



## The Building Civic Bridges Act

### Background:

The assassination attempt against President Trump while he campaigned for reelection has shown a bright light on the troubling social and political division of American society. The Society for Human Resource Management has found that incivility and political division [cost America's employers \\$2B per day](#). America's [business community](#), [national security leaders](#), and [faith community representatives](#) have been clear: polarization and division represent a national threat and require a whole-of-government response.

### Bill Summary:

This bipartisan piece of legislation was originally introduced in the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress by Reps. Derek Kilmer (D-WA) and Andy Barr (R-KY). **In the 119<sup>th</sup> Congress, it is being led by Reps. Chrissy Houlahan (D-PA), Andy Barr (R-KY), GT Thompson (R-PA), and Lucy McBath (D-GA).** The bill supports communities in addressing sources of division by aiding local civic and community organizations. The BCBA positions the federal government as a partner in reinforcing key American values of unity and democracy. It includes four pillars:

1. Administering a grant program to support civic bridge building programs across the nation by funding nonprofits, public institutions, schools, and religious groups, among others that are striving to heal toxic polarization in the U.S. through civic bridge building and community reconciliation;
2. Establishing an Office of Civic Bridge Building to activate a public conversation about civic bridge building by serving as both a convening and coordinating partner to the national civic bridge building movement;
3. Researching civic bridge building, civic engagement, and social cohesion; and
4. Supporting the training of AmeriCorps members in civic bridge building skills and techniques.

Additionally, the 119<sup>th</sup> Congress version includes one new provision, requiring that all funding used to carry out the bill to come from the private donations that AmeriCorps is already authorized to accept.

### Contact Information:

For questions or to support the bill, please reach out to Jack Leighninger on Rep. Houlahan's staff, at [jack.leighninger@mail.house.gov](mailto:jack.leighninger@mail.house.gov).