

PRO-DIPLOMACY ORGANIZATIONS: NDAA CONFEREES MUST HONOR BIPARTISAN MAJORITY'S OPPOSITION TO UNAUTHORIZED WAR WITH IRAN

As pro-diplomacy organizations that oppose unauthorized war with Iran, we call on the National Defense Authorization Act conferees to retain language supported by a bipartisan majority in both chambers that would prohibit funds for military action against Iran without explicit authorization from Congress.

The Trump Administration has repeatedly signaled its intent to subvert Congress' constitutional prerogative to decide when the United States will and will not go to war. The Administration violated and abandoned the agreement restraining Iran's nuclear activities and engaged in a series of escalations with Iran. While Iran has ratcheted up the tension in recent weeks, the Trump Administration's provocations and saber rattling have made conflict, not negotiations, more likely.

The question of whether American forces should be put in harm's way is one of the utmost gravity. The Constitution gives the power of the purse and the power to declare war to Congress, and Congress alone. Congress needs to assert its constitutional powers to prevent decisions about the use of force being made by an administration that has acted with gross recklessness and profoundly weakened key alliances and multilateral partnerships essential to addressing threats from Iran. Any unilateral escalation risks both further alienation and getting mired in another disastrous war in the region.

Bipartisan majorities in both chambers support blocking funds for unauthorized military strikes against Iran. Although the Senate bill did not include this provision, 51 Senators indicated their support for the Kaine-Udall amendment. 251 Representatives voted for the Khanna-Gaetz amendment prohibiting funds from being used for military action against Iran without explicit authorization from Congress.

Given the bipartisan majority in both chambers supportive of ruling out an unauthorized war with Iran, the conferees must ensure the Khanna-Gaetz amendment is fully included in the final bill.

Failing to honor the will of the American people's elected representatives on this point, at the very moment the administration is barreling toward an unauthorized and costly war of choice, would be an undemocratic and historic abdication of constitutional responsibility.

American College of National Security Leaders

International Crisis Group

Americans for Peace Now

J Street

Arab American Institute

MoveOn

Arms Control Association

NIAC Action

Center for America Progress

Open Society Policy Center

Center for International Policy

Peace Action

Council on American-Islamic Relations

Peace Corps Iran Association

Common Defense

Ploughshares Fund

Council for a Livable World

Physicians for Social Responsibility

CREDO Action

Truman National Security Project

Demand Progress

T'ruah

Friends Committee on National Legislation

VoteVets

Foreign Policy for America

Union of Concerned Scientists

Global Security Institute

Win Without War

Indivisible

Women's Action for New Directions