
WIN ★ WITHOUT ★ WAR

CONGRESS NEEDS TO DEBATE AND VOTE ON A NEW AUTHORIZATION FOR WAR

SUMMARY

In September of 2001, Congress granted the executive branch wide ranging authority to wage war on those who perpetrated the 9/11 attacks (al-Qaeda) and any “affiliates.” Then-President Bush, President Obama, and now Donald Trump have used that broad authority to justify fighting terrorist forces with tenuous (at best) connections to 9/11 and have thus **bogged the U.S. military down in places like Syria, Yemen, and parts of Africa** in what appears to be a series of wars without end.

While some members of Congress, and even Obama himself, have been calling for a new and updated authorization of the use of military force, or AUMF, to conform with today’s threats, **Congress has largely failed to act.**

But in a stunning reversal, both Republicans and Democrats recently [allowed](#) an amendment to a recent spending bill sponsored by Rep. Barbara Lee that would have repealed the 2001 AUMF and compelled Congress to debate and vote on a new authorization. However, on July 19th **House Speaker Paul Ryan [stripped](#) the measure at the last hour**, thereby in effect blocking his colleagues from carrying out their most important duty -- deciding whether to send the American military to war.

TOWNHALL SAMPLE QUESTIONS

- Do you think it’s appropriate for the president to use the authority granted by Congress to fight al-Qaeda in 2001 to now wage war against adversaries that had nothing to do with 9/11?
- If so, why?
- If not, would you support Congress debating and voting on a new authorization for the use of military force that covers all conflicts the U.S. military is currently engaged in?

MESSAGING POINTS

Speaker Ryan’s move to strip the AUMF repeal from a recent spending bill is the height of irresponsibility

- It's time for Congress to finally provide proper oversight of America's endless wars so that we're certain the president is acting in the best interests of the United States and its allies, and is keeping America and our troops safe.

The 2001 Authorization for the Use of Military force is outdated and doesn't address or reflect the adversaries and wars the U.S. is currently fighting.

- Congress needs to evaluate the Trump administration's military plans and operations and address where current and proposed missions need authorization.
- A new AUMF is needed now more than ever, particularly given that we currently have a trigger happy president bent on dragging the United States into more wars in the Middle East and beyond.

Congress should repeal or supercede prior AUMFs, and debate and vote on [a] new authorization[s] that:

- Clearly specify missions, objectives, the enemy,
- Increase transparency and reporting,
- Require compliance with international law,
- And contain sunset clauses that compel future reauthorization.