



**Congressional  
Research Service**

Informing the legislative debate since 1914

---

# The War in Yemen: A Compilation of Legislation in the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress

**Jeremy M. Sharp**

Specialist in Middle Eastern Affairs

**Christopher M. Blanchard**

Specialist in Middle Eastern Affairs

May 18, 2018

**Congressional Research Service**

7-5700

[www.crs.gov](http://www.crs.gov)

R45046

## Summary

The 115<sup>th</sup> Congress continues to debate the extent and terms of the United States' involvement in the ongoing conflict in Yemen, where fighting has continued unabated since March 2015. Lawmakers have questioned the extent to which successive Administrations have adhered to existing law relating to providing security assistance, including sales or transfers of defense goods and defense services, while upholding international human rights standards (e.g., 22 U.S.C. §2754 or 22 U.S.C. §2304). They also have proposed new legislation that would condition or prohibit the use of U.S. funds for some activities related to Yemen and extend legislative oversight over the executive branch's policy toward the war in Yemen.

This product provides a summary of all legislative proposals that the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress has considered to date regarding the conflict in Yemen. Proposed stand-alone legislation, resolutions, and amendments to wider bills [National Defense Authorization Acts for 2018 (H.R. 2810/P.L. 115-91) and 2019 (H.R. 5515), and defense appropriations (H.R. 3219/Division I, H.R. 3354)] have reflected a range of congressional perspectives and priorities, including with regard to

- the authorization of the activities of the U.S. Armed Forces related to the conflict;
- the extent of U.S. logistical, material, advisory, and intelligence support for the coalition led by Saudi Arabia;
- the approval, disapproval, or conditioning of U.S. arms sales to Saudi Arabia;
- the appropriation of funds for U.S. operations in support of the Saudi-led coalition;
- the conduct of the Saudi-led coalition's air campaign and its adherence to international humanitarian law and the laws of armed conflict;
- the demand for greater humanitarian access to Yemen;
- the call for a wider government assessment of U.S. policy toward Yemen and U.S. support to parties to the conflict;
- the nature and extent of U.S.-Saudi counterterrorism and border security cooperation; and
- the role of Iran in supplying missile technology and other weapons to the forces of the Houthi movement.

This product will be updated during the second session of the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress to reflect new legislative proposals. It does not include references to Yemen in Iran sanctions legislation, which are covered in CRS Report RS20871, *Iran Sanctions*. For additional information on the war in Yemen and Saudi Arabia, please see the following CRS Products.

CRS Report R43960, *Yemen: Civil War and Regional Intervention*.

CRS Report RL33533, *Saudi Arabia: Background and U.S. Relations*.

CRS Insight IN10729, *Yemen: Cholera Outbreak*.

## **Contents**

Overview: U.S. Involvement in the War in Yemen, 2015-Present .....	1
Trump Administration Policy .....	2
Recent Congressional Action .....	3

## **Tables**

Table 1. Proposed Legislation on the Conflict in Yemen .....	6
--	---

## **Contacts**

Author Contact Information .....	16
----------------------------------	----

## Overview: U.S. Involvement in the War in Yemen, 2015-Present

In March 2015, Saudi Arabia established a coalition of nations (hereinafter referred to as the Saudi-led coalition) to engage in military operations in Yemen against the Ansar Allah/Houthi movement and loyalists of the previous president of Yemen, the late Ali Abdullah Saleh.<sup>1</sup> The war in Yemen has continued unabated since then, leading, according to the United Nations, to one of the world's largest humanitarian crises.

The United States' role in supporting the Saudi-led coalition's military operations in Yemen has evolved over time. During 2014, the United States joined Saudi Arabia in demanding Houthi forces reverse their campaign to occupy the Yemeni capital of Sana'a, but the rapid onset of hostilities in March 2015 forced the Obama Administration to react quickly. At the start of the Saudi-led intervention on March 25, 2015, the Administration announced that the United States would provide "logistical and intelligence support" to the coalition's operations without taking "direct military action in Yemen in support of this effort."<sup>2</sup> Soon thereafter, a joint U.S.-Saudi planning cell was established to coordinate military and intelligence support for the campaign. At the United Nations Security Council, the United States supported the passage of Resolution 2216 (April 2015), which, among other things, required member states to impose an arms embargo against the Houthi-Saleh forces and demanded that the Houthis withdraw from all areas seized during the current conflict.

As the engagement went on, reports of errant coalition airstrikes leading to civilian casualties and infrastructure damage mounted.<sup>3</sup> The Obama Administration reportedly considered the legal implications of possible U.S. complicity in the Saudi-led coalition's alleged violations of the international laws of armed conflict.<sup>4</sup> In summer 2016, the Obama Administration withdrew small numbers of U.S. military personnel who were assisting in coordinating the Saudi-led air campaign in Yemen.<sup>5</sup> In the wake of an October 2016 Saudi airstrike on a funeral hall in Sana'a that killed 140 people, the Obama Administration initiated a review of U.S. security assistance to Saudi Arabia. Based on that review, it put a hold on a planned sale of precision guided munitions (PGMs) to Saudi Arabia and limited intelligence sharing, but maintained counterterrorism cooperation and refueling for coalition aircraft. While the Obama Administration emphasized Saudi Arabia's need to defend itself from Houthi missile strikes, it also amplified its calls for a political settlement to the conflict.

In the final months of the Obama Administration, U.S. Armed Forces briefly exchanged fire with forces party to the conflict. In October 2016, Houthi-Saleh forces launched anti-ship missiles at U.S. Navy vessels on patrol off the coast of Yemen. The attacks against the U.S. ships marked the first time U.S. Armed Forces had come under direct fire in the war. The Obama Administration responded to the attacks against U.S. naval vessels by directing the Armed Forces to fire cruise

---

<sup>1</sup> For background, see CRS Report RL34170, *Yemen: Background and U.S. Relations*. In early December 2017, the Houthi-Saleh alliance unraveled, culminating in the killing of former President Saleh on December 4, 2017.

<sup>2</sup> Statement by NSC Spokesperson Bernadette Meehan on the Situation in Yemen, The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, March 25, 2015.

<sup>3</sup> See, "Bombing Businesses: Saudi Coalition Airstrikes on Yemen's Civilian Economic Structures," *Human Rights Watch*, July 11, 2016.

<sup>4</sup> "As Saudis bombed Yemen, U.S. worried about legal blowback," *Reuters*, October 10, 2016.

<sup>5</sup> "U.S. withdraws staff from Saudi Arabia dedicated to Yemen planning," *Reuters*, August 19, 2016.

missiles against Houthi-Saleh radar installations. The Obama Administration described the U.S. strikes as self-defense and indicated that it did not want to deepen its direct involvement in the conflict.<sup>6</sup>

## **Trump Administration Policy**

The Trump Administration initiated a review of U.S. policy upon taking office and, in May 2017, notified Congress of its intention to proceed with proposed sales of precision guided munitions technologies that the Obama Administration had deferred, while increasing training for Saudi Arabia's air force on both targeting and the Law of Armed Conflict.<sup>7</sup> President Trump and Administration officials have signaled strong support for the Saudi-led coalition's operations in Yemen as a bulwark against Iranian regional interference while imploring the Saudis to improve humanitarian access, pursue a settlement to the conflict, and take measures to prevent civilian casualties. Overall, President Trump has directed his Administration "to focus on ending the war and avoiding a regional conflict, mitigating the humanitarian crisis, and defending Saudi Arabia's territorial integrity and commerce in the Red Sea."<sup>8</sup>

In November 2017, a Houthi missile with alleged Iranian origins landed deep inside Saudi Arabia, leading the coalition to blockade all of Yemen's ports. This exacerbated Yemen's humanitarian crisis, and the Trump Administration demanded that the coalition ease its entry restrictions while condemning Iran for its dangerous escalation of the conflict.<sup>9</sup> U.S. officials continue to speak in clear terms about what they view as the importance of avoiding civilian casualties and reaching a negotiated solution to the crisis. In April 2018, Acting Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs David Satterfield told the House Foreign Affairs Committee that,

We have engaged at the highest levels of the government, including the president repeatedly, to impress upon the governments involved in this campaign, led by Saudi Arabia, that there must be every possible action taken first to maintain free and full access for humanitarian and commercial goods, including fuel into Yemen. Secondly, that the campaign directed with the purpose of bringing the Houthis to the negotiating table is not, in our view, a campaign that can succeed. Saudi Arabia has legitimate self-defense needs and requirements, which do require military action. We work with them to help shape and support those actions in a way that mitigates or diminishes civilian

---

<sup>6</sup> Letter from the President -- War Powers Resolution, The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, October 14, 2016.

<sup>7</sup> A November 2017 report suggests that Saudi Arabia has agreed to purchase \$7 billion in precision munitions from U.S. companies in agreements that would span a decade. See, "Saudi Arabia Agrees to buy \$7 billion in Precision Munitions from U.S. firms: Sources," *Reuters*, November 22, 2017. To date, no new precision-guided munitions sale has been notified to Congress since the May 2017 notification of three direct commercial sales of precision guided munitions technology that had been deferred by the Obama Administration.

<sup>8</sup> Letter from Department of Defense Acting General Counsel William Castle to Senators Mitch McConnell and Chuck Schumer, February 27, 2018.

<sup>9</sup> On November 4, 2017, a Houthi ballistic missile (with alleged Iranian markings) landed on Saudi soil near King Khalid international airport in Riyadh. Two days later, the Saudi-led coalition closed all Yemeni ports, including Hodeida, which is the primary point of entry for most imported food and humanitarian supplies entering Yemen. Yemen imports over 90% of its food supply. After the coalition's imposition of total ports' closure, food and fuel prices skyrocketed, leading international aid agencies to warn of impending famine. The total closure of all Yemeni ports lasted until November 24, 2017, when the Saudi-led coalition announced that it would begin allowing humanitarian aid to resume entering Hodeida port - but not commercial shipments of food and fuel. The Saudi-led coalition argues that the Houthis earn hard currency by taxing fuel imports. Yemen imports 80% of its food from commercial suppliers rather than from humanitarian sources, and U.N. officials reported through May 2018 that commercial shipments of food to Hodeida remain deterred and delayed by coalition restrictions.

casualties. But the campaign to force a political resolution is not one that we believe has a military calculus to it. It's political, it should lie in enabling the United Nations to move forward. We have the new representative of the United Nations for Yemen in Washington, today, and we hope very much that his efforts can achieve success.<sup>10</sup>

U.S. military support to the coalition and border security and anti-ballistic missile support to Saudi Arabia continues. In his biannual War Powers letters to Congress on the deployment of U.S. forces abroad in combat operations (P.L. 93-148), President Trump informed Congress about expanded U.S. counterterrorism operations in Yemen and stated that U.S. forces in noncombat roles were providing “logistics and other support to regional forces combatting the Houthi insurgency in Yemen.”<sup>11</sup> In February 2018, the Acting Department of Defense General Counsel wrote to Senate leaders describing the extent of current U.S. support, and reported that “the United States provides the KSA-led coalition defense articles and services, including air-to-air refueling; certain intelligence support; and military advice, including advice regarding compliance with the law of armed conflict and best practices for reducing the risk of civilian casualties.”<sup>12</sup> According to the Department of Defense, “roughly 50” U.S. personnel are in Saudi Arabia for related activities including efforts focused on Houthi ballistic missile threats to the kingdom.<sup>13</sup> Press reports also have included unconfirmed details about U.S. border security and counter-missile operations.<sup>14</sup>

In-flight refueling to the militaries of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) is conducted pursuant to the terms of bilateral Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreements (ACSAs) between the Department of Defense and the respective ministries of each country.<sup>15</sup> Sales and deliveries of defense articles and services continue pursuant to the Foreign Military Sales and Direct Commercial Sales procedures established in the Arms Export Control Act. The Department of Defense argues that “the limited military and intelligence support that the United States is providing to the KSA-led coalition does not involve any introduction of U.S. forces into hostilities for purposes of the War Powers Resolution.”

## Recent Congressional Action

Congressional debate over U.S. support to the Saudi-led coalition’s military operations since 2015 has reflected reports of Yemeni civilian casualties resulting from the coalition’s operations and broader concerns about deteriorating humanitarian conditions, restrictions on the flow of goods

---

<sup>10</sup> Acting Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs David Satterfield, Testimony before the House Foreign Affairs Committee, April 20, 2018.

<sup>11</sup> See, Text of a Letter from the President to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, December 11, 2017.

<sup>12</sup> Letter from Department of Defense Acting General Counsel William Castle to Senators Mitch McConnell and Chuck Schumer, February 27, 2018.

<sup>13</sup> Assistant Defense Secretary for International Security Affairs Robert S. Karem, Testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, April 17, 2018.

<sup>14</sup> Helene Cooper, Thomas Gibbons-Neff and Eric Schmitt, “Army Special Forces Secretly Help Saudis Combat Threat From Yemen Rebels,” *New York Times*, May 18, 2018.

<sup>15</sup> ACSA agreements are governed by 10 U.S.C. 2341-2350. The agreements provide for reciprocal logistical support under a variety of circumstances, and their underlying statutory authority does not prohibit U.S. support to partner forces engaged in armed conflict. U.S. ACSA agreements with Saudi Arabia and the UAE provide for the transfer of support to third parties with the prior written consent of both the original provider and original recipient. The U.S. agreement with Saudi Arabia was signed in May 2016. The executive branch has not publicly specified what legal authority or agreement provided for refueling support to Saudi aircraft from March 2015 through May 2016.

and humanitarian aid, the war-driven empowerment of Al Qaeda and Islamic State forces, and Iranian support for the Houthis.

Saudi officials acknowledge that some of their operations have inadvertently caused civilian casualties, while maintaining that their military campaign is an act of legitimate self-defense because of their Yemeni adversaries' repeated, deadly cross-border attacks, including ballistic missile attacks. Saudi officials argue that coalition-imposed restrictions and strict inspections of goods and vessels bound for Yemen are required because of Iranian weapons smuggling to Houthi forces. Saudi officials similarly argue that the delivery of goods to ports and territory under Houthi control creates opportunities for Houthi forces to redirect or otherwise exploit shipments for their material or financial benefit.<sup>16</sup> Saudi and Emirati officials have made more than \$1 billion in donations to relief efforts in 2018.

As the Trump Administration attempts to balance its condemnation of the Houthis and their Iranian backers with more direct calls for the coalition to ease its restrictions on access to Yemen and pursue negotiations, there has been heightened interest in Congress regarding the U.S. role in the Yemen conflict. Some lawmakers have suggested that U.S. arms sales and military support to the coalition have enabled alleged violations of international humanitarian law, while others have argued that U.S. support to the coalition improves its effectiveness and helps minimize civilian casualties. Senators have focused on Yemen-related questions in considering nominations, Members of both chambers have conducted enhanced oversight, and Congress has considered but has not enacted proposals to curtail or condition U.S. defense sales to Saudi Arabia or to prohibit the use of funds for coalition support operations.<sup>17</sup>

Most recently, on March 20, 2018, the Senate voted to table a motion to discharge the Senate Foreign Relations Committee from further consideration of S.J.Res. 54, a joint resolution that would direct the President to remove U.S. forces from "hostilities in or affecting" Yemen (except for those U.S. forces engaged in counterterrorism operations directed at al Qaeda or associated forces).

U.S. officials have acknowledged that pressure from Congress has altered how the Administration deals with the coalition over the Yemen conflict, with Acting Assistant Secretary Satterfield telling Senator Todd Young and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in April that,

Senator, your efforts, the efforts of your colleagues in this body and on this Committee have been exceedingly helpful in allowing the Administration to send a message from whole of government regarding the very specific concerns we have over any limitations, restrictions, constraints on the ability of both humanitarian and commercial goods

---

<sup>16</sup> Saudi Press Agency, Command of the Coalition to Restore Legitimacy in Yemen Issues Statement, November 22, 2017.

<sup>17</sup> In late 2017, Senators Todd Young and Christopher Murphy placed a hold on the confirmation of the State Department's nominee for legal advisor, Jennifer Newstead, until the Administration took certain steps to address the coalition's blockade of Yemen. Dan De Luce and Robbie Gramer, "GOP Senator Presses Trump Administration Over Deadly Saudi Blockade in Yemen," *Foreign Policy*, December 4, 2017; and, Dan De Luce, "Trump Nominee Concedes Saudi Siege of Yemen Could Be Violating U.S. Law," *Foreign Policy*, December 19, 2017. On December 14, Senator Young sent a letter to President Trump thanking the President for his December 6 statement, while asserting that the coalition's blockade triggers, per the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 as amended (22 U.S. Code §2378-1(a)), a prohibition on U.S. foreign assistance to Saudi Arabia. Newstead was confirmed by the Senate on December 19 after promising the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to consider evidence of any possible foreign government restriction of the delivery of U.S. humanitarian assistance to Yemen in determining whether to apply statutory prohibitions found in 22 U.S. Code §2378-1(a). See, Senator Todd Young, Young: Law Triggered by Saudi Arabia's Actions in Yemen, December 14, 2017, and Newstead response online at: [<https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/4333104-20171114-Young-Newstead-QFRs-Round-3-1.html>].

specifically to include fuel to have unrestricted and expeditious entry into Yemen. And that messaging which comes from us, the Executive Branch, also comes from this body is extremely important.<sup>18</sup>

Congress continues to debate legislative proposals seeking variously to

- Require additional oversight reporting on U.S. activities;
- Restrict or prohibit the deployment of U.S. military personnel or the use of U.S. funds for certain purposes in Yemen; and/or
- Condition or prohibit the provision of certain support or the sale of certain weaponry to Saudi Arabia.

**Table 1** describes proposals currently under consideration and others previously proposed and considered.

---

<sup>18</sup> Acting Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs David Satterfield, Testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, April 17, 2018.

**Table I. Proposed Legislation on the Conflict in Yemen**

Bills, Resolutions, and Amendments offered in the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress

Bill Number	Sponsor	Summary	Status
<b>Resolutions and Stand-alone Legislation</b>			
S.Res. 114	Senator Todd Young, (R) – Indiana and Senator Benjamin Cardin, (D) – Maryland	Among other things, states the sense of the Senate that the United States should support efforts to hold accountable those responsible for deliberate restrictions on humanitarian access in Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, and Yemen.	Resolution agreed to in Senate with an amendment and an amended preamble by unanimous consent on 09/26/2017.
S.J.Res. 40	Senator Christopher Murphy, (D) – Connecticut	Would prohibit the transfer to Saudi Arabia of U.S. air-to-ground munitions until the President certifies to Congress that, among other things: Saudi Arabia and its coalition partners are taking all feasible precautions to reduce the risk of civilian harm and exercising proportional use of force in the course of military actions, and are making demonstrable efforts to facilitate the flow of critical humanitarian aid and commercial goods. The bill also would require a briefing on U.S. government support for the Saudi-led coalition’s military operations in Yemen, which would include an assessment, among other things, of whether these operations in Yemen constitute legitimate self-defense and whether these operations have deliberately targeted civilian infrastructure in Yemen.	S.J.Res. 40 referred to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on 04/06/17.
H.J.Res. 104	Representative Ted Lieu, (D) – California		H.J.Res. 104 referred to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs on 05/25/2017.
H.R. 2795	Representative Karen Bass, (D) – California	Would require the Secretaries of State and Defense in coordination with the Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development to provide Congress with a report on United States security and humanitarian interests in Yemen, including: the strategic objectives of the United States in Yemen, including humanitarian support to civilian populations under threat of famine, and the criteria for determining the success of such objectives; a description of efforts to coordinate civilian and military efforts with respect to Yemen; and a description of the diplomatic strategy with respect to regional partners seeking to end the civil war in Yemen.	Referred to the Subcommittee on Middle East and North Africa, House Foreign Affairs Committee on 06/27/17.

Bill Number	Sponsor	Summary	Status
H.R.4603	Representative Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, (R) – Florida	Would, among other things, require the President to impose sanctions on a foreign person that the President determines knowingly provides significant financial, material, or technological support for, among others, the Ansar Allah in Yemen (Houthis). The bill also would require the President to report on Iranian activities in Yemen.	H.R.4603 referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs on 12/07/2017, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.
H.Con.Res. 81	Representatives Khanna (D - CA), Massie (R – KY), Pocan (D – WI), and Jones (R – NC).	Would direct the President to remove U.S. Armed Forces from hostilities in the Republic of Yemen, except those engaged in operations directed at Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, within 30 days after adoption of this concurrent resolution, unless the President requests and Congress authorizes a later date, and unless and until a declaration of war or specific authorization for the use of U.S. Armed Forces has been enacted.	Unanimous consent that the provisions of Section 7 of the War Powers Resolution (50 U.S.C. 1546) shall apply to H.Con.Res. 81 not earlier than November 2, 2017, but on the same terms that would have adhered on October 13, 2017. Agreed to without objection on 10/11/17.
H.Res. 599	Representative Ro Khanna, (D) – California	Among other things, expresses the urgent need for a political solution in Yemen consistent with United Nations Security Council Resolution 2216; denounces the conduct of activities in Yemen and areas affected by the conflict that are, directly or indirectly, inconsistent with the laws of armed conflict; and condemns Iranian activities in Yemen in violation of UNSCR 2216. Calls on all responsible countries to take appropriate and necessary measures against the Government of Iran, including the interdiction of Iranian weapons to the Houthis, and the bilateral and multilateral application of sanctions against Iran for its violations of UNSCR 2216.	Unanimous consent that it be in order at any time to consider in the House H.Res. 599 with one hour of debate and that notwithstanding any previous order of the House, the provisions of Section 7 of the War Powers Resolution (50 U.S.C. 1546) shall not apply to H.Con.Res. 81. Agreed to without objection on 11/1/17. Passed in the House on 11/13/17 (Yeas and Nays 366-30, 1 present, and 35 not voting, Roll no. 623).

Bill Number	Sponsor	Summary	Status
S.J.Res. 54	Senator Bernie Sanders, (I) – VT, Senator Mike Lee (R) – Utah, and Senator Christopher Murphy, (D) – Connecticut	Would direct the President to remove U.S. Armed Forces from hostilities in or affecting the Republic of Yemen, except United States Armed Forces engaged in operations directed at Al Qaeda or associated forces within 30 days of adoption unless and until a declaration of war or specific authorization for such use of United States Armed Forces has been enacted.	Motion to table a motion to discharge the Senate Foreign Relations Committee from further consideration of S.J.Res. 54 agreed to in the Senate on 03/20/18 (Yeas and Nays 55 – 44, Record Vote Number 58).
S.J.Res. 55	Senator Todd Young, (R) – Indiana and Senator Jeanne Shaheen (D) – New Hampshire	Would prohibit the obligation or expenditure of U.S. funds for in-flight refueling operations of Saudi and Saudi-led coalition aircraft that are not conducting select operations if certain certifications cannot be made and maintained at 30, 180, and 360 day intervals. Criteria include undertaking an urgent and good faith effort to conduct diplomatic negotiations to end the civil war in Yemen and appropriate measures to alleviate the humanitarian crisis in Yemen by increasing access for all Yemenis to food, fuel, and medicine.	Referred to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, 03/8/2018.
S.J.Res. 58	Senators Young (R – IN), Shaheen (D – NH), Collins (R – ME), and Coons (D – DE)	Revises S.J.Res. 55 to add a reduction of civilian harm criterion to the initial certification, amend the description of operations not subject to restrictions in absence of certification, and to add a strategy submission requirement.	Referred to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, 04/11/2018.

#### National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019

H.R. 5515	Representative Mac Thornberry, (R) – Texas	<b>Section 1286 (HASC Reported)</b> – would require the Secretary of Defense to submit to the congressional defense committees not later than February 1, 2019, a report describing the strategy of the U.S. Armed Forces with respect to Yemen, including current activities, costs, interests, goals, success metrics, estimated resource needs through FY2022, and current legal authorities.	Reported to House, 05/15/18.
H.R. 5515	Representative Beto O'Rourke, (D) – Texas and Representative Ro Khanna, (D) – California	<b>House Rules Committee Amendment 312</b> – would require the Secretary of Defense to report every 90 days on any mid-air refueling for any non-U.S. aircraft of the Saudi-led coalition for any anti-Houthi missions in Yemen to include recipient aircraft information, targets struck by such aircraft, associated damage, and any records required by cross-servicing agreements.	Submitted on 05/17/18
H.R. 5515	Representative Ro Khanna, (D) – California	<b>House Rules Committee Amendment 323</b> – would require the Secretary of Defense to issue a declassified report on the effect of the war in Yemen on the Islamic State and Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula.	Submitted on 05/17/18

Bill Number	Sponsor	Summary	Status
H.R. 5515	Representative Ro Khanna, (D) – California	<b>House Rules Committee Amendment 325</b> - would prohibit the use of funds authorized to be appropriated by the Act “for refueling non-United States military aircraft for missions conducted against the Houthi in Yemen.”	Submitted on 05/17/18
H.R. 5515	Representative Ro Khanna, (D) – California	<b>House Rules Committee Amendment 338</b> - would require the Secretary of Defense to investigate whether coalition partners or U.S. military or intelligence personnel violated federal law or Department of Defense policy with regard to interrogations or gross violations of internationally recognized human rights while conducting operations in Yemen.	Submitted on 05/17/18
H.R. 5515	Representative Ted Lieu, (D) – California and Representative Ted Yoho, (R) – Florida	<b>House Rules Committee Amendment 367</b> – would prohibit the obligation or expenditure of federal funds for refueling of non U.S. aircraft in Yemen with some exceptions unless the Department of State in conjunction with the Secretary of Defense and Director of National Intelligence certifies that the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen is making a good-faith effort on diplomatic negotiations, not obstructing the flow of critical humanitarian aid, not supporting radical Salafi militias, and providing the U.S. Government with battle damage assessments of airstrikes in Yemen for which the United States provided refueling. Would require a briefing within 30 days on operations in Yemen and a range of civilian protection and other issues.	Submitted on 05/17/18
H.R. 5515	Representative Rick Nolan, (D) – Minnesota	<b>House Rules Committee Amendment 399</b> - would prohibit the use of funds authorized by the Act “to deploy members of the Armed Forces to participate in the ongoing civil war in Yemen.”	Submitted on 05/17/18
H.R. 5515	Representative Pramila Jayapal, (D) – Washington	<b>House Rules Committee Amendment 456</b> - would prohibit the use of funds authorized to be appropriated by the Act to refuel or assist in targeting of air strikes led by Saudi Arabia or the United Arab Emirates against Houthi forces in Yemen or for Special Operations ground missions in support of anti-Houthi operations until the Secretary of Defense certifies that Yemen’s Hodeida port is “completely open to aid and commercial flow of food, fuel, and medicine.”	Submitted on 05/17/18
H.R. 5515	Representative Mark Pocan (D) – Wisconsin	<b>House Rules Committee Amendment 507</b> - Would require the Secretary of Defense to submit a report within 120 days of enactment regarding all activities conducted by members of the U.S. Armed Forces and civilian personnel of the Department of Defense in providing assistance to the military coalition led by Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates against Houthi forces in Yemen.	Submitted on 05/17/18

Bill Number	Sponsor	Summary	Status
H.R. 5515	Representative Mark Pocan (D) – Wisconsin and Representative Justin Amash (R) - Michigan	<b>House Rules Committee Amendment 508</b> - Would prohibit the use of funds authorized to be appropriated by the Act to transfer precision guided munitions to Saudi Arabia until the Secretary of Defense certifies that U.S. Armed Forces have withdrawn from all forms of participation in the hostilities led by Saudi Arabia or the United Arab Emirates against Houthi forces in Yemen, unless such participation is specifically authorized by Congress.	Submitted on 05/17/18

**National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018**

H.R. 2810 (NDAA)/P.L. 115-91	Representative Mac Thornberry, (R) – Texas	<p><b>Section 1277 (House-passed)</b> – Would have required the President to provide the appropriate congressional committees with a report that contains a security strategy for Yemen, including, among other things: a discussion of the strategy’s compliance with applicable legal authorities and a detailed description of the roles of the U.S. Armed Forces in implementing the strategy.</p> <p><b>Section 1275 (Agreed to in Conference)</b>- Requires the President to provide the appropriate congressional committees with a report that contains a security strategy for Yemen, including, among other things: “an explanation of the legal authorities supporting the strategy; a detailed description of the political and security environment in Yemen; a detailed description of the threats posed by Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria–Yemen Province, including the intent, capabilities, strategic aims, and resources attributable to each organization; a detailed description of the threats posed to freedom of navigation through the Bab al Mandab Strait and waters in proximity to Yemen as well as any United States efforts to mitigate those threats; a detailed description of the threats posed to the United States and its allies and partners by the proliferation of advanced conventional weapons in Yemen; a detailed description of the threats posed to United States interests by state actors in Yemen; a discussion of United States objectives regarding long-term stability and counterterrorism in Yemen; a plan to integrate the United States diplomatic, development, military, and intelligence resources necessary to implement the strategy; and a detailed description of the roles of the United States Armed Forces in supporting the strategy.”</p>	<p>Engrossed in the House on 07/14/2017. The Senate engrossed amendment contained no similar provision.</p> <p>In conference, the prohibition on funds contained in Section 1277(e) [see below] was removed and conferees adopted the security strategy provisions contained in Section 1277 with clarifying changes and incorporated them into Section 1275 in P.L. 115-91.</p>
------------------------------	--	---	--

Bill Number	Sponsor	Summary	Status
H.R. 2810 (NDAA)/P.L. 115-91	Representative Ted Lieu, (D – CA), Representative Ruben Gallego (D – AZ), and Representative Yvette Clarke (D – NY)	<p><b>House Rules Committee Amendment 274</b> – Would have required the Secretaries of State and Defense to provide the appropriate congressional committees with a report on military action of Saudi Arabia and its coalitions partners in Yemen, including among other things: the extent to which the Government of Saudi Arabia and its coalition partners in Yemen are abiding by their “No Strike List and Restricted Target List,” and the roles played by United States military personnel with respect to operations of such coalition partners in Yemen.</p> <p><b>Section 1265 (Agreed to in Conference)</b> – Requires the Secretaries of State and Defense to provide the appropriate congressional committees with a report on military action of Saudi Arabia and its coalitions partners in Yemen, including, among other things: the extent to which the Government of Saudi Arabia and its coalition partners in Yemen are taking demonstrable actions to “reduce the risk of harm to civilians and civilian objects, in compliance with obligations under international humanitarian law; facilitate the flow of humanitarian aid and commercial goods into Yemen, including commercial fuel and commodities not subject to sanction or prohibition under United Nations Security Council Resolution 2216 (2015); and target al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula and affiliates of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria as part of the coalition’s military operations in Yemen.” Would also require an assessment of “the role of United States military personnel with respect to operations of such coalition partners in Yemen” and “progress made by the Government of Saudi Arabia and its coalition partners in avoiding and investigating, if necessary, civilian casualties, including improvements to (A) targeting methodology; (B) the strike approval process; and (C) training of personnel, including by implementing the recommendations of the Joint Incident Assessment Team.”</p>	<p>Submitted on 07/12/17.</p> <p>Made in order as Amendment 93 in H.Rept. 115-217. Adopted by voice vote as part of en bloc H.Amdt. 195. Incorporated as Section 1293 and engrossed in the House on 07/14/2017.</p> <p>Agreed to in conference (with clarifying changes) and incorporated as Section 1265 in P.L. 115-91. The conference agreement changed the reporting requirement from an annual report with no time limit to an annual report issued for two years.</p>
H.R. 2810 (NDAA)/P.L. 115-91	Representative Rick Nolan, (D) – Minnesota	<p><b>House Rules Committee Amendment 159</b> – Would have prohibited the use of funds authorized to be appropriated by the Act to deploy members of the Armed Forces to participate in the ongoing civil war in Yemen.</p>	<p>Submitted on 07/12/2017.</p> <p>Made in order as Amendment 84 in H.Rept. 115-217. Adopted by voice vote as part of en bloc H.Amdt. 194. Incorporated as Section 1277(e) and engrossed in the House on 07/14/2017. The Senate struck the prohibition on funds in conference.</p>

Bill Number	Sponsor	Summary	Status
H.R. 2810 (NDAA)/P.L. 115-91	Representative Ro Khanna, (D) – California	<b>House Rules Committee Amendment 70</b> – Would have required certifications for provision of air-to-ground munitions to countries relating to the civil war in Yemen.	Submitted on 07/12/17. Not made in order by Rules Committee.
H.R. 2810 (NDAA)/P.L. 115-91	Representative Ro Khanna, (D) – California	<b>House Rules Committee Amendment 71</b> – Would have required an investigation to determine if employees of the Department of Defense violated federal law or Department of Defense policy while conducting operations in Yemen.	Submitted on 07/12/17. Not made in order by Rules Committee.
H.R. 2810 (NDAA)/P.L. 115-91	Representatives Khanna (D – CA), Jones (R – NC), Conyers (D – MI), Pocan (D – WI), Lee (D – CA), Grijalva (D – AZ), Clarke (D – NY)	<b>House Rules Committee Amendment 73</b> – Would have prohibited the use of funds authorized to be appropriated by the Act for refueling for missions over northern and western Yemen and required a reoccurring report to Congress.	Submitted on 07/12/17. Not made in order by Rules Committee.
H.R. 2810 (NDAA)/P.L. 115-91	Representative Warren Davison, (R) – Ohio	<b>House Rules Committee Amendment 386</b> – Would have prohibited the use of funds authorized to be appropriated by the Act or otherwise available to the Department of Defense for FY2018 to conduct military operations in Yemen with the exception of: Activities carried out in full compliance with the Authorization for Use of Military Force (Public Law 107–40; 50 U.S.C. 1541 note), the provision of humanitarian assistance, the defense of United States Armed Forces, and support for freedom of navigation operations.	Submitted on 07/12/2017. Made in order as Amendment 120 in H.Rept. 115-217. Adopted by voice vote as part of en bloc H.Amdt. 196. Incorporated as Section 1298 and engrossed in the House on 07/14/2017.
H.R. 2810 (NDAA)/P.L. 115-91	Representatives Gwen Moore, (D) – Wisconsin and Yvette Clarke, (D) – New York	<b>House Rules Committee Amendment 188</b> – Would have required the U.S. strategy on Yemen to also consider the political and humanitarian environment in Yemen, ways to mitigate harms to civilians caused by the ongoing conflict, and efforts to improve access to food, water, and health care. Would have required an assessment of how military and other support to regional allies will help to achieve this strategy, including how the United States will ensure that such aid is not used to harm civilians. Would have required that future budget requests specifically identify costs associated with implementing the required strategy.	Submitted on 07/12/17. Not made in order by Rules Committee.
H.R. 2810 (NDAA)/P.L. 115-91 S.Amdt. 439	Senator Elizabeth Warren, (D) – Massachusetts	<b>Senate Amendment 439</b> – Would have required the Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the Director of National Intelligence, to provide Congress with a report assessing whether the use of air-to-ground munitions sold or otherwise supplied by the United States to the Government of Saudi Arabia have resulted in civilian casualties, and providing recommendations on actions to be taken to mitigate the incidence of civilian casualties in Yemen.	Submitted on 07/27/2017. Not considered.

Bill Number	Sponsor	Summary	Status
H.R. 2810 (NDAA)/P.L. 115-91 S.Amdt. 585	Senator Todd Young, (R) – Indiana	<b>Senate Amendment 585</b> – Would have prohibited the sale or export of any defense article to the government of Saudi Arabia during FY2018 until the Secretary of State certifies that, among other things: the Government of Saudi Arabia is complying fully with its obligations in Yemen under international law; and that the government of Saudi Arabia is facilitating the delivery and installation of cranes to the port of Hodeida. Would also have required the Comptroller General to report on whether the conclusions in the certification are fully supported.	Submitted on 07/27/2017. Not considered.
H.R. 2810 (NDAA)/P.L. 115-91 S.Amdt. 896	Senator Christopher Murphy, (D) – Connecticut	<b>Senate Amendment 896</b> – Would have required the Secretary of Defense to certify certain government of Saudi Arabia action before funds may be authorized by the Act for the refueling of aircraft of Saudi Arabia or its military coalition partners in Yemen. The certification would not have applied for refueling missions related to counterterrorism operations. The Secretary of Defense would have the option to waive the certification requirement.	Submitted on 09/11/2017. Not considered.
H.R. 2810 (NDAA)/P.L. 115-91 S.Amdt. 923	Senator Marco Rubio, (R) – Florida	<b>Senate Amendment 923</b> – Would have required the Secretaries of State and Defense to jointly report on the military action of Saudi Arabia and its coalitions partners in Yemen, including, among other things: The extent to which the Government of Saudi Arabia and its coalition partners in Yemen are abiding by their “No Strike List and Restricted Target List” and the roles played by United States military personnel with respect to operations of such coalition partners in Yemen.	Submitted on 09/11/2017. Not considered.
H.R. 2810 (NDAA)/P.L. 115-91 S.Amdt. 1081	Senators Todd Young (R) – Indiana, Christopher Murphy (D) – Connecticut, and Dean Heller, (R) – Nevada	<b>Senate Amendment 1081</b> – Similar to SA Amendment 896, would have required the Secretary of Defense to certify certain government of Saudi Arabia action before funds may be authorized by the Act for the refueling of aircraft of Saudi Arabia or its military coalition partners in Yemen. This certification would have required, among other things, that the Government of Saudi Arabia facilitate the delivery and installation of cranes to the port of Hodeida.	Submitted on 09/14/2017. Not considered.
<b>H.R.3219 – Make America Secure Appropriations Act, 2018 (Defense Appropriations)</b>			
H.R. 3219 (FY2018 Defense Appropriations)/ Division I, H.R. 3354	Representative Rick Nolan, (D) – Minnesota	<b>House Rules Committee Amendment 35</b> – Would have prohibited the use of funds made available by the Act to deploy members of the U.S. Armed Forces to participate in the ongoing civil war in Yemen.	Not made in order by Rules Committee.

Bill Number	Sponsor	Summary	Status
H.R. 3219 (FY2018 Defense Appropriations)/ Division I, H.R. 3354	Representative Warren Davidson, (R) – Ohio	<b>House Rules Committee Amendment 104</b> – Would have prohibited the funds appropriated or otherwise made available by the Act from being used with respect to Yemen in contravention of the War Powers Resolution.	Made in order as Amendment 45 in H.Rept. 115-261. Considered as H.Amdt. 268 on 07/27/2017. Failed by voice vote.
H.R. 3219 (FY2018 Defense Appropriations)/ Division I, H.R. 3354	Representatives Khanna (D - CA), Jones (R- NC), Amash (R - MI), and, Pocan (D - WI)	<b>House Rules Committee Amendment 13</b> – Would have prohibited the use of funds made available by the Act to transfer munitions to Saudi Arabia or the United Arab Emirates.	Not made in order by Rules Committee.
H.R. 3219 (FY2018 Defense Appropriations)/ Division I, H.R. 3354	Representatives Ro Khanna (D) – California and Walter Jones (R) – North Carolina	<b>House Rules Committee Amendment 20</b> – Would have prohibited the use of funds made available by the Act to transfer fuel to Saudi Arabia or the United Arab Emirates, except in connection with Operation Inherent Resolve and operations conducted by Special Operations Command–Central or under Operating Enduring Freedom–Horn of Africa.	Not made in order by Rules Committee.
H.R. 3219 (FY2018 Defense Appropriations)/ Division I, H.R. 3354	Representatives Amash (R - MI), Conyers (D - MI), Jones (R- NC), Pocan (D - WI), Lee (D - CA), McGovern (D - MA), and, Lieu (D- CA)	<b>House Rules Committee Amendment 44</b> – Would have prohibited the use of funds made available by the Act from being used to transfer or authorize the transfer of cluster munitions to the Government of Saudi Arabia.	Not made in order by Rules Committee.
<b>Consolidated Appropriations FY2018</b>			
H.R. 3354 (“minibus”)	Representative Ro Khanna, (D) – California	<b>House Rules Committee Amendment 45</b> – Would have reduced funds for the International Military Education & Training (IMET) program for Saudi Arabia and increased the State Department’s international disaster assistance program for Yemen.	Submitted on 09/12//2017. Not made in order by Rules Committee.
<b>Joint Resolutions of Disapproval on U.S. Arms Sales to Saudi Arabia</b>			
S.J.Res. 42	Senator Rand Paul, (R) – Kentucky	Would disapprove of the proposed export to the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia of certain defense articles, such as joint direct attack munitions (JDAMs), Paveway laser–guided munitions kits, and programmable bomb fuzes.	Considered in the Senate on 06/13/2017.
H.J.Res 102	Representative Justin Amash, (R) – Michigan		Motion to discharge resolution from the Senate Foreign Relations Committee rejected by Yea–Nay Vote (47 – 53, Record Vote Number 143).

**Source:** Congress.gov, Congressional Record, and House Rules Committee.

## **Author Contact Information**

Jeremy M. Sharp  
Specialist in Middle Eastern Affairs  
jsharp@crs.loc.gov, 7-8687

Christopher M. Blanchard  
Specialist in Middle Eastern Affairs  
cblanchard@crs.loc.gov, 7-0428

## **Acknowledgments**

Christopher Mellon provided research support for this product.