



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

January 27, 2020
(House Rules)

STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY
H.R. 2456 (House Amendment to Senate Amendment to H.R. 550) – Repeal of the
Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq of 2002
(Rep. Lee, D-CA, and 115 cosponsors)

The Administration strongly opposes passage of H.R. 2456, which would repeal the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002 (Public Law 107–243) (“2002 AUMF”). The United States forces that have been threatened by Iranian and Iran-backed attacks in Iraq are there to combat terrorist groups such as ISIS. H.R. 2456 would undermine their ability to execute this mission, and the President’s ability to defend United States forces and interests in the region against ongoing threats from Iran and Iranian-sponsored proxies. It would also terminate a critical legal authority that three successive administrations have relied upon to use force against threats to our national security, and that of our international partners.

The 2002 AUMF provides specific statutory authorization to engage in military action to “defend the national security of the United States against the continuing threat posed by Iraq.” The 2002 AUMF has long been understood to authorize the use of force for, among other purposes, addressing threats emanating from Iraq, including threats such as ISIS—a group whose objectives have included establishing an Islamic state in Iraq and using that state to support terrorism against the United States—as well as threats directed by Iran. Through its Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-Qods Force, Iran conducts and directs the actions of several terrorist groups in Iraq, such as Kata’ib Hizballah. Iran and Iran-sponsored proxies continue to plan and execute attacks against United States forces in Iraq and terrorize religious minority groups and peaceful protestors throughout that country. With respect to Iran’s malign activities in Iraq, the 2002 AUMF provides critical authorities for the United States to defend itself and its partner forces as they carry out their missions against terrorist threats emanating from Iraq and in support of a stable, democratic Iraq.

The arbitrary termination of the authorization would embolden our enemies with the recognizable goal of outlasting us. This bill is misguided, and its adoption by Congress would undermine the ability of the United States to protect American citizens whom Iran continues to seek to harm. It would make the world less safe, less secure, and less free.

If H.R. 2456 were presented to the President, his senior advisors would recommend he veto it.

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