To amend title 18, United States Code, to carry out the international obligations of the United States under the Geneva Conventions to provide criminal penalties for certain war crimes.
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Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-

tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “War Crimes Act of

1996”.

SEC. 2. CRIMINAL PENALTIES FOR CERTAIN WAR CRIMES.

(a) In General.—Title 18, United States Code, is

amended by inserting after chapter 117 the following:

“CHAPTER 118—WAR CRIMES

Sec. 2401. War crimes.

(a) Offense.—Whoever, whether inside or outside

the United States, commits a grave breach of the Geneva

Conventions, in any of the circumstances described in sub-

section (b), shall be fined under this title or imprisoned

for life or any term of years, or both, and if death results

to the victim, shall also be subject to the penalty of death.

(b) Circumstances.—The circumstances referred

to in subsection (a) are that the person committing such

breach or the victim of such breach is a member of the

armed forces of the United States or a national of the

United States (as defined in section 101 of the Immigra-

tion and Nationality Act).

(c)Definitions.—As used in this section, the term

‘grave breach of the Geneva Conventions’ means conduct
defined as a grave breach in any of the international con-
ventions relating to the laws of warfare signed at Geneva
12 August 1949 or any protocol to any such convention,
to which the United States is a party.”

(b) Clerical Amendment.—The table of chapters
for part I of title 18, United States Code, is amended by
inserting after the item relating to chapter 117 the follow-
ing new item:

“118. War crimes ............................................................................... 2401”.
A BILL

To amend title 18, United States Code, to carry out the international obligations of the United States under the Geneva Conventions to provide criminal penalties for certain war crimes.

JULY 24, 1996

Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union and ordered to be printed.