

# 2002 AUMF REPEAL: EMBOLDENING IRAN, ENDANGERING OUR TROOPS

*Democrats are this week renewing their dangerous push to repeal the 2002 AUMF, which authorizes the President to defend against the continuing threat posed by Iraq.*

## TOPLINE:

- While it may be legitimate to have a debate about the 2002 AUMF in the future, Democrats are only bringing this measure to the floor now in an effort to undermine the President.
- Repealing the 2002 AUMF now will embolden Iran as it has ramped up its aggressive activity against U.S. forces in Iraq and across the Middle East.
- The President has countered Iran's hostility with decisive, restrained action, and it is vital that he maintains full authority and congressional support to defend our national interest.
- Repealing the 2002 AUMF would undermine his ability to protect our troops and America's national security.
- The 2002 AUMF has long served as an additional authority supporting America's fight against terror groups. It has also helped us protect our military members in Iraq fighting ISIS. Democrats' push to revoke it tells our men and women in uniform that some in Congress do not want to authorize force to protect them against violent Iran-backed [terrorist](#) groups in Iraq.

## REPEALING THE AUMF WILL:

- Embolden Iran and support its ambitions in Iraq
  - For more than a decade, Iran has executed a campaign to infiltrate Iraq militarily, politically, economically, and religiously. Iran has routinely used its militias in Iraq to target U.S. forces and interests, killing hundreds of U.S. service members during the Iraq War and targeting U.S. troops repeatedly just in recent months.
  - This measure is a propaganda victory for Iran, which wants to drive the U.S. out of Iraq, continue to weaken the Iraqi state, and solidify its control over the country.
  - Iraq, like Syria and Lebanon, is central to Iran's ambitions of building a [land bridge to the Mediterranean](#). An Iranian land-bridge would pose a grave threat to U.S. forces and interests, as well as key allies such as Israel.
  - Repealing the AUMF would undermine Iraqi government allies, send the wrong signal to our regional partners and allies, and help virulently anti-American Iran-backed militant groups, who fuel sectarian violence.
- Endanger our troops in the region
  - Iran is working hard to increase pressure against U.S. forces in Iraq and compel an American withdrawal. According to the [Institute for the Study of War](#), Iran is currently trying to coalesce its violent Iraqi proxies "into a more unified military force to target U.S. forces in the region."
- Undermine the Trump Administration's efforts to keep America safe

- The U.S. continues to have a significant and urgent counterterrorism mission to ensure that ISIS cannot conduct massive external attacks from safe havens in Iraq. The 2002 AUMF serves as an authority supporting this mission.
- The Administration rightfully cited the 2002 AUMF as one of several legal authorities underlying its recent defensive, decisive strike against terrorists who posed a serious threat to our troops.
- The strike against Qassem Soleimani, who was central to the Iranian infiltration of Iraq and the death of U.S. troops, and Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, a key Iraqi militia leader, has made the world a safer place. The Administration is currently countering Iran-backed militias in Iraq through sanctions and diplomatic efforts.
- Instead of supporting these actions, Democrats are pursuing a partisan effort that will hurt our security.

## A PATTERN OF IRANIAN ESCALATION:

- May 12: Iran damages four commercial ships in the Gulf of Oman.
- June 13: Iran attacks two tankers in the Gulf of Oman with limpet mines. CENTCOM releases footage of the IRGC removing an unexploded limpet mine from one of the tankers.
- July 20: Iran seizes a British-flagged tanker in the Strait of Hormuz.
- Sep 14: Iran attacks Saudi energy infrastructure.
- October: According to [Reuters](#), Soleimani met with Muhandis and other Iraqi militia leaders and instructed them “to step up attacks on U.S. targets in the country using sophisticated new weapons provided by Iran.”
- October-January: Iran-backed militias repeatedly fire rockets targeting U.S. forces and interests.
- Dec 3: Five rockets land outside the Ain al-Asad airbase, which houses U.S. forces.
- Dec 9: Four Katyusha rockets strike a military base near Baghdad airport.
- Dec 27: More than 30 rockets are fired at an Iraqi military base near Kirkuk, killing a U.S. contractor and wounding four American and two Iraqi servicemembers.
- Dec 31: Iran-backed militias stage violent attacks outside the U.S. embassy in Baghdad, targeting diplomats and service members.
- Jan 4: Two rocket attacks occur near Iraqi bases housing Coalition forces, “a total of 13 attacks in the past two months,” per DOD.
- Jan 7: Iran launches more than a dozen ballistic missiles against U.S. and Coalition forces in Iraq, injuring 34 U.S. service members.
- Jan 8: Two rockets land in Baghdad’s Green Zone and explode in the perimeter of the U.S. Embassy.
- Jan 12: A rocket attack against an Iraqi air base wounds four Iraqi service members.
- Jan 26: A rocket attack against the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad wounds one person and successfully hits the dining area.

