



Lee AMD: Repeals Important Counterterrorism Authorities Without a Replacement

BOTTOM LINE: OPPOSE

This amendment recklessly repeals the 2002 authorization of use of military force (AUMF), which has been used as a legal authority for military operations against ISIS and other threats in Iraq by the Trump and Obama Administrations. Repeal without a replacement sends the wrong message to our troops currently in Iraq, our partners, and our terrorist adversaries. Democrats are playing politics with national security rather than offering a real, updated AUMF to counter the threats we face. Premature disengagement can have huge costs, as when the Obama Administration's rush to withdraw U.S. troops contributed to the rise of ISIS and regional instability.

BACKGROUND

The 2002 AUMF authorizes the use of force to “defend the national security of the United States against the continuing threat posed by Iraq.” While it largely addressed the Saddam Hussein regime, it also identified Al Qaeda and “other international terrorist organizations, including organizations that threaten the lives and safety of United States citizens.”

The Trump Administration has cited the 2002 AUMF as authority for activities against terrorist threats in Iraq, including counter-ISIS operations and the recent defensive strike that killed Qassem Soleimani, who was ramping up his attacks on Americans in Iraq and orchestrated the New Year's eve attack on our Embassy in Baghdad.

OPPOSE: Lee Amendment, which:

- ▶ **Repeals current counterterrorism authorities without offering a replacement.** This undermines our ability to counter terrorist threats risking an ISIS resurgence.
- ▶ **Sends the wrong message to U.S. troops currently in Iraq, our partners, and terrorist adversaries** in Iraq regarding our commitment to counterterrorism and regional stability.
- ▶ **Projects weakness and uncertainty** regarding U.S. troop presence in Iraq as they are under significant pressure to leave before the counter-ISIS mission is complete.
- ▶ Is pure politics at the expense of the safety of Americans already in harm's way.
- ▶ **Is strongly opposed by the Administration**, which states: “The 2002 AUMF remains an important source of additional authority for military operations against ISIS in Iraq and to defend the national security of the United States against threats emanating from Iraq.”
- ▶ **Was already voted on by the House in July** as an amendment to the NDAA.
- ▶ **Is being considered under convoluted procedural tactics that bypassed regular order Committee consideration and are being used to deny the minority a Motion to Recommit.**