

§ 1596b. Foreign language proficiency: National Foreign Language Skills Registry

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—(1) The Secretary of Defense may establish and maintain a registry of persons who—

(A) have proficiency in one or more critical foreign languages;

(B) are willing to provide linguistic services to the United States in the interests of national security during war or a national emergency; and

(C) meet the eligibility requirements of subsection (b).

(2) The registry shall be known as the “National Foreign Language Skills Registry” (in this section referred to as the “Registry”).

(b) ELIGIBLE PERSONS.—To be eligible for listing on the Registry, a person—

(1) must be—

(A) a national of the United States (as defined in section 101(a)(22) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(22))); or

(B) an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence (as defined in section 101(a)(20) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(20)));

(2) shall express willingness, in a form and manner prescribed by the Secretary—

(A) to provide linguistic services for a foreign language as described in subsection (a); and

(B) to be listed on the Registry; and

(3) shall meet such language proficiency and other selection criteria as may be prescribed by the Secretary.

(c) REGISTERED INFORMATION.—The Registry shall consist of the following:

(1) The names of eligible persons selected by the Secretary for listing on the Registry.

(2) Such other information on such persons as the Secretary determines pertinent to the use of such persons to provide linguistic services as described in subsection (a).

(d) PROTECTION OF PRIVACY.—The Secretary may withhold from public disclosure the information maintained in the Registry in accordance with section 552a of title 5.

(e) DESIGNATION OF CRITICAL FOREIGN LANGUAGES.—The Secretary shall designate those languages that are critical foreign languages for the purposes of this section. The Secretary shall make such a designation for any foreign language for which there is a shortage of experts in translation or interpretation available to meet requirements of the Secretary or of the head of any other department or agency of the United States for translation or interpretation in the national security interests of the United States.

(f) LINGUISTIC SERVICES DEFINED.—In this section, the term “linguistic services” means translation or interpretation of communication in a foreign language.

(Added Pub. L. 107-314, div. A, title X, §1064(a)(1), Dec. 2, 2002, 116 Stat. 2653.)

§ 1596c. Programming language proficiency: special pay for proficiency beneficial for national security interests

(a) AUTHORITY.—The Secretary of Defense, under the sole and exclusive discretion of the

Secretary, may pay special pay under this section to an employee of the Department of Defense who—

(1) has been certified by the Secretary to be proficient in a computer or digital programming language identified by the Secretary as being a language in which proficiency by civilian personnel of the Department is necessary because of national security interests; and

(2) is assigned duties requiring proficiency in that programming language.

(b) RATE.—The rate of special pay for an employee under this section shall be prescribed by the Secretary, but may not exceed 20 percent of the employee’s rate of basic pay.

(c) RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PAY AND ALLOWANCES.—Special pay under this section is in addition to any other pay or allowances to which the employee is entitled.

(d) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary of Defense shall prescribe regulations to carry out this section.

(Added Pub. L. 116-283, div. A, title II, §241(c)(1), Jan. 1, 2021, 134 Stat. 3487.)

§ 1597. Civilian positions: guidelines for reductions

(a) REQUIREMENT OF GUIDELINES FOR REDUCTIONS IN CIVILIAN POSITIONS.—Reductions in the number of civilian positions of the Department of Defense during a fiscal year, if any, shall be carried out in accordance with the guidelines established pursuant to subsection (b).

(b) GUIDELINES.—The Secretary of Defense shall establish guidelines for the manner in which reductions in the number of civilian positions of the Department of Defense are made. In establishing the guidelines, the Secretary shall ensure that nothing in the guidelines conflicts with the requirements of section 129 of this title or the policies and procedures established under section 129a of this title. The guidelines shall include procedures for reviewing civilian positions for reductions according to the following order:

(1) Positions filled by foreign national employees overseas.

(2) All other positions filled by civilian employees overseas.

(3) Overhead, indirect, and administrative positions in headquarters or field operating agencies in the United States.

(4) Direct operating or production positions in the United States.

(c) EXCEPTIONS.—The Secretary of Defense may permit a variation from the guidelines established under subsection (b) if the Secretary determines that such variation is critical to the national security. The Secretary shall immediately notify the Congress of any such variation and the reasons for such variation.

(d) INVOLUNTARY REDUCTIONS OF CIVILIAN POSITIONS.—The Secretary of Defense may not implement any involuntary reduction or furlough of civilian positions in a military department, Defense Agency, or other component of the Department of Defense until the expiration of the 45-day period beginning on the date on which the Secretary submits to Congress a report setting forth the reasons why such reductions or fur-