End the Blank Check for War
Congress Must Decide When the U.S. Goes to War

Since 9/11, three U.S. presidents have used the 2001 Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF) and the 2002 Iraq AUMF to justify U.S. military action across the globe without congressional approval. According to public records, the 2001 AUMF has been used to justify 41 military operations in 19 countries.

Article II of the Constitution gives the president, as commander in chief, the power to use limited military force without congressional approval to defend the United States against a sudden or imminent attack. But under Article I of the Constitution, Congress has the sole authority to decide whether to allow the president to take the country into a prolonged war. As a Quaker organization, we oppose all war. As a matter of public policy, we believe Congress must debate and vote before the president commits our military to lethal action and should regularly evaluate and vote on whether to continue ongoing U.S. wars.

For the first time in 18 years, the House of Representatives voted to repeal the 2001 AUMF after eight months. The provision was passed as part of the Defense Appropriations bill. We urge Congress to include this provision in the final Defense Appropriations bill and to also repeal the 2002 Iraq AUMF.

The 2001 and 2002 AUMFs should be repealed because they lack:

- Sunset clause: A three-year end date will facilitate oversight and prevent endless war.
- Clear military targets: Naming each specific group or country that the U.S. is waging war against will prevent presidents from starting wars against new groups or countries without congressional approval.
- Geographic restrictions: These would limit mission creep and protect Congress’ oversight role and its power to decide where the U.S. goes to war.
- Any restrictions on the use of ground troops: Explicit congressional approval should be required before committing our troops to any new ground war.

Please cosponsor Rep. Lee’s bill to repeal the 2001 AUMF (H.R. 1274) & insist the 2001 AUMF repeal remains in the final Defense Appropriations bill

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