

Foreign Affairs Act [HR-8]

July 27, 1789

AN ACT FOR ESTABLISHING AN EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT, TO BE DENOMINATED THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

[1] BE IT ENACTED BY THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED, That there shall be an Executive department, to be denominated the department of foreign Affairs: and that there shall be a principal Officer therein, to be called the Secretary for the department of foreign Affairs, who shall perform and execute such duties as shall from time to time be enjoined on, or intrusted to him by the President of the United States, agreeable to the Constitution, relative to correspondences, commissions, or instructions to, or with public Ministers or Consuls from the United States, or to negotiations with public Ministers from foreign States or princes, or to Memorials or other applications from foreign public Ministers, or other foreigners, or to such other Matters respecting foreign Affairs, as the President of the United States shall assign to the said department: And furthermore, that the said principal Officer shall conduct the business of the said department in such manner as the President of the United States, shall from time to time Order or instruct.

[2] AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That there shall be in the said department an inferior Officer, to be appointed by the said principal Officer, and to be employed therein as he shall deem proper, and to be called the chief Clerk in the department of foreign Affairs, and who, whenever the said principal Officer shall be removed from Office by the President of the United States, or in any other case of vacancy, shall during such Vacancy, have the charge and custody of all Records, Books, and Papers, appertaining to the said department.

[3] AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the said principal Officer, and every other person to be appointed or employed in the said department, shall, before he enters on the execution of his Office or employment, take an Oath or Affirmation well and faithfully to execute the trust committed to him.

[4] AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the Secretary for the department of foreign Affairs, to be appointed in consequence of this Act, shall, forthwith

after his Appointment, be entitled to have the Custody and charge of all Records, Books, and Papers in the Office of Secretary for the department of foreign Affairs, heretofore established by the United States in Congress Assembled.

FREDERICK AUGUSTUS MUHLENBERG
Speaker of the House of Representatives
JOHN ADAMS
Vice-President of the United States, and
President of the Senate

Approved July
Twenty seventh
1789

GO. WASHINGTON
President of the United States

I certify that this Act did originate
in the House of Representatives.
Clerk