

A BILL

To establish the Science, Technology Assessment, and Analytics Office in the Government Accountability Office, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Technology Foresight for Understanding Trends through Unbiased Research, Evidence, and Support Act of 2026” or “Tech FUTURES Act of 2026”.

SEC. 2. CONTINUATION OF THE SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT, AND ANALYTICS OFFICE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter II of chapter 7 of title 31, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“§ 722. Science, Technology Assessment, and Analytics Office

“(a) The Comptroller General shall continue to operate the Science, Technology Assessment, and Analytics Office in the Government Accountability Office, in accordance with this section.

“(b) It is the policy of the Congress that—

“(1) to the extent possible through appropriated funding, the Comptroller General shall encourage, assist, and promote the capabilities of the Government Accountability Office with respect to science and technology, through the STAA Office, in—

“(A) rendering the most effective and efficient service to the Congress;

“(B) responding most expeditiously, effectively, and efficiently to the special needs of the Congress; and

“(C) discharging the responsibilities of the STAA Office to the Congress; and

“(2) the Comptroller General shall grant and accord to the personnel of the STAA Office complete research independence and the maximum practicable administrative independence consistent with this policy.

“(c) The Comptroller General, without regard to the civil service laws and solely on the basis of fitness to perform the duties of each respective position—

“(1) in consultation with the appropriate congressional committees, shall appoint a Director of the STAA Office, who shall supervise the STAA Office and perform such other duties and responsibilities assigned to the Director by the Comptroller General; and

“(2) on the recommendation of the Director, shall appoint a Deputy Director of the STAA Office, who shall supervise the STAA Office in the absence of the Director, and such other personnel of the STAA Office.

“(d) To the extent possible through appropriated funding, the personnel of the STAA Office shall perform the following duties:

“(1) On the request of any congressional committee or any Member of Congress with respect to a technology assessment or recommendation submitted by the President or an executive agency to the Congress—

“(A) advise and assist the congressional committee or Member of Congress in the analysis, appraisal, or evaluation of the assessment or recommendation by—

“(i) conducting objective, rigorous, and timely analysis of emerging technologies pertaining to the assessment or recommendation in order to assess potential benefits and risks;

“(ii) evaluating the probable policy results of the assessment or recommendation and alternatives to the assessment or recommendation;

“(iii) evaluating alternative methods for accomplishing the policy results described in clause (ii);

“(iv) offering briefings of the assessment or recommendation; and

“(B) provide such other research and analytical services, as the congressional committee or Member of Congress considers appropriate, or as the Comptroller General determines is appropriate, to assist the congressional committee or Member of Congress in developing a proper evaluation or determination of a technology assessment or recommendation.

“(2) Notify each Member of Congress and to each congressional committee, at the opening of a new Congress, of such subjects and emerging technology policy areas that the STAA Office might analyze for the Member and committee.

“(3) Submit to the congressional oversight committees, at the beginning of each session of the Congress, a report that contains—

“(A) a detailed description of every activity of the STAA Office in the most recent completed fiscal year prior to the session; and

“(B) a summary of the activities described in subparagraph (A).

“(4) Conduct horizon scanning activities to identify strategic trends in areas of science and technology that have national importance, significance, or interest, and communicate such identifications to Members of Congress, congressional committees, and other entities of the Congress.

“(5) On the request of a congressional committee or a Member of Congress, or on the initiative of the Director of the STAA Office in accordance with protocols of the Comptroller General for providing services to the Congress—

“(A) make available to the congressional committee or Member of Congress, in the form of a study, report, compilation, digest, bulletin, index, translation, or other appropriate means of publication, the collection, classification, or analysis of data relevant to the legislative priorities of the congressional committee or Member of Congress;

“(B) provide to the congressional committee or Member of Congress such information, research, or reference material or service necessary to assist the congressional committee or Member of Congress on a legislative matter;

“(C) publish a concise memorandum, with respect to a legislative matter considered by the congressional committee or Member of Congress, that contains—

“(i) a statement of the purpose and effect of the matter;

“(ii) a description of such other matters considered by the Congress with similar purpose or effect; and

“(iii) a recitation of the actions taken in the Congress with respect to the matters described in clause (ii);

“(D) provide briefings, whether classified or unclassified, to the congressional committee or Member of Congress; and

“(E) make available such other technical assistance to the congressional committee or Member of Congress.

“(6) Maintain the capability of the STAA Office to carry out this section through the regular periodic recruitment of

specialists, consultants, and other experts as employees of the STAA Office.

“(e) The Comptroller General, without regard to the civil service laws and solely on the basis of fitness to perform such duties as assigned by the Comptroller General or the Director of the STAA Office, may appoint among the personnel of the STAA Office scientists, engineers, and other technical experts and specialists in the following fields:

“(1) Advanced computing.

“(2) Artificial intelligence.

“(3) Automation.

“(4) Biotechnology.

“(5) Human-machine interfaces.

“(6) Such other fields of emerging technology as deemed appropriated by the Comptroller General, on the recommendation of the Director of the STAA Office.

“(f) The Comptroller General may establish a science and technology fellowship program with respect to which the following shall apply:

“(1) A science and technology fellow selected under the program shall be appointed by the Comptroller General, without regard to the civil services laws and solely on the basis of fitness to perform such duties as assigned by the Comptroller General or the Director of the STAA Office, to serve as an employee of the Government Accountability Office in the STAA Office for a term of not more than 2 years.

“(2) A science and technology fellow may not disclose commercially valuable information to the public or include such information in publicly disclosed work product of the Government Accountability Office.

“(3) The Comptroller General and the personnel of the Government Accountability Office may not use personal property or rights related to science or technology that, in the determination of the Comptroller General, compromises or appears to compromise the integrity and independence of the Comptroller General and the Government Accountability Office.

“(g) The personnel of the STAA Office shall carry out this section and all duties and responsibilities assigned to the personnel or the STAA Office without partisan bias.

“(h) The Director of the STAA Office may, from time to time—

“(1) organize the requests for services of the STAA Office by the congressional committees and the Member of Congress pursuant to this section in such a manner as the Director determines is necessary in order—

“(A) to expedite and to facilitate the fulfillment of the requests submitted by the Members of Congress; and

“(B) to promote efficiency in the performance of services for the congressional committees; and

“(2) establish and modify the divisions or other organizational units of the STAA Office, as the Director considers necessary to carry out this section.

“(i) Any budget estimate or request by the Comptroller General with respect to the Government Accountability Office shall include information with respect to the STAA Office as a separate item that shall be prepared by the Director of the STAA Office and submitted to the Comptroller General.

“(j) The STAA Office shall be subject to reauthorization under this section on the date that is 10 years after the date of the first day of the fiscal year after the date of the enactment of this section.

“(k) There are authorized to be appropriated, for each fiscal year before the date described in subsection (h), \$13,400,000 to carry out this section.

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“(l) Not later than 1 year before the date described in subsection (j), the Comptroller General and the Director of the STAA Office each shall submit to the congressional oversight committees a report containing—

“(1) an evaluation of—

“(A) the effectiveness of the STAA Office in carrying out this section; and

“(B) the necessity of continued operations of the STAA Office; and

“(2) recommendations with respect to the reauthorization or modification of the STAA Office.

“(m) In this section:

“(1) The term ‘congressional committee’ means—

“(A) a committee in the House of Representatives;

“(B) a committee in the Senate; and

“(C) a joint committee of the Congress.

“(2) The term ‘congressional oversight committee’ means—

“(A) the Committee on Oversight and Reform of the House of Representatives; and

“(B) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate.

“(3) The term ‘Member of Congress’ means a Senator or Representative in, or Delegate or Resident Commissioner to, the Congress.

“(4) The term ‘STAA Office’ means the Science, Technology Assessment, and Analytics Office in the Government Accountability Office described in subsection (a).”.

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(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 7 of title 31, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 721 the following:

“722. Science, Technology Assessment, and Analytics Office.”.