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# WIN ★ WITHOUT ★ WAR

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## **Members of Congress, Experts, and Progressive Organizations Oppose the Proposed Authorization for the Use of Military Force**

### **U.S. House of Representatives**

Congressional Progressive Caucus- The proposal “is too broad. In order to ensure meaningful limits on executive branch authority, an AUMF should at a minimum contain a clear objective and geographical limitations. It should also include an enforceable ban on the deployment of ground troops... and a repeal of the 2001 AUMF.” [2/13]

Rep. Tulsi Gabbard (D-HI)- “I ran for Congress... to make sure we didn’t repeat the mistakes of the past, of going into war without a clear strategy. (I wondered if) those in positions of making these decisions really understand what the impacts of their decisions were.” [2/17]

Rep. Alan Grayson (D-FL)- “You just described a blank check, which I’m not willing to give the President. Nobody knows what the AUMF means, not even the experts.” [2/12]

Rep. Ted Lieu (D-CA), Fmr. Lieutenant Colonel- “I cannot support the Administration’s proposed authorization for the use of force. I do not believe the Administration has made the case that ISIL represents a direct, grave threat to our nation.” [2/12]

Rep. Tom Massie (R-KY)- “I don’t know what (enduring) means. So I’m uncomfortable putting any of our boots on the ground, however you define them.” [2/11]

Rep. Jim McGovern (D-MA)- “I am troubled by the Administration’s request, which I believe is far too open-ended and does little to constrain this or the next Administration from engaging in sustained combat. We should be doing much more to promote a political solution.” [2/11]

Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-CA)- “An AUMF (should be) narrowly-tailored to the war against ISIS.” [2/11]

Rep. Adam Schiff (D-CA)- “There are some key aspects of the proposal which I believe must be narrowed... New authorization should include a sunset of the 2001 AUMF. Additionally, a new authorization should place more specific limits on the use of ground troops... There are additional concerns over the lack of a geographic limitation.” [2/11]

## U.S. Senate

Sen. Tammy Baldwin (D-WI)- “The vague language... may leave the door open to putting boots on the ground and put the U.S. at risk of... becoming bogged down in an open-ended conflict. I’m also concerned that the draft AUMF would authorize action for 3 years without establishing measurable goals, benchmarks of success and a clear scope.” [2/11]

Sen. Barbara Boxer (D-CA)- “At best, this language is vague, overly broad and confusing - and no one has defined the meaning of "enduring." At worst, it is a dangerous loophole that could lead to another large-scale conflict involving tens of thousands of American troops. I cannot and will not support such an AUMF. It is stunning to me that so many lawmakers have forgotten the lessons of the Iraq War. The last thing America needs is another ground war.” [2/13]

Sen. Richard Blumenthal (D-CT)- “There remain grave issues still to be resolved – such as clarifying restrictions against use of American combat ground troops, establishing the scope and scale of U.S. military operations, and sunseting obsolete authorities. Ultimately, U.S. military force alone will not suffice to stop this terrorist threat, which requires a local and regional response, both military and political.” [2/11]

Sen. Richard Blumenthal (D-CT)- “I am insistent that [the AUMF] needs to be narrowed or clarified or specified so that we are not in effect authorizing open ended operations.” [2/11]

Sen. Ben Cardin (D-MD)- “While the (AUMF) is limited to three years, that sunset means little if the 9/11 AUMF is still in effect as a potentially boundless, all-encompassing authorization... Congress could be authorizing a state of perpetual war, and giving this President and future presidents a blank check to keep America at war.” [2/13]

Sen. Dick Durbin (D-IL)- “What does it mean? How long, how big, is 'enduring'? 'Offensive,' what's 'offensive'? We have some legitimate questions as to whether we open this up with a loophole that could lead to another major war.” [2/11]

Sen. Martin Heinrich (D-NM)- “It’s a little too broad. I don’t think that’s their intention, but I think there’s a potential for abuse there that I’d very much like to see narrowed.” [2/11]

Sen. Mazie Hirono (D-HI)- “I will continue to hold the President to his promise of no boots on the ground. This will not be another Iraq War.” [2/11]

Sen. Tim Kaine (D-VA)- “I am concerned about the breadth and vagueness of the U.S. ground troop language and will seek to clarify it. (This authorization should) ensure that the U.S. is

vigorously assisting nations willing to battle their own terrorist threat rather than carrying the unsustainable burden of policing a region that won't police itself.” [2/11]

Sen. Angus King (I-ME)- “I am concerned about the Administration's term... 'enduring offensive ground combat operations.’ Congress must more specifically define that term.” [2/11]

Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-VT)- “I have serious concerns about the breadth and ambiguity of this proposal. The executive branch’s reliance on the 2001 AUMF to justify such things as indefinite detentions and drone strikes far from Afghanistan has taught that Congress must carefully limit any authority it grants a president to engage in war.” [2/11]

Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-VT)- “I have serious concerns about the breadth and ambiguity of this proposal. We have a responsibility to take action against [Islamic State] terrorists but we must do so in a way that avoids repeating the missteps of the past, and that does not result in an open-ended authorization that becomes legal justification for future actions against unknown enemies, in unknown places at unknown times.” [2/11]

Sen. Joe Manchin (D-WV)- “As far as taking the ground battle, no, I’m not for that. And that enduring operation type thing, I don’t know what that means, to be honest with you, and no one else does. We’ve already given 6,600 American lives trying to liberate and help that part of the world; we’ve spent about 2- to 3-trillion dollars. Under no circumstances do I believe us getting engaged in a ground war over there is going to change that part of the world. Hasn’t done it yet, and I don’t think it will.” [2/13]

Sen. Ed Markey (D-MA)- “We want to avoid an open-ended commitment to another war.” [2/17]

Sen. Barbara Mikulski (D-MD)- “I don’t know what the word enduring means. Enduring is not in the eyes of the beholder. Enduring has to have a clock to it.” [2/11]

Sen. Chris Murphy (D-CT)- “American combat troops alone will not defeat ISIL... This authorization needs to make it crystal clear that U.S. combat troops cannot be sent back into the Middle East as part of this conflict, and I worry that the vague limitations on ground troops in today's draft may turn out to be no limitations at all.” [2/11]

Sen. Chris Murphy (D-CT)- “I strongly believe that we must put strict limits on the use of force to ensure that the United States does not get entangled in another endless war in the Middle East.” [2/22/15]

Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-VT)- "I oppose sending U.S. ground troops into combat in another bloody war in the Middle East. I therefore cannot support the resolution in its current form without clearer limitations on the role of U.S. combat troops." [2/12]

Sen. Brian Schatz (D-HI)- "I am troubled by the ambiguity regarding our commitment of ground troops as well as the lack of specificity about what individuals and groups will be considered associated with ISIL. Without that specificity, Congress risks authorizing a war against an ever expanding list of persons and organizations in an ever growing number of countries." [2/11]

Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-MA)- "It is critical for those nations in the region that are most immediately affected by the rise of ISIS to play a leading role in this fight, and I do not want America to be dragged into another ground war in the Middle East." [2/12]

### Experts

Colonel Andrew Bacevich (Ret.)- "The US military effort to stabilize or pacify or dominate or democratize the Greater Middle East has failed irrevocably. Trying harder, whether with air strikes or special operations raids or even 'enduring offensive ground combat operations,' will not yield a different result." [2/16]

Elizabeth Beavers, Friends Committee on National Legislation- "Let's hope Congress takes this rare window of opportunity to cancel (its) blank check for war." [2/12]

Francis Boyle, University of Illinois College of Law Professor- "This Resolution sets a dangerous precedent. Up until the 2001 AUMF, all War Powers Resolutions had been adopted with respect to a State, not alleged terrorist organizations that can operate anywhere in the world as defined by the President." [2/13]

Marjorie Cohn, Fmr. President of the National Lawyers Guild- "President Obama is essentially asking Congress to bless endless war against anyone he wants, wherever he wants... Although it would prohibit 'enduring offensive operations,' there is a loophole that allows the limited use of ground troops." [2/11]

Major General Paul Eaton (Ret.)- "Congress must vote against President Obama's proposed Authorization for the Use of Military Force (AUMF) to take on ISIS. But the authorization proposed by the president is too broad, and leaves too much room from drawn-out combat missions. From a military point of view, the phrase 'enduring offensive ground operations' is meaningless. So, we must oppose the proposed AUMF in it's current form. [2/17]

Ryan Goodman, New York University- Let's "look at the likely document Obama will eventually sign into law: Congress will authorize force against unknown future associated forces of the Islamic State, with no geographic constraints, with little or no limits on ground forces, and little or no reporting requirements, into the indefinite future. That (is) worrisome." [2/12]

Matthew Hoh, Iraq War Veteran- "What has occurred throughout the Middle East as a result of American intervention has been more instability. In that authorization it says there will be no enduring ground troops, meaning that there will be no permanent ground troops. And the president can put as many troops into Iraq, into Syria and into any other places... with the caveat that they are temporary and not permanent. So really it's just semantics to hide the fact that the United States is going to find itself again in the Middle Eastern civil wars." [2/12]

Raed Jarrar, American Friends Service Committee- "We are against authorizing a new war. The language is extremely concerning, because it... will not only legitimize the ongoing intervention in Iraq and Syria but will also prolong it and increase its scope." [2/10]

### **Organizations**

American Civil Liberties Union- "It fails to make clear that the proposed authorization will be the exclusive authority for the use of military force against ISIS... It lacks any geographic limitation... It also fails to state clearly the specific objective for which military force is being authorized, and so gives no clear picture of what it would mean to 'win.'" [2/11]

Conference of Major Superiors of Men- "Escalating the violence has already and will mean more sectarian division, bloodshed, recruitment for ISIS and similar organizations, violent attacks on civilians abroad, habits of violence in the region, as well as undermine sustainable political negotiations and agreements... There are better, more effective, more healthy, and more humanizing ways to protect people and to engage this conflict. An emerging ecumenical paradigm called 'justpeace' offers a fresh way to view and analyze conflicts. This gives rise to the realization of a broader set of smart, effective nonviolent practices to engage hostile conflicts as we have recommended earlier. We need a debate on these types of justpeace practices, not on another self-destructive AUMF." [2/17]

Council on American-Islamic Relations- "We are troubled by the President's open-ended request. It fails to set any reasonable objectives, scope of mission, geographic boundaries, and does not include an exit strategy." [2/12]

Friends Committee on National Legislation- “The proposal extends authority for war for three years and has no geographic limits... The U.S. should lead with political, economic and diplomatic policies that cut off weapons, funding and support for the Islamic State. (We urge) Congress to oppose the proposal and repeal the 2001 AUMF.” [2/11]

Friends Committee on National Legislation- “Clearly, with such complex issues, one cannot simply bomb a region into submission (see Iraq and Afghanistan). The following are five alternatives to militarism that offer the U.S. and its regional allies a much better chance at stopping the Islamic State group: 1) End the bombing and remove the troops... This is what fueled violence against U.S. troops in Iraq for decades. 2) Create a comprehensive, multilateral strategy with our allies, including the Arab League and the U.N. 3) Address the political and economic grievances in the area that are causing civilians to join the Islamic State group. Job creation, education, financial support and an open political process to create long-term stability should be prioritized – not bombs. 4) Stop marketing for the Islamic State group. The brutal beheadings that our media so sensationally publicizes are a means for the group to convey power, authority and recruit. 5) Discourage Western youth from falling for Islamic State group propaganda and joining the fight abroad.” [2/18]

MoveOn.org- “Congress must not (give) the president a blank check to pursue multiple years of war, in Iraq, Syria, or any nation, against an open-ended array of possible targets. And it certainly must not allow the president to leave open the real possibility of deploying U.S. ground troops, as the proposed AUMF does.” [2/12]

Peace Action- “While we oppose any AUMF because the war is not working, we encourage members of Congress to push for tighter restrictions than what President Obama proposes should an AUMF move forward. Limitations could include: a one-year sunset clause; geographic limitations; definitively no combat troops on the ground; repealing both former AUMFs, not just one; and robust reporting requirements including civilian deaths.” [2/11]

Progressive Democrats of America- “The time has come for a comprehensive strategy to stop endless war. We cannot continue to request life sacrifices of military personnel, aid workers, journalists, and others over battles that American ground troops should not have to fight.” [2/11]

Win Without War Coalition- “We strongly urge Congress to reject the pursuit of a military solution to a conflict that does not have one. We should redouble our efforts to find a truly comprehensive solution to these challenges that has a chance of finally bring peace to the long-suffering people of this region.” [2/11]