



Action Sheet: October 2021

We seek a world free of war and the threat of war

October is a crucial month in our 2021 campaign to end endless wars. Three new cosponsors signed onto S.J. Res. 10 in September, including Sen. Joe Manchin (WV). FCNL's lobbyists are hearing from Congressional staff that October is the month when this bill is most likely to come to the Senate floor for a vote.

But Congress has been focusing on many other priorities, from the bipartisan infrastructure deal to funding the federal government. It is now up to us to create enough urgency to convince the Senate to bring S.J. Res. 10 to a floor vote before the end of the year!

We believe we have the 60 votes we need to pass, and President Biden has said he will sign this into law. What we need now is a surge of grassroots pressure: your October lobby visit could tip the scales to repeal the first war authorization in 50 years!

Our lobby visits around the country have been reinforced by calls from a broad range of veterans' groups, from the American Legion to Common Defense, that are urging Congress to address war powers. With midterm elections coming up in 2022, it is critical that we repeal the Iraq AUMF before the end of the year. Whether your Senators are opponents, supporters, or remain undecided, October is a critical time to schedule lobby visits to make the case that repealing the 2002 AUMF is a necessary and bipartisan step towards ending endless wars.

Your next lobby visit could tip the scales to repeal the first AUMF in 50 years!

Get the Facts: Ending the Endless Wars

The Constitution

The founders of the United States specifically placed the power to declare war in the hands of Congress. The 2001 and 2002 AUMFs have been interpreted by three presidents to give the executive branch the power to wage war without congressional approval.

The 2001 Authorization for Use of Military Force

Three days after 9/11, Congress gave the president advance permission to use military force against anyone who planned, authorized, committed, or aided those attacks, or who harbored such groups. By the authorization's own language, that should have only meant al Qaeda, who were responsible for the attacks, and the Taliban, who harbored al Qaeda in Afghanistan.

But later, the Bush administration developed the concept of “associated forces” – a term that does not appear in the 2001 AUMF – which three administrations have now used to expand the war to more than half a dozen groups around the world that had no connection to the 9/11 attacks, including ISIS. This is not what Congress intended in 2001; ISIS didn’t even exist then. Congress didn’t intend to start wars against al-Shabaab in Somalia or al-Nusra in Syria, but that’s exactly what has happened.

The 2002 Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq

The 2002 Iraq AUMF authorized the 2003 invasion of Iraq to defend the United States against the threat of weapons of mass destruction possessed by the Saddam Hussein regime in Iraq. The Trump administration claimed that the 2002 Iraq AUMF also authorizes war against ISIS in Iraq, Syria, and elsewhere, saying it allows the president to fight any threat “to or emanating from Iraq.” Indeed, in January 2020, the administration asserted that the 2002 Iraq AUMF authorized the assassination of Iranian general Qassem Soleimani in Baghdad. [Read more.](#)

Bipartisan Support Exists

Congress has twice voted to end U.S. military engagements abroad: first in April 2019, to end U.S. involvement in the Saudi-led war in Yemen, and second in April 2020, to terminate hostilities against Iran following the General Soleimani strike. The House has voted three times, in 2019, 2020 and 2021, to repeal the 2002 Iraq AUMF. All these votes have been on a bipartisan basis. These actions demonstrate that there is bipartisan will in Congress to rein in presidential power and ever-expanding wars.

War Is Not the Answer.

More war has not brought more peace. After nearly two decades of war, it is long past time for Congress to acknowledge that U.S. war policies have contributed to more instability and violence. They have failed to reduce the threat of terrorism or keep Americans safe. The world only becomes a safer place when lawmakers engage in robust debate prior to authorizing any military attacks, when we invest in peacebuilding, diplomacy, and other measures to prevent violent conflict, and when we learn lessons from our actions and reflect on what it means to truly protect American security.

» Take Action

Urge your senators to ask Senate leadership to bring [S.J. Res. 10](#), Sens. Tim Kaine (VA) and Todd Young’s (IN) bill to repeal the 1991 and 2002 Iraq AUMF, to the floor for a vote.

In October:

- **Schedule a lobby visit to ensure S.J. Res. 10 comes to a floor vote this year.**
- **Invite a new person to join your lobby visit, especially someone who brings a different perspective than your core team members.**