

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 914

To limit the use of funds to reduce the total number of members of the Armed Forces serving on active duty who are deployed to Syria, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 30, 2019

Mr. MALINOWSKI (for himself, Mr. TAYLOR, Mr. PANETTA, Mr. GALLAGHER, Mr. KIM, Ms. STEFANIK, Mr. ROSE of New York, and Mr. HURD of Texas) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services

A BILL

To limit the use of funds to reduce the total number of members of the Armed Forces serving on active duty who are deployed to Syria, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Responsible With-
5 drawal from Syria Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. LIMITATION ON USE OF FUNDS TO REDUCE THE**
2 **TOTAL NUMBER OF MEMBERS OF THE**
3 **ARMED FORCES SERVING ON ACTIVE DUTY**
4 **WHO ARE DEPLOYED TO SYRIA.**

5 (a) LIMITATION.—None of the funds made available
6 to the Department of Defense for fiscal year 2019 may
7 be used to reduce the total number of members of the
8 United States Armed Forces serving on active duty who
9 are deployed to Syria below 1,500, unless and until the
10 Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of State, and the Di-
11 rector of National Intelligence submit to the relevant con-
12 gressional committees a report that addresses the fol-
13 lowing:

14 (1) The current strength and regenerative ca-
15 pacity of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS),
16 including an assessment of how many fighters ISIS
17 fields in Syria and Iraq, the threat it continues to
18 pose to the United States and its allies, its likely re-
19 action to the withdrawal of United States and coali-
20 tion forces, and of the operational risks involved
21 with conducting counter-ISIS operations following a
22 withdrawal.

23 (2) The Administration's military and political
24 strategy for meeting any remaining threat from
25 ISIS.

1 (3) The viability of the Syrian Democratic
2 Forces (SDF) to remain a viable fighting force in
3 the absence of a United States military presence in
4 Syria.

5 (4) Whether the Euphrates will remain the aer-
6 ial and land deconfliction line between United
7 States-backed forces and Assad regime forces and
8 their allies, and if so, how will the Administration
9 ensure it will be respected.

10 (5) Actions the Administration plans to take to
11 ensure the safety of Syrian nationals who took part
12 in or provided support to the coalition to defeat
13 ISIS, including members of the SDF, and the form
14 and amount of assistance the Administration plans
15 to provide to the SDF following a withdrawal of
16 United States and coalition forces.

17 (6) The likelihood that the Assad regime and
18 its allies, including Hezbollah and Iranian forces,
19 will retake areas where United States personnel and
20 Syrian allies have operated or created demilitarized
21 zones, and the actions the Administration plans to
22 take to ensure the safety, and prevent the exodus,
23 of civilians living in those areas.

24 (7) The actions the Administration plans to
25 take to ensure the safety of civilians living in refugee

1 camps that may fall under the control of the Assad
2 regime following withdrawal of United States forces,
3 including Rubkan Camp, and to ensure access by
4 humanitarian organizations to areas being vacated
5 by United States forces and Syrian allies.

6 (8) The expected windfall in oil revenue the
7 Assad regime is likely to gain if the regime or its al-
8 lies retake areas currently held by United States-al-
9 lied groups.

10 (9) The impact a withdrawal from Syria would
11 have on Iranian power and influence in the Middle
12 East, including an assessment of the current status
13 of Iranian backed forces in Syria, whether with-
14 drawal is likely to make easier Iranian advanced
15 weapon transfers to Syria and Lebanon, the impact
16 on the security of Israel, the prospect of large scale
17 conflict between Israel and Iran in Syria and Leb-
18 anon, and a strategy to counter any such threats.

19 (10) The impact any United States withdrawal
20 from Syria would have on Russian power and influ-
21 ence in the Middle East.

22 (11) The impact any United States withdrawal
23 from Syria would have on diplomatic efforts to end
24 the Syrian conflict, and on United States influence
25 on those efforts, including a statement of the Ad-

1 ministration's current diplomatic objectives in that
2 process.

3 (12) The commitments, if any, Turkey has ex-
4 tended with respect to fighting ISIS and refraining
5 from military action against the Kurds following a
6 withdrawal of United States forces.

7 (13) The commitments, if any, Saudi Arabia or
8 any coalition partners have made to assist in Syria's
9 reconstruction, including any plans to ensure that
10 funding of these efforts are transparent and ac-
11 countable.

12 (14) Any efforts the Administration plans to
13 undertake to support legitimate, effective and demo-
14 cratic local governance in areas from which United
15 States and coalition forces are withdrawing, to di-
16 minish the likelihood that extremist forces will re-
17 turn.

18 (15) Any consultations that have taken place
19 with coalition allies in Operation Inherent Resolve
20 about withdrawal of forces from Syria, including
21 how the governments of Israel, Jordan, Saudi Ara-
22 bia, the United Arab Emirates, Iraq, Russia, Iran,
23 the United Kingdom, France, Germany, and Turkey
24 and the Kurdistan Regional Government are likely
25 to respond to any withdrawal.

1 (16) The assurances, if any, that religious and
2 ethnic minority communities will be secure from
3 ISIS threats.

4 (b) FORM.—The report required by subsection (a)
5 shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may contain
6 a classified annex.

7 (c) WAIVER.—The Secretary of Defense may waive
8 the limitation under subsection (a) if, upon advice of the
9 relevant military commanders, the Secretary determines
10 that the waiver is necessary due to an imminent and ex-
11 traordinary threat to members of the United States
12 Armed Forces in Syria.

13 (d) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this Act
14 may be construed to obstruct or prevent the normal rota-
15 tion of United States Armed Forces into and out of Syria.

16 (e) RELEVANT CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DE-
17 FINED.—In this section, the term “relevant congressional
18 committees” means—

19 (1) the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the
20 Committee on Armed Services of the House of Rep-
21 resentatives; and

22 (2) the Committee on Foreign Relations and
23 the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate.

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