



Written by [D. Michael DeRidder](#) on December 19, 2024

House Bill Includes Funding for State Department “Censorship” Agency

The continuing resolution (CR) bill released yesterday includes renewing funding for a State Department agency known as the Global Engagement Center (GEC). Funding for the GEC is just one of the many questionable sections included in the 1,547-page H.R. 10445. Under “Foreign Affairs Section 301. Global Engagement Center Extension” [on page 139, the bill states:](#)

Section 1287(j) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 (Public Law 114-328; 22 U.S.C. 2656 note) is amended by striking “on the date that is 8 years after the date of the enactment of this 20 Act” and inserting “on the date that is 9 years after the date of the enactment of this Act”



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First Amendment Concerns

The GEC’s [stated mission is to](#) “recognize, understand, expose, and counter foreign state and non-state propaganda and disinformation efforts” by adversarial foreign governments, who allegedly are “undermining or influencing the policies, security, or stability of the United States, its allies, and partner nations.” The constitutionality of the State Department agency is under scrutiny due to it expanding its oversight to domestic discourse, potentially violating the First Amendment by directly, or indirectly, censoring protected speech.

The GEC has also been [criticized for allegedly violating the free speech](#) rights of American citizens (under the guise of opposing foreign disinformation) by allegedly providing funding to the Global Disinformation Index (GDI), a nonprofit organization based in London [whose stated mission is](#) “to reduce disinformation.” According to GDI, “we need to remove the financial incentive to create [disinformation]” by influencing companies to cut online advertisement spending.

This funding raises questions in regard to a federal government agency indirectly influencing companies, and undermining free speech protected by the First Amendment. The GDI is accused of disproportionately targeting conservatives who it claims “spread disinformation,” effectively censoring protected political speech through financial deplatforming.

Criticism of GEC Funding

Senator Eric Schmitt (R-Mo.) stated the GEC should be excluded from legislation for the remainder of the 118th Congress, citing protecting U.S. citizens’ First Amendment rights, [stating in a post on X:](#)



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The Global Engagement Center must be excluded from any subsequent piece of legislation for the remainder of the 118th Congress. The American people deserve to know their First Amendment rights are being protected.

<https://twitter.com/SenEricSchmitt/status/1869569275515502937>

Representative Andrew Clyde (R-Ga.) said Congress shouldn't fund the GEC, claiming it illegally censors U.S. citizens, [stating in a post on X](#):

The State Department's Global Engagement Center has illegally censored conservatives for years. Congress shouldn't reauthorize or fund the GEC — period.

Elon Musk also criticized the CR, noting it funds the GEC, which he describes as a government "censorship operation," [stating in a post on X](#):

<https://twitter.com/elonmusk/status/1869443894070686162>



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