

114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1654

To authorize the direct provision of defense articles, defense services, and related training to the Kurdistan Regional Government, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 26, 2015

Mr. ROYCE (for himself, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. NUNES, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. McCaul, Mr. DEUTCH, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. CHABOT, Ms. MENG, Mr. POE of Texas, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. ROHR-ABACHER, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois, Mr. COOK, Mr. DESANTIS, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mr. PERRY, Mr. MARINO, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. HUNTER, Mr. ROONEY of Florida, Mr. TURNER, Mr. ADERHOLT, Mr. ZINKE, Mr. POLIS, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Mr. ISSA) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

A BILL

To authorize the direct provision of defense articles, defense services, and related training to the Kurdistan Regional Government, 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. FINDINGS.**

4 Congress finds the following:

1 (1) Since 2011, the terrorist group now known
2 as the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL),
3 has rapidly expanded, now possessing greater fund-
4 ing, more personnel, and heavier weapons than any
5 other terrorist force.

6 (2) ISIL has threatened to continue attacking
7 United States persons and interests and has an
8 apocalyptic vision for a larger confrontation with the
9 United States and its allies in the Middle East.

10 (3) According to the United States intelligence
11 community, approximately 20,000 to 30,000 ISIL
12 fighters operate in Iraq and Syria, an estimated
13 3,000 of which are believed to have western pass-
14 ports.

15 (4) ISIL finances itself through looting, smug-
16 gling, taxes, oil sales, kidnapping, and human traf-
17 ficking.

18 (5) According to United States officials, ISIL
19 captured approximately 1,500 Humvees, a number
20 of other modern armored vehicles and transport
21 trucks, over 50 long-range Global Positioning Sys-
22 tem (GPS)-guided artillery pieces, a substantial
23 number of artillery shells, a large quantity of small
24 arms, approximately 4,000 heavy machine guns, and
25 other weapons from the Iraqi Security Forces in

1 June 2014, and has also reportedly captured a num-
2 ber of other weapons and vehicles from Bashar al-
3 Assad’s forces in Syria.

4 (6) The rapidly deteriorating humanitarian sit-
5 uation in Iraq caused by ISIL advances in Iraq and
6 Syria has resulted in approximately 2,000,000 refu-
7 gees and internally displaced people from Syria and
8 Iraq taking refuge in the Iraqi Kurdistan region.
9 The Kurdistan Regional Government is facing a hu-
10 manitarian and budget crisis while defending itself
11 from ISIL.

12 (7) The Kurdistan Regional Government
13 (KRG) is the democratically elected government of
14 the Kurdistan Region in Iraq, and Iraqi Kurds have
15 been a reliable and stable partner of the United
16 States.

17 (8) The Iraqi constitution guarantees the right
18 of Iraqi regions, such as Iraqi Kurdistan, to main-
19 tain “internal security forces for the region such as
20 police, security forces, and guards of the region”.

21 (9) The Kurdish Peshmerga forces are officially
22 organized under the Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs
23 and commanded by the Minister of Peshmerga, who
24 reports to the President of the Kurdistan Regional
25 Government.

1 (10) ISIL has positioned its forces along a 650-
2 mile border with the Kurdistan Regional Govern-
3 ment's Peshmerga forces.

4 (11) ISIL has employed captured armored vehi-
5 cles, long-range artillery, and heavy weapons in at-
6 tacking thinly stretched Kurdish forces along the
7 border.

8 (12) United States airstrikes against ISIL tar-
9 gets have helped stall the terrorist organization's ad-
10 vance on territory held by Kurdish forces, but have
11 not proven to be militarily decisive against ISIL.

12 (13) The United States and its allies have pro-
13 vided the resupply of various small arms and train-
14 ing to Peshmerga forces since June 2014.

15 (14) Such resupply efforts, to comply with
16 United States law, must be approved and coordi-
17 nated through the Government of Iraq. In the initial
18 phase of the resupply effort, the Government of Iraq
19 constrained and delayed the emergency supply of
20 weapons to the Kurdistan Regional Government.

21 (15) The Peshmerga forces continue to lack the
22 arms and battle-ready armored vehicles necessary to
23 take significant offensive action against ISIL forces,
24 leading to their requests for such assistance.

1 (16) The possession of armored vehicles, anti-
2 armor weapons, long-range artillery, and other weap-
3 ons is consistent with the Kurdistan Regional Gov-
4 ernment's constitutional right to defend itself
5 against the clear and present danger posed by ISIL.

6 (17) A strong Peshmerga force is essential to
7 countering the ISIL threat to Iraq, the region, and
8 United States interests.

9 (18) The longer ISIL's sanctuary remains
10 largely unchallenged, the more time it will have to
11 reinforce its positions, and plan attacks against
12 United States interests.

13 **SEC. 2. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

14 It is the sense of Congress that—

15 (1) defeating the Islamic State in Iraq and the
16 Levant (ISIL) is critical to maintaining a unified
17 Iraq in which all faiths and ethnicities are afforded
18 equal protection and full integration into the Iraqi
19 government and society;

20 (2) the people of Kurdistan face an urgent and
21 deadly threat from ISIL which the Iraqi Security
22 Forces, of which the Peshmerga are a component,
23 are currently unable to match in armaments;

24 (3) any outstanding issues between the Govern-
25 ment of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Govern-

1 ment should be resolved by the two parties expedi-
2 tiously to allow for a resumption of normal relations;
3 and

4 (4) ISIL's recent advances and continued
5 growth present an imminent threat to Iraqi
6 Kurdistan, the rest of Iraq and the Middle East,
7 and international security.

8 **SEC. 3. STATEMENT OF POLICY.**

9 It shall be the policy of the United States to directly
10 provide the Kurdistan Regional Government with ad-
11 vanced conventional weapons, training, and defense serv-
12 ices, on an emergency and temporary basis, to more effec-
13 tively partner with the United States and other inter-
14 national coalition members to defeat the Islamic State in
15 Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).

16 **SEC. 4. TEMPORARY EMERGENCY AUTHORIZATION OF DE-**
17 **ENSE ARTICLES, DEFENSE SERVICES, AND**
18 **RELATED TRAINING DIRECTLY TO THE**
19 **KURDISTAN REGIONAL GOVERNMENT.**

20 (a) IN GENERAL.—The President should consult with
21 the Government of Iraq in carrying out the authority pro-
22 vided in subsection (b).

23 (b) AUTHORIZATION.—

24 (1) MILITARY ASSISTANCE.—The President is
25 authorized to provide defense articles, defense serv-

ices, and related training directly to the Kurdistan Regional Government for the purpose of supporting international coalition efforts against the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) or any successor group.

(2) DEFENSE EXPORTS.—The President is authorized to issue licenses authorizing United States exporters to export defense articles, defense services, and related training directly to the Kurdistan Regional Government. For purposes of processing applications for such export licenses, the President is authorized to accept End Use Certificates approved by the Kurdistan Regional Government.

(3) TYPES OF ASSISTANCE.—Assistance authorized under paragraph (1) and exports authorized under paragraph (2) may include anti-tank and anti-armor weapons, armored vehicles, long-range artillery, crew-served weapons and ammunition, secure command and communications equipment, body armor, helmets, logistics equipment, excess defense articles and other military assistance that the President determines to be appropriate.

(c) RELATIONSHIP TO EXISTING AUTHORITIES; CONDITIONS OF ELIGIBILITY.—

1 (1) RELATIONSHIP TO EXISTING AUTHORI-
2 TIES.—Assistance authorized under subsection
3 (b)(1) and licenses for exports authorized under sub-
4 section (b)(2) shall be provided pursuant to the ap-
5 plicable provisions of the Arms Export Control Act
6 (22 U.S.C. 2751 et seq.) and the Foreign Assistance
7 Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151 et seq.), notwith-
8 standing any requirement in such applicable provi-
9 sions of law that a recipient of assistance of the type
10 authorized under subsection (b)(1) shall be a coun-
11 try or international organization.

12 (2) CONDITIONS OF ELIGIBILITY.—In addition
13 to such other provisions as the President may re-
14 quire, no defense article, defense service, or related
15 training may be provided to the Kurdistan Regional
16 Government under the authority of subsection (b)(1)
17 or (b)(2) unless the Kurdistan Regional Government
18 agrees that—

19 (A) it will not provide any such defense ar-
20 ticle, defense service, or related training to any-
21 one who is not an officer, employee, or agent of
22 the Kurdistan Regional Government, and

23 (B) it will not use or permit the use of any
24 such defense article, defense service, or related

1 training for purposes other than the purposes
2 for which it was provided,
3 unless the consent of the President has first been
4 obtained.

5 (d) REPORT.—

6 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after
7 the date of the enactment of this Act, the President
8 shall submit to the appropriate congressional com-
9 mittees a report on the following:

10 (A) The anticipated defense articles, de-
11 fense services, and related training to be pro-
12 vided under the authority of subsections (b)(1)
13 and (b)(2).

14 (B) A timeline for the provision of such de-
15 fense articles, defense services, and related
16 training.

17 (C) A description of mechanisms and pro-
18 cedures for end-use monitoring of such defense
19 articles, defense services, and related training.

20 (D) How such defense articles, defense
21 services, and related training would contribute
22 to the foreign policy and national security of
23 the United States, as well as impact security in
24 the region.

1 (2) DEFINITION.—In this subsection, the term
2 “appropriate congressional committees” means—

3 (A) the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the
4 Committee on Appropriations, and the Com-
5 mittee on Armed Services of the House of Rep-
6 resentatives; and

7 (B) the Committee on Foreign Relations,
8 the Committee on Appropriations, and the
9 Committee on Armed Services of the Senate.

10 (e) NOTIFICATION.—The President should provide
11 notification to the Government of Iraq prior to defense
12 articles, defense services, or related training being pro-
13 vided to the Kurdistan Regional Government under the
14 authority of subsection (b)(1) or (b)(2).

15 (f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section, the terms “de-
16 fense article”, “defense service”, and “training” have the
17 meanings given those terms in section 47 of the Arms Ex-
18 port Control Act (22 U.S.C. 2794).

19 (g) TERMINATION.—The authority to provide defense
20 articles, defense services, and related training under sub-
21 section (b)(1) and the authority to issue licenses for ex-
22 ports authorized under subsection (b)(2) shall terminate
23 on the date that is 3 years after the date of the enactment
24 of this Act.

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