—

(A) the strategic policy and organizational review planning process required under subsection (b); and

(B) the strategic plan required under subsection (d).

**(2) Alternative approval process**

If unanimous agreement under paragraph (1) is not possible, items for inclusion in the strategic plan may, at the joint discretion of the Chair and Vice Chair, be approved by an affirmative vote of—

(A) a majority of Commissioners appointed by an elected official from the political party of the President; and

(B) a majority of Commissioners appointed by an elected official from the political party that is not the party of the President.

**(d) Submission of strategic plan**

Not later than 180 days after October 16, 2015, and not less frequently than biennially thereafter, the Chair and Vice Chair of the Commission shall jointly submit, to the appropriate congressional committees, a written strategic plan that includes—

(1) a description of prioritized actions for the Commission for a period of time to be specified by the Commissioners;

(2) a description of any changes the Commission considers necessary with regard to the scope, content, and timing of the Commission's annual report;

(3) a description of any changes the Commission considers necessary with regard to personnel matters; and

(4) the Commission's funding requirements for the period covered by the strategic plan.

**(e) Pending issues**

The strategic plan required under subsection (d) may identify any issues or proposals that have not yet been resolved by the Commission.

**(f) Implementation of personnel provisions and annual report**

Notwithstanding section<sup>1</sup> 6432b(a) and 6533(a) of this title, the Commission is authorized to implement provisions related to personnel and the Commission's annual report that are included in the strategic plan submitted pursuant to this section.

**(g) Congressional oversight**

Upon request, the Commission shall—

(1) make available for inspection any information and documents requested by the appropriate congressional committees; and

(2) respond to any requests to provide testimony before the appropriate congressional committees.

(Pub. L. 114–71, § 4, Oct. 16, 2015, 129 Stat. 563.)

CODIFICATION

Section was enacted as part of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom Reauthorization Act of 2015, and not as part of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 which comprises this chapter.

**§ 6434. Applicability of other laws**

The Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to the Commission.

(Pub. L. 105–292, title II, § 206, formerly § 204, Oct. 27, 1998, 112 Stat. 2799; renumbered § 206, Pub. L. 106–55, § 1(b)(2), Aug. 17, 1999, 113 Stat. 401.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Federal Advisory Committee Act, referred to in text, is Pub. L. 92–463, Oct. 6, 1972, 86 Stat. 770, as amended, which is set out in the Appendix to Title 5, Government Organization and Employees.

PRIOR PROVISIONS

A prior section 206 of Pub. L. 105–292 was renumbered section 209 and is classified to section 6436 of this title.

**§ 6435. Authorization of appropriations**

**(a) In general**

There are authorized to be appropriated to the Commission \$3,500,000 for each of the fiscal years 2016 to 2019 to carry out the provisions of this chapter and section 6433a of this title.

**(b) Availability of funds**

Amounts authorized to be appropriated under subsection (a) shall remain available until the earlier of—

(1) the date on which they have been expended; or

(2) the date on which the Commission is terminated under section 6436 of this title.

**(c) Limitation**

In each fiscal year, the Commission shall only be authorized to expend amounts that have been appropriated pursuant to subsection (a) if the Commission—

(1) complies with the requirements set forth in section 6433a of this title; and

(2) submits the annual financial report required under section 6435a(e) of this title to the appropriate congressional committees.

(Pub. L. 105–292, title II, § 207, formerly § 205, Oct. 27, 1998, 112 Stat. 2800; renumbered § 207 and amended Pub. L. 106–55, § 1(b)(2), (4), Aug. 17, 1999, 113 Stat. 401, 403; Pub. L. 107–228, div. A, title VI, § 681(e), Sept. 30, 2002, 116 Stat. 1409; Pub. L. 112–75, § 4, Dec. 23, 2011, 125 Stat. 1273; Pub. L. 113–271, § 1(1), Dec. 18, 2014, 128 Stat. 2951; Pub. L. 114–71, § 5, Oct. 16, 2015, 129 Stat. 565.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

This chapter, referred to in subsec. (a), was in the original “this Act”, meaning Pub. L. 105–292, Oct. 27, 1998, 112 Stat. 2787, known as the International Reli-

<sup>1</sup> So in original. Probably should be “sections”.

gious Freedom Act of 1998, which is classified principally to this chapter. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 6401 of this title and Tables.

#### AMENDMENTS

2015—Pub. L. 114-71 amended section generally. Prior to amendment, section authorized appropriations for fiscal years 2012 through 2015.

2014—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 113-271 substituted “2015” for “2014”.

2011—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 112-75 substituted “for each of the fiscal years 2012 through 2014” for “for the fiscal year 2003”.

2002—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 107-228 inserted “for the fiscal year 2003” after “\$3,000,000”.

1999—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 106-55, §1(b)(4), substituted “to carry out the provisions of this subchapter” for “for each of the fiscal years 1999 and 2000 to carry out the provisions of this subchapter.”

#### EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2014 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 113-271, §2, Dec. 18, 2014, 128 Stat. 2951, provided that: “The amendments made by this Act [amending this section and section 6436 of this title] shall take effect as if enacted on December 10, 2014.”

### § 6435a. Standards of conduct and disclosure

#### (a) Cooperation with nongovernmental organizations, the Department of State, and Congress

The Commission shall seek to effectively and freely cooperate with all entities engaged in the promotion of religious freedom abroad, governmental and nongovernmental, in the performance of the Commission’s duties under this subchapter.

#### (b) Conflict of interest and antinepotism

##### (1) Member affiliations

Except as provided in paragraph (3), in order to ensure the independence and integrity of the Commission, the Commission may not compensate any nongovernmental agency, project, or person related to or affiliated with any member of the Commission, whether in that member’s direct employ or not. Staff employed by the Commission may not serve in the employ of any nongovernmental agency, project, or person related to or affiliated with any member of the Commission while employed by the Commission.

##### (2) Staff compensation

Staff of the Commission may not receive compensation from any other source for work performed in carrying out the duties of the Commission while employed by the Commission.

##### (3) Exception

###### (A) In general

Subject to subparagraph (B), paragraph (1) shall not apply to payments made for items such as conference fees or the purchase of periodicals or other similar expenses, if such payments would not cause the aggregate value paid to any agency, project, or person for a fiscal year to exceed \$250.

###### (B) Limitation

Notwithstanding subparagraph (A), the Commission shall not give special preference to any agency, project, or person related to

or affiliated with any member of the Commission.

#### (4) Definitions

In this subsection, the term “affiliated” means the relationship between a member of the Commission and—

(A) an individual who holds the position of officer, trustee, partner, director, or employee of an agency, project, or person of which that member, or relative of that member of,<sup>1</sup> the Commission is an officer, trustee, partner, director, or employee; or

(B) a nongovernmental agency or project of which that member, or a relative of that member, of the Commission is an officer, trustee, partner, director, or employee.

#### (c) Contract authority

##### (1) In general

Subject to the availability of appropriations, the Commission may contract with and compensate Government agencies or persons for the conduct of activities necessary to the discharge of its functions under this subchapter. Any such person shall be hired without interruption or loss of civil service or Foreign Service status or privilege. The Commission may procure temporary and intermittent services under the authority of section 3109(b) of title 5, except that the Commission may not expend more than \$250,000 in any fiscal year to procure such services.

##### (2) Expert study

In the case of a study requested under section 6474 of this title, the Commission may, subject to the availability of appropriations, contract with experts and shall provide the funds for such a study. The Commission shall not be required to provide the funds for that part of the study conducted by the Comptroller General of the United States.

#### (d) Gifts

##### (1) In general

In order to preserve its independence, the Commission may not accept, use, or dispose of gifts or donations of services or property. An individual Commissioner or employee of the Commission may not, in his or her capacity as a Commissioner or employee, knowingly accept, use or dispose of gifts or donations of services or property, unless he or she in good faith believes such gifts or donations to have a value of less than \$50 and a cumulative value during a calendar year of less than \$100.

##### (2) Exceptions

This subsection shall not apply to the following:

(A) Gifts provided on the basis of a personal friendship with a Commissioner or employee, unless the Commissioner or employee has reason to believe that the gift was provided because of the Commissioner’s position and not because of the personal friendship.

(B) Gifts provided on the basis of a family relationship.

<sup>1</sup> So in original. The comma probably should follow “member”.