



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

March 13, 2019
(Senate)

STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY

S.J. Res. 7 – Directing the President to Remove United States Armed Forces from Hostilities in the Republic of Yemen that Have Not Been Authorized by Congress

(Sen. Sanders, I-VT and 18 cosponsors)

The Administration strongly opposes passage of S.J. Res 7, a joint resolution that purports to direct the President to remove United States forces from hostilities in or affecting the Republic of Yemen, with certain exceptions.

The premise of the joint resolution is flawed. Since 2015, the United States has provided limited support to member countries of the Saudi-led coalition, including intelligence sharing, logistics support, and, until recently, aerial refueling, to assist in the defense of United States allies and partners. The provision of this support has not caused United States forces to be introduced into hostilities. Such support is provided pursuant to licenses and approvals under the Arms Export Control Act, statutory authorities for the Department of Defense to provide logistics support to foreign countries, and the President’s constitutional powers. Because the President has directed United States forces to support the Saudi-led coalition under his constitutional powers, the joint resolution would raise serious constitutional concerns to the extent that it seeks to override the President’s determination as Commander in Chief.

In addition to its erroneous premise, the joint resolution would harm bilateral relationships in the region, negatively affect our ability to prevent the spread of violent extremist organizations—such as al-Qa’ida in the Arabian Peninsula and ISIS in Yemen—and establish bad precedent for future legislation by defining “hostilities” to include defense cooperation such as aerial refueling for the purposes of this legislation. While we appreciate that sections 4 and 5 of the resolution acknowledge these serious consequences to some extent, after-the-fact reporting is not an effective means to mitigate them. Our continued cooperation with regional partner nations allows the United States to support diplomatic negotiations to end the conflict, promote humanitarian access, mitigate civilian casualties, enhance efforts to recover United States hostages in Yemen, and defeat terrorists who seek to harm the United States.

If S.J. Res. 7 were presented to the President, his senior advisors would recommend he veto the joint resolution.

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