FIRST REGULAR SESSION

HOUSE BILL NO. 1351

103RD GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE BYRNES.

2880H.01I JOSEPH ENGLER, Chief Clerk

AN ACT

To amend chapter 27, RSMo, by adding thereto one new section relating to the foreign agents registration act, with penalty provisions.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the state of Missouri, as follows:

Section A. Chapter 27, RSMo, is amended by adding thereto one new section, to be known as section 27.200, to read as follows:

27.200. 1. This section shall be known and may be cited as the "Foreign Agents **Registration Act".**

- 3 2. As used in this section, the following terms mean:
 - (1) "Adversary nation", countries listed in 15 CFR 791.4;
- 5 (2) "Agent of a foreign principal" shall include:
- (a) Any person who acts as an agent, representative, employee, or servant or any person who acts in any other capacity at the order, request, or under the direction or control of a foreign principal or of a person whose activities are directly or indirectly supervised, directed, controlled, financed, or subsidized in whole or in part by a foreign principal, and who directly or through any other person: 10
- a. Engages within the state of Missouri in political activities for or in the interests of such foreign principal; 12
- 13 b. Acts within the state of Missouri as a public relations counsel, publicity agent,
- information-service employee, or political consultant for or in the interests of such
- 15 foreign principal;

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EXPLANATION — Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted from the law. Matter in **bold-face** type in the above bill is proposed language.

16 c. Within the state of Missouri, solicits, collects, disburses, or dispenses 17 contributions, loans, money, or other things of value for or in the interest of such foreign 18 principal; or

- d. Within the state of Missouri, represents the interests of such foreign principal before any agency or public official of the state of Missouri or any political subdivision thereof; and
- (b) Any person who agrees, consents, assumes, or purports to act as, or who is or holds themselves out to be, whether under a contractual relationship, an agent of a foreign principal.

"Agent of a foreign principal" shall not include any news or press service or association organized under the laws of the United States or of any state or other place subject to the jurisdiction of the United States; any newspaper, magazine, periodical, or any social media websites and applications that enable users to create and share content or to participate in social networking; or other publication for which there is on file with the United States Postal Service information in compliance with Section 3611 of Title 39 solely by virtue of any bona fide news or journalistic activities, including the solicitation or acceptance of advertisements, subscriptions, or other compensation, so long as such media is at least eighty percent beneficially owned by, and its officers and directors, if any, are, citizens of the United States and such news or press service or association, newspaper, magazine, periodical, or other publication is not owned, directed, supervised, controlled, subsidized, or financed, and none of its policies are determined, by any foreign principal or by any agent of a foreign principal required to register under this section;

- (3) "Foreign political party", any organization or any other combination of individuals in a country other than the United States, or any territory subject to the jurisdiction thereof, having for an aim or purpose, or that is engaged in any activity devoted in whole or in part to, the establishment, administration, control, or acquisition of administration or control, of a government of a foreign country or a subdivision thereof, or the furtherance or influencing of the political or public interests, policies, or relations of a government of a foreign country or a subdivision thereof;
 - (4) "Foreign principal" shall include:
 - (a) A government of a foreign country and a foreign political party;
- (b) A person outside of the United States unless it is established that such person is an individual and a citizen of and domiciled within the United States or that such person is not an individual and is organized under or created by the laws of the United

52 States or of any state or other place subject to the jurisdiction of the United States and 53 has its principal place of business within the United States;

- (c) A partnership, association, corporation, organization, or other combination of persons organized under the laws of or having its principal place of business in a foreign country;
- (d) A partnership, association, corporation, organization, or other combination of persons that is at least twenty percent beneficially owned by a partnership, association, corporation, organization, or other combination of persons organized under the laws of or having its principal place of business in a foreign country; or
 - (e) A foreign terrorist organization;
- (5) "Foreign terrorist organization", any organization that appears on the United States Department of State's list of Designated Foreign Terrorist Organizations;
- (6) "Government of a foreign country", any person or group of persons exercising sovereign de facto or de jure political jurisdiction over any country other than the United States or over any part of such country, inclduing any subdivision of any such group and any group or agency to which such sovereign de facto or de jure authority or functions are directly or indirectly delegated. Such term shall include any faction or body of insurgents within a country assuming to exercise governmental authority whether such faction or body of insurgents has or has not been recognized by the United States;
- (7) "Information-service employee", any person who is engaged in furnishing, disseminating, or publishing accounts, descriptions, information, or data with respect to the political, industrial, employment, economic, social, cultural, or other benefits, advantages, facts, or conditions of any country other than the United States or of any government of a foreign country, a foreign political party, or a partnership, association, corporation, organization, or other combination of individuals organized under the laws of, or having its principal place of business in, a foreign country;
- (8) "Person", an individual, partnership, association, corporation, organization, or any other combination of individuals;
- (9) "Political activities", any activity that the person engaging in believes will, or that the person intends to, in any way influence any agency or public official of the state of Missouri or any political subdivision thereof or any section of the public within the state of Missouri with reference to formulating, adopting, or changing the domestic or foreign policies of the United States or of the state of Missouri with reference to the political or public interests, policies, or relations of a government of a foreign country or a foreign political party;

(10) "Political consultant", any person who engages in informing or advising any other person with reference to the policies of the state of Missouri or the political or public interest, policies, or relations of a foreign country or of a foreign political party;

- (11) "Prints", newspapers and periodicals, books, pamphlets, sheet music, visiting cards, address cards, printing proofs, engravings, photographs, pictures, drawings, plans, maps, patterns to be cut out, catalogs, prospectuses, advertisements, and printed, engraved, lithographed, or autographed notices of various kinds, and, in general, all impressions or reproductions obtained on paper or other material assimilable to paper, on parchment, or on cardboard, by means of printing, engraving, lithography, autography, or any other easily recognizable mechanical process. Prints shall not include the copying press, stamps with movable or immovable type, and the typewriter;
- (12) "Public relations counsel", any person who engages directly or indirectly in informing, advising, or in any way representing a principal in any public relations matter pertaining to political or public interests, policies, or relations of such principal;
- (13) "Publicity agent", any person who engages directly or indirectly in the publication or dissemination of oral, visual, graphic, written, or pictorial information or matter of any kind, including publication by means of advertising, books, periodicals, newspapers, lectures, broadcasts, motion pictures, or otherwise;
- (14) "Registration statement", the registration statement required to be filed with the attorney general under this section and any supplements thereto, including all documents and papers attached or incorporated by reference.
- 3. No person shall act as an agent of a foreign principal from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization unless he or she has filed with the attorney general a true and complete registration statement as required by this section or unless he or she is exempt from registration under the provisions of this section. Except as hereinafter provided, every person who becomes an agent of a foreign principal from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization shall, within ten days, file with the attorney general a registration statement under oath on a form prescribed by the attorney general. The agent shall be required to keep his or her registration current and update information as required for the entire time during which he or she serves as an agent for a foreign principal from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization. The registration statement shall include the following:
- (1) The registrant's name, principal business address and all other business addresses in the United States or elsewhere, and all residence addresses, if any;
- (2) Status of the registrant; if an individual, the individual's nationality; if a partnership, the name, residence addresses, and nationality of each partner and a true

and complete copy of its articles of copartnership; if an association, corporation, organization, or any other combination of suchindividuals, the name, residence addresses, and nationality of each director and officer and of each person performing the functions of a director or officer and a true and complete copy of its charter, articles of incorporation, association, constitution, and bylaws, and amendments thereto; a copy of every other instrument or document and a statement of the terms and conditions of every oral agreement relating to its organization, powers, and purposes; and a statement of its ownership and control;

- (3) A comprehensive statement of the nature of the registrant's business; a complete list of the registrant's employees and a statement of the nature of the work of each; the name and address of every foreign principal from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization for whom the registrant is acting, assuming or purporting to act, or has agreed to act; the character of the business or other activities of every such foreign principal from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization, and, if any such foreign principal from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization be other than a natural person, a statement of the ownership and control of each; and the extent, if any, to which each such foreign principal from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization is supervised, directed, owned, controlled, financed, or subsidized, in whole or in part, by any government of a foreign country or foreign political party, or by any other foreign principal from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization;
- (4) Copies of each written agreement and the terms and conditions of each oral agreement, including all modifications of such agreements, or, where no contract exists, a full statement of all the circumstances, by reason of which the registrant is an agent of a foreign principal from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization and a comprehensive statement of the nature and method of performance of each such contract and of the existing and proposed activity or activities engaged in or to be engaged in by the registrant as agent of a foreign principal from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization for each such foreign principal from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization, including a detailed statement of any such activity that is a political activity;
- (5) The nature and amount of contributions, income, money, or thing of value, if any, that the registrant has received within the preceding one hundred eighty days from each such foreign principal from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization, either as compensation or for disbursement or otherwise, and the form and time of each such payment and from whom received;

- (6) A detailed statement of every activity that the registrant is performing or is assuming or purporting or has agreed to perform for themselves or any other person other than a foreign principal from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization and that requires their registration hereunder, including a detailed statement of any such activity that is a political activity;
- (7) The name, business, and residence addresses, and if an individual, the nationality, of any person other than a foreign principal from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization for whom the registrant is acting, assuming, or purporting to act or has agreed to act under such circumstances as require their registration hereunder; the extent to which each such person is supervised, directed, owned, controlled, financed, or subsidized, in whole or in part, by any government of a foreign country or foreign political party or by any other foreign principal from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization; and the nature and amount of contributions, income, money, or thing of value, if any, that the registrant has received during the preceding one hundred eighty days from each such person in connection with any of the activities referred to in subdivision (6) of this subsection, either as compensation or for disbursement or otherwise, and the form and time of each such payment and from whom received;
- (8) A detailed statement of the money and other things of value spent or disposed of by the registrant during the preceding one hundred eighty days in furtherance of or in connection with activities that require their registration hereunder and that have been undertaken by them either as an agent of a foreign principal from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization or for themselves or any other person or in connection with any activities relating to them becoming an agent of such principal from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization and a detailed statement of any contributions of money or other things of value made by them during the preceding one hundred eighty days, other than contributions that are prohibited by federal law or the laws of this state, in connection with an election to any political office or in connection with any primary election, convention, or caucus held to select candidates for any political office;
- (9) Copies of each written agreement and the terms and conditions of each oral agreement, including all modifications of such agreements, or, where no contract exists, a full statement of all the circumstances, by reason of which the registrant is performing or assuming or purporting or has agreed to perform for themselves or for a foreign principal from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization or foreign terrorist organization any activities that require their registration hereunder; and

(10) Such other statements, information, or documents pertinent to the purposes 199 of this subsection as the attorney general may deem necessary.

- 4. Every agent of a foreign principal from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization who has filed a registration statement required by subsection 3 of this section shall file a supplemental registration every six months on a form prescribed by the attorney general. The supplement shall update any information that has changed since the original registration or the previous supplement. If there is a change in any information provided in an initial registration or a supplement, the registrant shall file an update with the attorney general within ten days of such change. The attorney general may, at his or her discretion, require supplemental information to be filed more regularly than every six months.
- 5. Registrations shall be subscribed and sworn under oath. For a business entity filing a registration, the oath shall be subscribed and sworn by at least fifty percent of its governing body or officers.
- 6. Timely registration and supplementation and acceptance of such filings by the attorney general shall not be sufficient to indicate full compliance with this section, nor shall timely filings preclude persecution under this section.
- 7. If any agent of a foreign principal from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization, required to register under the provisions of this section, has previously registered with the attorney general under this section, the attorney general may permit the incorporation by reference of any information or documents previously filed by such agent of a foreign principal from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization under the provisions of such section.
- 8. Any person who acted as an agent of a foreign principal from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization at any time after January 1, 2019, shall file with the attorney general a true and complete retroactive registration statement and supplements as required under subsections 3 to 7 of this section.
- 9. The provisions of subsections 3 to 8 of this section shall not apply to the following agents of foreign principals:
- (1) A duly accredited diplomatic or consular officer of a foreign government who is recognized by the United States Department of State, while such officer is engaged exclusively in activities that are recognized by the United States Department of State as being within the scope of the functions of such officer;
- (2) Any official of a foreign government, if such government is recognized by the United States, who is not a public-relations counsel, publicity agent, information-service employee, or a citizen of the United States, whose name and status and the character of whose duties as such official are of public record in the United States Department of

State, while the official is engaged exclusively in activities that are recognized by the Department of State as being within the scope of the functions of such official;

- (3) Any member of the staff of, or any person employed by, a duly accredited diplomatic or consular officer of a foreign government who is so recognized by the United States Department of State, other than a public-relations counsel, publicity agent, or information-service employee, whose name and status and the character of whose duties as such member or employee are of public record in the United States Department of State, while the member or employee is engaged exclusively in the performance of activities that are recognized by the United States Department of State as being within the scope of the functions of such member or employee; and
- (4) Any person qualified to practice law in the state of Missouri, if engaged in or agreed to engage in the legal representation of a disclosed foreign principal from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization before any court in the state or any agency of the state or any political subdivision thereof, provided that for the purposes of this section legal representation does not include attempts to influence or persuade agency personnel or officials other than in the course of judicial proceedings, criminal or civil law enforcement inquiries, investigations, or proceedings, or agency proceedings required by statute or regulation to be conducted on the record.
- 10. Every person within the state of Missouri who is an agent of a foreign principal from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization and who is required to register under the provisions of this section and who transmits or causes to be transmitted through the United States mail, through digital communication, or by any means or instrumentality of interstate or foreign commerce any informational materials for or in the interests of such foreign principal from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization in the form of prints or in any other form that is reasonably adapted to being, or that they believe will be or intends to be, disseminated or circulated among two or more persons shall, not later than forty-eight hours after the beginning of the transmittal thereof, file with the attorney general a copy thereof.
- 11. It shall be unlawful for any person within the United States who is an agent of a foreign principal from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization and required to register under the provisions of this section to transmit or cause to be transmitted through the United States mail, through digital communication, or by any means or instrumentality of interstate or foreign commerce any informational materials for or in the interests of such foreign principal from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization without placing in such informational materials a conspicuous statement that the materials are distributed by the agent on behalf of the foreign principal from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization and that additional

information is on file with the attorney general. The attorney general may define what constitutes a conspicuous statement for the purposes of this section by rule.

- 12. The copies of informational materials required to be filed with the attorney general under subsection 10 of this section shall be available for public inspection, as prescribed by the attorney general by rule.
- 13. It shall be unlawful for any person within the state of Missouri who is an agent of a foreign principal from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization required to register under the provisions of this section to transmit, convey, or otherwise furnish to any agency or for or in the interests of such foreign principal from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization, any political propaganda or to request from any such agency, or public official of the state of Missouri for or in the interests of such foreign principal from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization any information or advice with respect to any matter pertaining to the political or public interests, policies, or relations of a foreign adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization or of a political party from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization or pertaining to the foreign or domestic policies of the United States or the state of Missouri unless the propaganda or the request is prefaced or accompanied by a true and accurate statement to the effect that such person is registered as an agent of such foreign principal from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization under this section.
- 14. If any agent of a foreign principal from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization required to register under this section appears before any committee of the general assembly or a local government to testify for or in the interests of such foreign principal from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization, the agent shall, at the time of such appearance, furnish the committee with a copy of their most recent registration statement filed with the attorney general as an agent of such foreign principal from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization for inclusion in the records of the committee as part of their testimony.
- 15. Every agent of a foreign principal from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization registered under this section shall keep and preserve such books of account and other records with respect to all his or her activities, the disclosure of which is required under the provisions of this section, in accordance with such business and accounting practices, as the attorney general may prescribe by rule and shall preserve such books and records for a period of three years following the termination of such status. Until regulations are in effect under this section, every agent of a foreign principal from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization shall keep books of account and shall preserve all written records with respect to their activities. Such

books and records shall be open at all reasonable times to the inspection of any official charged with the enforcement of this section. It shall be unlawful for any person to willfully conceal, destroy, obliterate, mutilate, falsify; to attempt to conceal, destroy, obliterate, mutilate, or falsify; or to cause to be concealed, destroyed, obliterated, mutilated, or falsified, any books or records required to be kept under the provisions of this section.

- 16. The attorney general shall retain in permanent form one copy of all registration statements furnished under this section, and the same shall be public records and open to public examination and inspection at such reasonable hours, as the attorney general may prescribe by rule, and copies of the same shall be furnished to every applicant at a reasonable fee as the attorney general may prescribe.
- 17. The attorney general shall, promptly upon receipt, transmit one copy of every registration statement, supplement, or addendum filed under this section, to the United States Secretary of State.
- 18. The attorney general is authorized to furnish to departments and agencies in the executive branch and committees of the general assembly such information obtained in the administration of this section, including the names of registrants under this section, copies of registration statements, or other documents or information filed under this section, as may be appropriate.
- 19. The attorney general shall submit a report to the general assembly every six months concerning the administration of this section, including registrations filed under this section and the nature, sources, and content of political propaganda disseminated and distributed.
- 20. The attorney general shall publish on his or her website the registrations filed under this section and the nature, sources, and content of political propaganda disseminated and distributed.
- 21. Each officer, or person performing the functions of an officer, and each director, or person performing the functions of a director, of an agent of a foreign principal from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization that is not an individual shall require such agent to execute and file a registration statement and supplements as required by this section and shall also be under obligation to cause such agent to comply with all the requirements this section. Dissolution of any organization acting as an agent of a foreign principal from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization shall not relieve any officer, or person performing the functions of an officer, or any director, or person performing the functions of a director, from complying with the provisions of this section. In case of failure of any such agent of a foreign principal from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization to comply

with any of the requirements of this section, each of its officers, or persons performing the functions of officers, and each of its directors, or persons performing the functions of directors, shall be subject to prosecution.

- 22. Any person who commits the following acts shall, upon conviction thereof, be punished by a fine of not more than one hundred thousand dollars:
 - (1) Willfully violates any provision of this section; or
- (2) In any registration statement or supplement or in any other document filed with or furnished to the attorney general under the provisions of this section, willfully makes a false statement of a material fact, willfully omits any material fact, or willfully omits a material fact or a copy of a material document.
- 23. Any person who is a student, faculty member, researcher, adjunct, or otherwise employed or associated with a university in Missouri who commits the following acts shall, upon conviction thereof, be expelled or dismissed from any role with an institution of higher education in Missouri and shall be prohibited from entering any campus in this state:
 - (1) Willfully violates any provision of this section; or
- (2) In any registration statement or supplement or in any other document filed with or furnished to the attorney general under the provisions of this section willfully makes a false statement of a material fact, willfully omits any material fact, or willfully omits a material fact or a copy of a material document.

Each institution of higher education in Missouri shall adopt a policy for permanent expulsion and dismissal of individuals found in violation of this section.

- 24. In any proceeding under this section in which it is charged that a person is an agent of a foreign principal from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization, proof of the specific identity of the foreign principal from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization shall be permissible but not necessary.
- 25. Any alien who shall be convicted of a violation of, or a conspiracy to violate, any provision of this section or any regulation thereunder shall be subject to referral to the United States Department of Justice for removal under 8 U.S.C. Section 1221 et seq.
- 26. Failure to file any registration statement or supplements as is required by this section shall be considered a continuing offense for as long as such failure exists, notwithstanding any statute of limitation or other statute to the contrary.
- 27. If in the judgment of the attorney general, any person is engaged in or about to engage in any acts that constitute or will constitute a violation of any provision of this section or if any agent of a foreign principal from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization fails to comply with any of the provisions of this section or

otherwise is in violation of this section, the attorney general may make application to the appropriate state court for an order enjoining such acts or enjoining such person from continuing to act as an agent of such foreign principal from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization, or for an order requiring compliance with any appropriate provision of the section. The state court shall have jurisdiction and authority to issue a temporary or permanent injunction, restraining order, or such other order that it may deem proper.

- 28. If the attorney general determines that a registration statement does not comply with the requirements of this section, he or she shall notify the registrant in writing, specifying in what respects the statement is deficient. It shall be unlawful for any person to act as an agent of a foreign principal from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization at any time ten days or more after receipt of such notification without filing an amended registration statement in full compliance with the requirements of this section.
- 29. It shall be unlawful for any agent of a foreign principal from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization required to register under this section to be a party to any contract, agreement, or understanding, either express or implied, with such foreign principal from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization under which the amount or payment of the compensation, fee, or other remuneration of such agent is contingent in whole or in part upon the success of any political activities carried on by such agent.
- 30. In order to ensure compliance with this section, the attorney general shall have the power to issue civil investigative demands to persons and entities suspected of being agents of foreign principals from adversary nations or foreign terrorist organizations.
- 31. All employees of this state shall submit a signed affidavit annually to their employer attesting that the employee is not an agent of a foreign principal from an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization.
- 32. Each institution of higher education in this state shall develop a reporting mechanism for students who are former citizens of an adversary nation or who are dissidents against or critics of an adversary nation or foreign terrorist organization and who are being harassed by an agent of a foreign principal to file a report with the institution of higher education describing the harassment.
- 33. All active businesses and nonprofits operating within the state of Missouri shall attest on a filing form that they are cognizant of and in compliance with this section. The secretary of state shall provide a simple one-page attestation form for all

419 businesses and nonprofits operating within the state of Missouri to attest their 420 compliance with this section.

- 34. The attorney general may send and receive data with government officials in other states in order to increase the transparency and registration compliance of agents of foreign adversaries and foreign terrorist organizations that operate in multiple states.
- 35. The attorney general may promulgate all necessary rules and regulations for the administration of this section. Any rule or portion of a rule, as that term is defined in section 536.010, that is created under the authority delegated in this section shall become effective only if it complies with and is subject to all of the provisions of chapter 536 and, if applicable, section 536.028. This section and chapter 536 are nonseverable and if any of the powers vested with the general assembly pursuant to chapter 536 to review, to delay the effective date, or to disapprove and annul a rule are subsequently held unconstitutional, then the grant of rulemaking authority and any rule proposed or adopted after August 28, 2025, shall be invalid and void.

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