

**Coburn #2867 - to eliminate a program that subsidizes the operation of the Russian Federation's weapons institutes.**

The Global Security Through Science Partnerships (previously Initiatives for Proliferation Prevention) is a Cold War-era program intended to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, but which the Government Accountability Office (GAO) has found the money helped recruit new scientists for Russian weapons institutes, contrary to the original intent of the program.<sup>1</sup> The program was created to ensure unemployed Soviet weapons scientists and engineers were placed in private-sector, nonmilitary employment so these experts were not hired by terrorist groups or rogue nations. Over the years the program evolved to begin recruiting young nuclear scientists, an objective far removed from its original purpose. According to GAO, “Officials from 10 Russian and Ukrainian weapons institutes told GAO that the IPP program helps them attract, recruit, and retain younger scientists and contributes to the continued operation of their facilities.”<sup>2</sup> The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) even bragged that the program created almost 2,800 private-sector jobs in Russia.<sup>3</sup>

Russian and Ukrainian officials, as well as U.S. companies, have raised questions about the continuing need for the program. A senior Atomic Energy Agency official in Russia told GAO, “[T]he IPP program is no longer relevant because Russia’s economy is strong and its scientists no longer pose a proliferation risk.”<sup>4</sup> GAO notes, “DOE has not developed criteria to determine when scientists, institutes, or countries should ‘graduate’ from the program,” even when other federal programs have stopped supporting them.<sup>5</sup> Critics have also questioned the need for the program given that the U.S. engages in a number of nonproliferation diplomatic activities. Even the Department of Energy has conceded this program is duplicative, as “several other U.S. Government initiatives are also aimed at preventing weapons of mass destruction proliferation.”<sup>6</sup>

For many years the program took in more money than it spent.<sup>7</sup> In 2013, the DOE changed the program to focus its efforts on states outside of the former Soviet Union, rebranding it with its current name in the process, and the program’s

budget was decreased as resources were shifted outside the program.<sup>8</sup> The program was not funded in the FY 2014 Consolidated Appropriations Act because the Appropriations Committee determined the program lacked “measurable outcomes.”<sup>9</sup> No funding was requested in the FY 2015 President’s Budget request.

1. “Nuclear Nonproliferation: DOE Needs to Reassess Its Programs to Assist Weapons Scientists in Russia and Other Countries,” Government Accountability Office, January 23, 2008, GAO-08-434T, <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d08434t.pdf>.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. “International Nonproliferation Program,” Department of Energy website, <http://www.y12.doe.gov/missions/nonproliferation/inp/gipp/initiativesprevention.php>, accessed March 21, 2012.
7. “Nuclear Nonproliferation: DOE Needs to Reassess Its Programs to Assist Weapons Scientists in Russia and Other Countries,” Government Accountability Office, January 23, 2008, GAO-08-434T, <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d08434t.pdf>.
8. “The Evolution of Cooperative threat Reduction,” Congressional Research Service, July 8, 2013, R43143, [file:///C:/Users/jew45971/Downloads/nps62-082613-18%20\(1\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/jew45971/Downloads/nps62-082613-18%20(1).pdf).
9. Senate Report 113-47, June 27, 2013, <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CRPT-113srpt47/pdf/CRPT-113srpt47.pdf>