



**Statement of Lead Republican Michael McCaul (R-TX)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs**

“Floor Remarks for Khanna Amendment #423: Prohibiting Iran Use of Force”

July 11, 2019

Remarks as Delivered

You know, thank you Madam Chairman.

I rise in strong opposition to this unfortunate and dangerous amendment, which is a propaganda win for the Iranian regime and their Houthi allies.

It takes legitimate options off the table, shows America divided in the face of mounting Iranian threats, and makes our nation less safe.

We all agree that, under Article I of the Constitution, only Congress possesses the authority to declare war. The Administration’s measured response to Iran’s shutdown of our U.S. military asset in international airspace shows that the President is not looking for a war with Iran.

But this amendment goes much farther than prohibiting an unauthorized war with the number one state sponsor of terror.

It uses the power of the purse to preclude any use of force whatsoever against Iran, unless it is previously authorized by Congress or provoked by an attack on the United States or our armed forces.

Think about what that means.



What can our military do if Iran attacks American civilians, or our regional allies like Israel and Jordan, or strategic international shipping through the Strait of Hormuz?

Under this reckless amendment, the answer is: Absolutely nothing.

The U.S. military cannot fire a single shot until after the successful completion of a bicameral legislative process that enacts a law authorizing the use of force. All of us here today know how long that could take.

This will tie our military's hands at a perilous time. We need Iran and its terrorist proxies to think twice before they attack Americans, our friends, or our interests.

This amendment is an unprecedented attempt to micromanage the powers claimed by every Commander in Chief -- Democrat and Republican -- since the War Powers Resolution was enacted over President Nixon's veto in 1973.

In fact, effect of this misguided amendment is far more restrictive than the War Powers Resolution itself. This is absolutely not the time to play politics with our national security. Iran's saber-rattling and provocation is not going to go away anytime soon.

I'd like to quote from a July 8th letter from acting Under Secretary of Defense for Policy. The department he says, "strongly opposes this amendment. If U.S. citizens, diplomatic facilities in the region, or other national interest are threatened or attacked, we must be able to respond promptly in an appropriate fashion" end of quote. In a time when Iran is engaging in escalating military provocations -- demonstrated most recently by the shooting down of the U.S.



unmanned aerial vehicle. It is attacking allied shipping, it literally -- they shot a missile at our U.S. embassy in Iraq. This amendment could only embolden Iran to further provocations.

Bottom line, this amendment will give comfort to our enemy, who has the blood of Americans on their hands -- from the Marine barracks bombing to the Iraq War -- and who continues to hold American hostages to this day.

This is a pro-Iran, pro-Houthi amendment. I was in the White House when the president made his decision and exercised restraint to not escalate this war, but this I believe is an ill-proposed amendment.

And with that, Madam speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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