

Royce - Vietnam Human Rights Sanctions Act

Section-By-Section

Summary: House Foreign Affairs Chairman Royce is sponsoring legislation to impose sanctions on individuals who are complicit in human rights abuses committed against nationals of Vietnam or their family members, and for other purposes. This legislation allows for the identification of Vietnamese nationals complicit in human rights abuses, describes travel and financial sanctions, outlines exceptions to comply with international agreements, and details conditions under which sanctions may be terminated.

Section 1- This section identifies the Act as the “Vietnam Human Rights Sanctions Act.”

Section 2 - This section details Congressional findings regarding human rights abuses in Vietnam. In particular, Vietnam remains a one-party state that continues to deny the right of citizens to change their government. Furthermore, Vietnam places severe restrictions on citizens’ political rights, including increased measures to limit civil liberties, curtailment of public challenge to the legitimacy of the state, and restrictions on freedoms of opinion, assembly, association, and access to the Internet and telecommunication. Judicial and police corruption also remain problematic, with arbitrary arrest and detention. Finally, the Government of Vietnam limits religious freedoms and harasses religious leaders who do not conform to the Government’s demands. Though enhanced relations between the United States and Vietnam have provided opportunities for a human rights dialogue, future progress is unlikely without a clear signal from the United States indicating that such progress is required.

Section 3 - This section describes the sanctions the President shall impose on individuals who are complicit in human rights abuses committed against nationals of Vietnam or their family members.

The sanctions include travel and financial restrictions. Individuals on the list may not be admitted to enter or move through the United States, receive any lawful immigration status, and/or file any application or petition to obtain such admission, entry, or status. Financial sanctions include the blocking of the property of, and restricting or prohibiting financial transactions and the exportation and importation of property by, the individual. The President may authorize exceptions to permit the United States to comply with the Agreement between the United States and United Nations regarding the Headquarters of the United Nations, and other applicable international agreements.

Sanctions shall cease when the President determines and certifies to the appropriate congressional committees that the Government of Vietnam unconditionally releases all political prisoners, ceases its human rights abuses, and conducts a transparent investigation into abuses and prosecutes those responsible for them.