

By: Hughes

S.B. No. 2514

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to establishing the hostile foreign organizations unit at the Department of Public Safety and training, prohibitions, reporting requirements, and community outreach designed to combat foreign influence; creating a criminal offense.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Section 411.002(a), Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

(a) The Department of Public Safety of the State of Texas is an agency of the state to enforce the laws protecting the public safety and provide for the prevention and detection of crime. The department is composed of the Texas Rangers, the hostile foreign organizations unit, the Texas Highway Patrol, the administrative division, and other divisions that the commission considers necessary.

SECTION 2. Chapter 411, Government Code, is amended by adding Subchapter S to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER S. HOSTILE FOREIGN ORGANIZATIONS UNIT

Sec. 411.551. DEFINITIONS. In this subchapter:

(1) "Foreign influence operation" means covert actions by foreign governments, primarily conducted indirectly through front organizations, to influence political sentiment or public discourse in the United States.

(2) "Unit" means the department's hostile foreign

1 organizations unit established under this subchapter.

2 Sec. 411.552. HOSTILE FOREIGN ORGANIZATIONS UNIT. The  
3 hostile foreign organizations unit is established in the department  
4 to develop and make recommendations for implementing a strategy to  
5 identify, investigate, and track foreign influence operations in  
6 this state.

7 Sec. 411.553. UNIT CHIEF AND OTHER EMPLOYEES; ADDITIONAL  
8 DUTIES. The director may:

9 (1) appoint a unit chief and other unit employees as  
10 necessary to perform unit functions; and

11 (2) assign to the unit and the unit chief any duties of  
12 another department division that relate to the investigation and  
13 tracking of hostile foreign organizations.

14 Sec. 411.554. STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT. The unit shall, in  
15 collaboration with federal, state, and local agencies and private  
16 entities, develop a strategy for identifying, investigating, and  
17 tracking:

18 (1) foreign influence operations in this state;

19 (2) individuals conducting foreign influence  
20 operations in this state; and

21 (3) any person who:

22 (A) is an officer or employee of or is otherwise  
23 associated with a hostile foreign government or other hostile  
24 foreign organization; and

25 (B) maintains regular contact with an individual  
26 described by Subdivision (2).

27 Sec. 411.555. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTING STRATEGY.

1 The unit shall develop and report to the director recommendations  
2 for cyber intelligence services and other similar services  
3 necessary to implement the strategy developed under Section  
4 411.554.

5 Sec. 411.556. SECURE STORAGE OF SENSITIVE INFORMATION. (a)  
6 The unit shall provide for the secure storage of sensitive  
7 information obtained or produced as part of the strategy developed  
8 under Section 411.554.

9 (b) Information determined as sensitive under Subsection  
10 (a) is not subject to disclosure under Chapter 552.

11 Sec. 411.557. INFORMATION SHARING. With the approval of  
12 the director, the unit may share information determined sensitive  
13 under Section 411.556(a) with another federal, state, or local law  
14 enforcement agency. The disclosure of information under this  
15 section is not a voluntary disclosure under Section 552.007.

16 SECTION 3. Chapter 470, Government Code, is amended by  
17 adding Section 470.010 to read as follows:

18 SECTION 4. Section 571.071, Government Code, is amended by  
19 amending Subsection (a) and adding Subsections (e) and (f) to read  
20 as follows:

21 (a) The commission shall:

22 (1) provide training by January of each odd-numbered  
23 year for members and members-elect of the legislature concerning  
24 compliance with the laws administered and enforced by the  
25 commission; and

26 (2) provide, in cooperation with state agencies:

27 (A)~~[7]~~ a program of ethics training for state

employees; and

(B) a program of training for state employees on foreign influence in accordance with Subsection (e).

(e) The commission shall develop a training program to educate state employees on the influence operations of foreign adversaries and other hostile foreign actors, including the United Front Work Department of the central committee of the Chinese Communist Party and other coordinated foreign influence operations. The training program must include education on:

(1) known efforts by foreign adversaries to target and influence subnational governments, including efforts made by the United Front Work Department;

(2) identifying and recognizing suspected foreign influence operations;

(3) informational resources promulgated by federal, state, and nongovernmental organizations on United Front Work Department activities in this state and adjacent states; and

(4) reporting to the commission and law enforcement agencies suspected foreign influence operations and other interactions with persons acting on behalf of a foreign adversary.

(f) In this section:

(1) "Foreign adversary" has the meaning assigned by Section 572.070.

(2) "Foreign influence operation" has the meaning assigned by Section 411.551.

SECTION 5. Subchapter C, Chapter 572, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 572.070 to read as follows:

1       Sec. 572.070. PROHIBITIONS AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS  
2 RELATED TO FOREIGN INFLUENCE; CRIMINAL OFFENSE. (a) In this  
3 section, "foreign adversary" means a country identified by the  
4 United States Director of National Intelligence as a country that  
5 poses a risk to the national security of the United States in the  
6 most recent Annual Threat Assessment of the U.S. Intelligence  
7 Community issued pursuant to Section 108B, National Security Act of  
8 1947 (50 U.S.C. Section 3043b).

9       (b) An employee or volunteer of a state agency or a  
10 political subdivision of this state may not:

11           (1) accept transportation to or lodging in a country  
12 that is a foreign adversary and that is paid for by the foreign  
13 adversary because of the employee's or volunteer's position with  
14 the state or political subdivision; or

15           (2) accept a gift or item of value from a person  
16 representing a foreign adversary for any purpose, including to pay  
17 for travel expenses or as reimbursement for the costs of attending a  
18 conference or other event in a country that is a foreign adversary  
19 or that is hosted on behalf of a foreign adversary or a principal of  
20 a foreign adversary.

21       (c) An employee or volunteer of a state agency or a  
22 political subdivision of this state shall report to the commission,  
23 in the form and manner the commission requires, each interaction,  
24 communication, or meeting the employee or volunteer has with a  
25 person acting on behalf of a foreign adversary not later than the  
26 30th day after the date of the interaction, communication, or  
27 meeting. The commission shall make available a report under this

1 subsection to the attorney general and the Texas Department of  
2 Public Safety on request.

3 (d) A person commits an offense if the person violates this  
4 section. An offense under this subsection is a Class A misdemeanor.

5 SECTION 6. As soon as practicable after the effective date  
6 of this Act but not later than January 1, 2026, the governor shall  
7 appoint the liaison required by Section 470.010, Government Code,  
8 as added by this Act.

9 SECTION 7. Section 572.070(c), Government Code, as added by  
10 this Act, applies to an interaction, communication, or meeting with  
11 a person acting on behalf of a foreign adversary that occurs on or  
12 after March 1, 2025. A person required to report an interaction,  
13 communication, or meeting under that section that occurred before  
14 the effective date of this Act shall make the report not later than  
15 the 30th day after the effective date of this Act.

16 SECTION 8. This Act takes effect September 1, 2025.