



**Statement of Lead Republican Michael McCaul (R-TX)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs**

“Floor Remarks for Lee Amendment #424: 2002 Iraq AUMF Repeal”

July 11, 2019

Remarks as Delivered

I oppose this amendment to repeal the 2002 law that authorized the use of Military Force [QUOTE] “to defend the national security of the United States continued threat the posed by Iraq” [END OF QUOTE].

First of all, the repeal of any AUMF does not belong in this NDAA bill. The Committee on Foreign Affairs has longstanding, sole jurisdiction over declarations of war and intervention abroad. Any significant change to war-making authorities needs to be the result of deliberations, and votes, by the committee of jurisdiction. There is no issue more deserving of regular order than issues related to war and peace.

Although none of us want to see the extension of any conflict beyond what is necessary, we have also learned that premature disengagement can have huge costs, such as when the prior Administration’s rushed to withdraw U.S. troops contributed to the deadly rise of ISIS in Iraq and Syria.

And while the Saddam Hussein regime was a key focus, it was not the sole focus of the 2000 AUMF. It also expressly identified Al Qaeda and [QUOTE] “other international terrorist organizations, including organizations that threaten the lives and safety of United States citizens” [END OF QUOTE].



Members will recall that Al Qaeda in Iraq later became ISIS, a brutal transnational terrorist organization that continues to threaten American lives and interests.

President Obama cited the 2002 AUMF as legal authority for his military operations against ISIS.

The current Administration has stated its opposition to the repeal of the 2002 AUMF because it [QUOTE] “remains an important source of additional authority for military operations against ISIS in Iraq and to defend the security and national security of the United States against threats emanating from Iraq.”

For these reasons, we shouldn’t be repealing key counterterrorism AUMFs unless and until we have replaced them with updated authorities that clearly confront the enemies that continue to threaten our nation, our people, and our allies. To date, we have seen no such proposal from the majority.

So, for those reasons, I urge my colleagues to join me in prioritizing American security by opposing this amendment. And I yield back the balance of my time.

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