

Omar	Sarbanes	Swalwell
Pallone	Scanlon	Sykes
Panetta	Schakowsky	Takano
Pappas	Schiff	Thamendar
Pelosi	Schneider	Thompson (CA)
Peltola	Scholten	Thompson (MS)
Perez	Schrier	Tokuda
Peters	Scott (VA)	Tonko
Petersen	Scott, David	Torres (CA)
Phillips	Sewell	Torres (NY)
Pingree	Sherman	Trahan
Pocan	Sherrill	Underwood
Pressley	Slotkin	Vargas
Quigley	Smith (WA)	Vasquez
Ramirez	Sorensen	Veasey
Raskin	Soto	Velázquez
Ross	Spanberger	Wasserman
Ruiz	Stansbury	Schultz
Ruppersberger	Stanton	Waters
Ryan	Stevens	Wexton
Salinas	Strickland	Wild
Sánchez	Suozy	Williams (GA)

NOT VOTING—28

Bowman	Jackson (IL)	Pascrell
Boyle (PA)	Jackson Lee	Porter
Burlison	Kim (NJ)	Salazar
Cammack	Lofgren	Titus
Doggett	McClellan	Tlaib
Evans	Menendez	Trone
Gosar	Miller-Meeks	Watson Coleman
Green (TN)	Murphy	Wilson (FL)
Grijalva	Nehls	
Issa	Palmer	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1110

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I was unable to vote during rollcall votes No. 235 and No. 236 on the floor of the House of Representatives. Had I been present, I would have voted NO on rollcall votes No. 235 and No. 236.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I was not present due to a prior engagement. Had I been present, I would have voted NAY on Roll Call No. 236 and NAY on Roll Call No. 235.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. TITUS. Madam Speaker, while tending to a family emergency, I was absent from the floor and the roll call votes for the Motion on Ordering the Previous Question on H. Res. 1269 and the Adoption of H. Res. 1269. Had I been present, I would have voted: NAY on Roll Call 235, Ordering the Previous Question on H. Res. 1269, and NAY on Roll Call 236, Adoption of H. Res. 1269.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I was unable to be present to cast my vote on Roll Call No. 235 and Roll Call No. 236 today. Had I been present, I would have voted NAY on Roll Call 235 and NAY on Roll Call No. 236.

ILLEGITIMATE COURT COUNTERACTION ACT

Mr. McCAUL. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 1269, I call up the bill (H.R. 8282) to impose sanctions with respect to the International Criminal Court engaged in any effort to investigate, arrest, detain, or pros-

ecute any protected person of the United States and its allies, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. STRONG). Pursuant to House Resolution 1269, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of the Rules Committee Print 118-37 is adopted, and the bill, as amended, is considered read.

The text of the bill, as amended, is as follows:

H.R. 8282

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Illegitimate Court Counteraction Act”.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) The United States and Israel are not parties to the Rome Statute or members of the International Criminal Court (ICC), and therefore the ICC has no legitimacy or jurisdiction over the United States or Israel.

(2) On May 20, 2024, the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, Karim Khan, announced arrest warrant applications for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Minister of Defense Yoav Gallant and should be condemned in the strongest possible terms.

(3) The bipartisan American Servicemembers’ Protection Act was enacted in 2002 to protect United States military personnel, United States officials, and officials and military personnel of certain allied countries against criminal prosecution by an international criminal court to which the United States is not party, stating, “In addition to exposing members of the Armed Forces of the United States to the risk of international criminal prosecution, the Rome Statute creates a risk that the President and other senior elected and appointed officials of the United States Government may be prosecuted by the International Criminal Court.”.

(4) The ICC’s actions against Israel are illegitimate and baseless, including the preliminary examination and investigation of Israel and applications for arrest warrants against Israeli officials, which create a damaging precedent that threatens the United States, Israel, and all United States partners who have not submitted to the ICC’s jurisdiction.

(5) The United States must oppose any action by the ICC against the United States, Israel, or any other ally of the United States that has not consented to ICC jurisdiction or is not a state party to the Rome Statute of the ICC.

SEC. 3. SANCTIONS WITH RESPECT TO THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, and on an ongoing basis thereafter, if the International Criminal Court is engaging in any attempt to investigate, arrest, detain, or prosecute any protected person, the President shall impose—

(1) the sanctions described in subsection (b) with respect to any foreign person the President determines—

(A) has directly engaged in or otherwise aided any effort by the International Criminal Court to investigate, arrest, detain, or prosecute a protected person;

(B) has materially assisted, sponsored, or provided financial, material, or technological support for, or goods or services to or in support of any effort by the International Criminal Court to investigate, arrest, detain, or prosecute a protected person; or

(C) is owned or controlled by, or is currently acting or purports to have acted, directly or indirectly, for or on behalf of any person that di-

rectly engages in any effort by the International Criminal Court to investigate, arrest, detain, or prosecute a protected person; and

(2) the sanctions described in subsection (b)(2) with respect to the immediate family members of each foreign person who is subject to sanctions pursuant to paragraph (1).

(b) SANCTIONS DESCRIBED.—The sanctions described in this subsection with respect to a foreign person described in subsection (a) are the following:

(1) PROPERTY BLOCKING.—The President shall exercise all of the powers granted by the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) to the extent necessary to block and prohibit all transactions in all property and interests in property of any foreign person described in subsection (a)(1) if such property and interests in property are in the United States, come within the United States, or are or come within the possession or control of a United States person.

(2) ALIENS INADMISSIBLE FOR VISAS, ADMISSION, OR PAROLE.—

(A) VISAS, ADMISSION, OR PAROLE.—In the case of an alien described in subsection (a), the alien is—

(i) inadmissible to the United States;

(ii) ineligible to receive a visa or other documentation to enter the United States; and

(iii) otherwise ineligible to be admitted or paroled into the United States or to receive any other benefit under the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101 et seq.).

(B) CURRENT VISAS REVOKED.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—The visa or other entry documentation of an alien described in subparagraph (A) shall be revoked, regardless of when such visa or other entry documentation was issued.

(ii) IMMEDIATE EFFECT.—A revocation under clause (i) shall—

(I) take effect immediately; and

(II) automatically cancel any other valid visa or entry documentation that is in the alien’s possession.

(c) IMPLEMENTATION; PENALTIES.—

(1) IMPLEMENTATION.—The President may exercise all authorities provided under sections 203 and 205 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1702 and 1704) to carry out this section.

(2) PENALTIES.—A person that violates, attempts to violate, conspires to violate, or causes a violation of this section or any regulation, license, or order issued to carry out this section shall be subject to the penalties set forth in subsections (b) and (c) of section 206 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1705) to the same extent as a person that commits an unlawful act described in subsection (a) of that section.

(d) NOTIFICATION TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 10 days after any imposition of sanctions pursuant to subsection (a), the President shall brief and provide written notification to the appropriate congressional committees regarding the imposition of sanctions that shall include—

(1) a description of the foreign person or persons subject to the imposition of such sanctions, including the foreign person’s role at or relation to the International Criminal Court;

(2) a description of any activity undertaken by such foreign person or persons in support of efforts to investigate, arrest, detain, or prosecute any protected person; and

(3) the specific sanctions imposed on such foreign person or persons.

(e) WAIVER.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The President may, on a case-by-case basis and for periods not to exceed 90 days each, waive the application of sanctions imposed or maintained with respect to a foreign person under this section if the President submits to the appropriate congressional committees before the waiver is to take effect a report that contains a determination of the President that the waiver is vital to the national security interests of the United States.

(2) **CONTENTS.**—Each report required by paragraph (1) with respect to a waiver of the application of sanctions imposed or maintained with respect to a foreign person under this section, or the renewal of such a waiver, shall include—

(A) a specific and detailed rationale for the determination that the waiver is vital to the national security interests of the United States;

(B) a description of the activity that resulted in the foreign person being subject to sanctions;

(C) a detailed description and list of actions the United States has taken to—

(i) stop the International Criminal Court from engaging in any effort to investigate, arrest, detain, or prosecute all protected persons; and

(ii) permanently close, withdraw, end, or otherwise terminate any preliminary examination, investigation, or any other effort to investigate, arrest, detain, or prosecute all protected persons.

(3) **FORM.**—Each report required by paragraph (1) shall be submitted in unclassified form but may include a classified annex.

(f) **SPECIAL RULE.**—The President may terminate the sanctions with respect to the foreign persons described in subsection (a) if the President certifies in writing to the appropriate congressional committees that the International Criminal Court—

(1) has ceased engaging in any effort to investigate, arrest, detain, or prosecute all protected persons; and

(2) has permanently closed, withdrawn, ended, and otherwise terminated any preliminary examination, investigation, or any other effort by the International Criminal Court to investigate, arrest, detain, or prosecute all protected persons.

SEC. 4. RESCISSION OF FUNDS FOR INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Effective on the date of the enactment of this Act, any amounts appropriated for the International Criminal Court and available for obligation as of such date of enactment are hereby rescinded.

(b) **PROHIBITION ON FUTURE APPROPRIATIONS.**—On and after the date of the enactment of this Act, no appropriated funds may be used for the International Criminal Court.

SEC. 5. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) **ADMITTED ALIEN.**—The terms “admitted” and “alien” have the meanings given those terms in section 101 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101).

(2) **ALLY OF THE UNITED STATES.**—The term “ally of the United States” means—

(A) a government of a member country of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization; or

(B) a government of a major non-NATO ally, as that term is defined by section 2013(7) of the American Service-Members’ Protection Act (22 U.S.C. 7432(7)).

(3) **APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DEFINED.**—The term “appropriate congressional committees” means—

(A) the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee on Financial Services, and the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives; and

(B) the Committee on Foreign Relations the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, and the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate.

(4) **FOREIGN PERSON.**—The term “foreign person” means a person that is not a United States person.

(5) **IMMEDIATE FAMILY MEMBER.**—The term “immediate family member”, with respect to a foreign person, means the spouse, parent, sibling, or adult child of the person.

(6) **INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT; ROME STATUTE.**—The terms “International Criminal Court” and “Rome Statute” have the meaning given those terms in section 2013 of the American Service-Members’ Protection Act (22 U.S.C. 7432).

(7) **PROTECTED PERSON.**—The term “protected person” means—

(A) any United States person, unless the United States provides formal consent to International Criminal Court jurisdiction and is a state party to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, including—

(i) current or former members of the Armed Forces of the United States;

(ii) current or former elected or appointed officials of the United States Government; and

(iii) any other person currently or formerly employed by or working on behalf of the United States Government;

(B) any foreign person that is a citizen or lawful resident of an ally of the United States that has not consented to International Criminal Court jurisdiction or is not a state party to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, including—

(i) current or former members of the Armed Forces of such ally of the United States;

(ii) current or former elected or appointed government officials of such ally of the United States; and

(iii) any other person currently or formerly employed by or working on behalf of such a government.

(8) **UNITED STATES PERSON.**—The term “United States person” means—

(A) an individual who is a United States citizen or an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence to the United States;

(B) an entity organized under the laws of the United States or any jurisdiction within the United States, including a foreign branch of such an entity; or

(C) any person in the United States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The bill, as amended, shall be debatable for 1 hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs or their respective designees.

The gentleman from Texas (Mr. MCCAUL) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS) each will control 30 minutes.

The chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. MCCAUL).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on this measure.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, we are at a moment in history where our long-held fears are being realized.

The International Criminal Court has overstepped its authority and set a dangerous precedent by seeking arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu and Israel’s Defense Minister Gallant, alongside Hamas terrorists.

I will be clear: The case against Israel is baseless.

Mr. MEEKS and I wanted in good faith to make this a bipartisan bill, and I thank him for that.

Initially, the White House supported this idea; however, on May 28, they did a 180-degree turn. In response, even Democrat Senator CARDIN has criti-

cized the administration saying: “I am disappointed. I thought they were going to try and work on a bipartisan bill. . . .”

I agree with Mr. CARDIN, and I agree with Mr. MEEKS as we tried to make this bipartisan.

The United States and Israel are not members of the ICC. The ICC itself was created as a court of last resort if national governments are unwilling or unable to try cases in their jurisdiction.

The United States and Israel do not fall into this category. Despite this, the ICC prosecutor’s statement on the warrant applications contains several allegations that are directly contradicted by the Biden administration’s recent report pursuant to the National Security Memorandum-20.

I have many problems with National Security Memorandum-20, but this report clearly stated: “We do not currently assess that the Israeli Government is prohibiting or otherwise restricting the transport or delivery of U.S. humanitarian assistance.”

It also described in significant detail Israel’s own systems for ensuring compliance with international humanitarian law and for investigating possible violations of international and humanitarian law.

Moreover, comparing the legitimate, democratically-elected officials in Israel who were thrust into a war that they didn’t ask for and that they didn’t start to Hamas terrorists only highlights the complete disconnect of this politicized international body.

This is a war Hamas started.

Israel was forced into a war they didn’t want, and now they have no choice but to finish it. Further, Hamas is making it infinitely worse because they use human shields. They hide their control and command centers behind hospitals and schools, and they put civilians in harm’s way.

There are many, many unspeakable tragedies in this war. I have seen videos of Hamas terrorists killing innocent Palestinians simply trying to access humanitarian aid. Hamas does not care about civilian casualties. Their only objective is to remove Israel from the map.

Israel is fighting in what is likely the most difficult urban warfare landscape that has ever existed, and they have done everything in their power to limit casualties and facilitate humanitarian aid, but the same cannot be said of Hamas.

It is absolutely outrageous for the ICC to be pursuing arrest warrants against Israeli officials and announcing it on CNN before a decision has even been made.

Mr. MEEKS and I were prosecutors. We would never announce arrest warrants on national television on CNN. Failing to act here in the Congress would make us complicit with the ICC’s illegitimate actions.

We must not stay silent. We must stand with our allies. If the ICC is advancing a case against an American or

an allied country who is not party to the ICC, this bill will impose sanctions on ICC officials and others supporting that case.

We need to act quickly because this case is already advancing much faster than expected. Even the ICC's own staff did not know the warrant applications would be going ahead at this pace. That is why we are advancing this bill straight to the floor.

Mr. Speaker, it is time to stand up to international bullies who seek to undermine international law under the false pretext of justice. What happens if Americans are next as they looked at Americans on the battlefield in Afghanistan.

This sets a dangerous precedent where now it is Israeli officials, but tomorrow it could be Americans. It is a very dangerous precedent.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, too often in our foreign policy, we turn to sanctions as a first choice rather than a tool of last resort. Sanctions should not be our only go-to punishment to express our displeasure because they have real consequences.

That being said, I will say that on the Foreign Affairs Committee, we do try to work together and get a bipartisan bill. I thank the chairman for that. Unfortunately, we could not get to a final conclusion.

As I review the bill that we are about to vote on today, the bill that is on the floor, in this instance, this bill would have a chilling effect on the ICC as an institution and hamper the court's efforts to prosecute serious atrocities that have been perpetrated in many places around the world from Ukraine to Uganda. We can't forget that the ICC is a venue through which we can hold accountable bad actors.

I know many of us celebrated in March of last year when the ICC judges issued arrest warrants for Vladimir Putin and other senior Russian officials for abducting thousands of Ukrainian children.

In fact, in the wake of Putin's renewed war in Ukraine, Congress passed legislation to enable the United States to provide financial support to and share information with the ICC to investigate and prosecute Putin and his regime for their heinous crimes.

Put simply, we leaned in on engagement with the ICC because it was in our interest and because it reinforces the prospect that the justice we want to see will be delivered.

Let me also be clear that President Biden has said from the very start that the ICC prosecutor's application last month for arrest warrants against Israeli leaders is clearly outrageous. In doing so, the ICC prosecutor has attempted to equate the self-defense decisions made by Israel's democratically-elected leaders to those of Hamas' terrorist leaders.

There is no, and I repeat, there is no moral or legal equivalence here. This is

one reason why we try to work together and continue to figure out a way we can get to a bipartisan deal. Chairman MCCAUL and I will continue to do that.

Furthermore, let me just say that the United States has, since its inception, opposed, and we continue to oppose in the strongest terms, this investigation as an overreach into a matter for which the ICC has no jurisdiction.

That said, if our goal is to change the ICC's actions, sanctions is the wrong tool. They are simply not going to work here. They are not going to convince the ICC to back down and could, in fact, push the ICC to pursue this case with even greater vigor.

This bill will bluntly curtail the United States' ability to engage the court to advance our interests in supporting justice and accountability processes and, critically, to share relevant information that can impact the outcome.

The sanctions will have a chilling effect on States who would otherwise be inclined to align with us in ensuring the court delivers justice and avoids overreach.

Not only that, this particular legislation is overly broad. It would sanction our allies around the globe who support the ICC through resources and personnel.

Per the proposed text, anyone who has offered financial, material, or technological assistance to the court shall be sanctioned.

Let's look at what that means when we break it down. If you wrote a list of the largest funders of the ICC and a list of America's closest allies in Europe and in Asia, they would be virtually identical: the U.K., France, Germany, Italy, and Japan.

□ 1130

As drafted, the leaders of these countries would need to be sanctioned for providing material assistance to the ICC. The legislative bodies of the countries would also need to be sanctioned for appropriating funds to go to the ICC. Interparliamentary travel to Europe could become a sanctionable activity.

Is sanctioning Rishi Sunak, Emmanuel Macron, or Giorgia Meloni smart policy? To me, that is absurd on its face.

This bill would further risk sanctions on the over 900 staff members from approximately 100 countries at the court, from judges and prosecutors to administrative staff, including nationals of close U.S. allies and partners who collectively work to prosecute war criminals around the globe.

The language in this bill is so broad that even a cafeteria worker or janitor, even their families, could be construed as having supported or materially assisted in these prosecutions by providing services to the ICC.

It is almost certain that the ICC relies on American companies for cloud services, productivity software, and

other gold-standard tech products. All of these American companies would be banned from doing such business with the ICC, and their Chinese competitors could rush to fill that gap.

Do we want the ICC reliant on the PRC for its email services, data service, or cloud storage? Do we want to send a message to all other international organizations that America could pull the plug on their business services at any moment? This will undermine America's interests and bolster those of China and Russia.

The broad sanctions language included in this legislation will also affect many innocent Dutch companies and nationals. The same sanction risks would apply to companies from other U.S. allies and partner companies that provide services to the ICC. It is unclear how sanctioning close allies' financial institutions and small businesses will aid our foreign policy interests.

The path that has been chosen—not of leaning in, not of engaging the court and its supporters to ensure just outcomes, but of just punitive action—is dangerous for our national security. Behind-the-scenes diplomacy with the court and our allies and partners that support it is far more likely to yield a result that is better than a blunt-force approach.

I am for sending a message of concern to the ICC for seeking arrest warrants for Israeli officials, but we need to do it in another way. Therefore, I must oppose this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Let me just say to my dear friend, Mr. MEEKS, that he knows we worked on a version of this bill and came to a bipartisan resolution that, ultimately, was rejected by the White House, and I think that is unfortunate.

I also would like to state that the alarms that this bill harms U.S. alliances, I think, are overstated. The bill's sanctions are triggered by Presidential determination that a particular foreign person has supported illicit ICC efforts against protected persons, so that is against American citizens or the citizens of U.S. allies who have not submitted to ICC's jurisdiction.

Furthermore, and this is the most important point, this bill, and we did this at the behest of the Democrats, gives the President the ability to waive these sanctions.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ROY), the author of this bill. I thank him for working so closely not only with me but with the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Mr. ROY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from Texas, the chairman, for yielding, and I thank the ranking member and his staff and the entire staff of the Foreign Affairs Committee for their diligent work on this, for working all last week, for working through the weekend, and for the conversations.

On this one, it is important to note that I do believe that there is significant bipartisan agreement that we need to take action and stand with one voice in this country, the United States of America, to send a strong signal to not just the International Criminal Court but to the international community generally. We cannot stand by and allow the court to do what it is doing.

Let's remember why we are here. We are here because the International Criminal Court is seeking to issue warrants on the Prime Minister of Israel. It merits letting that just sit out there and marinate for a second that that is what we are dealing with. The Prime Minister of Israel is engaged in defending his country after the horrific October 7 attacks, which we have talked about in great detail on this floor—the assaults, the rapes, the beheadings of babies, the killing of innocent civilians. Israel is responding to what occurred and what happened to our Jewish brothers and sisters and others in Israel on October 7, and it is taking the attack to Hamas.

We recognize the difficulty of Hamas being fully intertwined with the civilians in Gaza. Israel is taking steps to send text messages, drop 15 million or more leaflets, leave voice messages, give 2 weeks' advance notice, do what they can to try to make sure that there are protections for civilians, keeping the overall civilian-to-combatant casualty ratio below historic norms by most accounts, including third-party observation.

Looking at Rafah, the international community is saying you can't go into Rafah. You go into Rafah and find 50-plus tunnels—now, I think it is 75 or more tunnels—that we know were being used to carry out attacks on Israel.

Israel is under assault right now, with missiles being fired with regularity by Hamas into Israel. This is Israel. This is not some random entity. This is Israel, our close ally, and you have a body, to which we have no sovereignty, for this country, that is being given to the International Criminal Court because we are not a party to it. We are not undermining our sovereignty. We are not going to do that as America.

That is what this stands for. That is what this says. This says that we should not be allowing the International Criminal Court to not just go after the Israeli Prime Minister but the door that that opens to go after our own servicemembers, to go after our own generals, to go after America's interests.

What happens here is going to be coming at us and our country. That is why it is important to speak with one voice, with authority, with force.

We have been working in good faith, and again, I want to compliment the ranking member and Democratic staff. Again, we were working through the weekend. I do believe there were

amendments that we could have agreed to. There were changes that we could have agreed to that would have had bipartisan support here. I understand that the White House did not agree to that, and I think that is a shame.

I think the White House made the wrong call, plain and simple. I think the White House got this wrong, and I just hope that we will be here today united as a body, putting aside partisan differences, and that we will move this bill forward and send it to the Senate, where the Senate can work its will.

If the Senate wants to modify it and send it back to the House and try to address any of the concerns that have been raised by my colleagues on the other side of the aisle or this side of the aisle, great, the Senate can do that. They can send it back to us, and we can send a product to the President.

We need to address this, and we need to address it quickly. If we allow this to fester, then we undermine our own national security, and importantly, at this moment in time, we give credence and power to an international body to which we are not a party, to which Israel is not a party, and that is being used to flex political muscle by targeting the Prime Minister for defending his own country. That we cannot stand for.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that my colleagues support H.R. 8282.

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. RAMIREZ).

Mrs. RAMIREZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 8282.

I realize the pattern here. When my Republican colleagues can't legislate, they decide they are going to score cheap points using three primary tools: fear-mongering, punishing, and silencing.

I want to break down a little bit of this bill today.

Fear-mongering: The bill invokes the protection of United States military personnel. Now, let me clarify. U.S. military personnel are not subject to the ICC because the United States is not a party to the Rome Statute, which I find shameful.

Punishing: The bill would impose sanctions against anyone who aids the ICC in investigating, detaining, arresting, or prosecuting anyone who has not consented to the court's jurisdiction. Let me clarify. Let me make a point of clarification here. The bill would weaponize sanctions against major U.S. allies who support the court, allies like Germany, France, the U.K., Japan, and countless others.

Silencing: How? If enacted, no funding may be used for the International Criminal Court. Another point of clarification: Those efforts would weaken the ICC, and that makes us all less safe.

It is important we remember why the ICC exists, as defined by the Rome Statute: "Mindful that during this century, millions of children, women, and

men have been victims of unimaginable atrocities that deeply shock the conscience of humanity."

It recognizes that "such grave crimes threaten the peace, security, and well-being of the world," and it is "determined to put an end to impunity for the perpetrators of these crimes and, thus, to contribute to the prevention of such crimes."

I stand in opposition to this resolution because we need the ICC.

In the last 241 days, thousands have been victims of unimaginable atrocities, and Netanyahu's violations of international law have threatened the peace of the world.

I am determined to put an end to impunity for the perpetrators of these crimes, and I urge a "no" vote.

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN).

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, the ICC's ruling is outrageous. The organization has dishonored itself. I would have been happy to cosponsor a resolution denouncing and sanctioning. I wanted to cosponsor this bill when I read the title; unfortunately, I read the bill.

Once again, we have a poorly drafted, poorly thought-out messaging bill that hasn't gone through the committee process, that hasn't gone through regular order, that hasn't been thought through. No amendments are allowed on the floor, and the author defends it on the theory that, well, if the bill is poorly drafted, the Senate will save us and correct it.

We cannot vote "yes" on a bill today that is this infirm and count on the Senate to clean it up.

Once again, the Republican Party has decided to hurt Israel for its own benefit. Israel has one friend in the world, the United States—plus Guatemala. Israel has survived because it has had the support of both political parties.

During the first 76 years of Israel's existence, Democrats have had roughly half the power in this city, and Republicans about half of the time have been in control. If Israel is to survive another 76 years, it will need the support of both parties. Yet, the purpose of this bill, which masquerades as pro-Israel, like so many bills brought up as messaging bills, is to drive a wedge between the Democratic Party and Israel for the benefit not of Israel but the Republican Party.

□ 1145

The decision by the International Criminal Court's prosecutor to seek arrest warrants against Israeli leaders is an outrageous perversion of everything anyone who has dedicated themselves to human rights holds dear, as I have for 28 years on the Foreign Affairs Committee.

It is a perversion of the international justice system. It is putrid. It dishonors those who originally thought

that the International Criminal Court would be a good idea. It undermines the rule of law, and it is based on a hatred of Israel and perhaps a hatred of Jews.

I would like to vote for this bill, but unfortunately I read it. Now, the ranking member has pointed out a number of problems. I will point out a couple as well. You cannot vote for this until you read section 2(a)(1)(A), which imposes sanctions on anyone who assists an effort to investigate, assists an effort to investigate.

What does that mean? It includes those who provide exculpatory information. Israel was subject to investigation. I am sure many patriotic Israelis and well-meaning Americans provided information to the ICC, as CHIP ROY did when he gave his speech, detailing why that action is wrongful on the law and the facts; but you assist an investigation when you provide exculpatory information, and anyone who does that is subject to sanction. Mr. ROY won't be sanctioned because he is a U.S. citizen, but anyone else who contacted the court and said here is what you are doing is wrong will be subject to these sanctions.

Second, this bill punishes the spouses and family members, even estranged family members. You may feel that your son has gone wrong. By involvement with the ICC, you get sanctioned for what that son does. Particularly, I want to focus on spouses. As I said, the bill punishes spouses and family members, even those spouses and family members who oppose the ruling.

You are going to wonder why I have this poster up here. All last week, the Republican Party told us that the decision of the Alitos to fly an insurrectionist flag at their two houses should not be imparted to the Justice because it was done by his spouse. Today, one week later, they come back and say that when a judge does something wrong, we are going to impart it to the spouse. Which is it? Are Justices and their spouses responsible for each other's actions or not? Some Republican is going to have to explain this to me.

Now, of course, this is even different and more extreme. Justice Alito lived in the houses, Justice Alito did not disclaim the message of these flags, and Justice Alito is not estranged from his wife, yet someone who is totally apart from anyone at the ICC but happens to be related will be subject to sanctions. Again, how can you defend an appeal to Heaven under those circumstances?

The attention of the world should be on the incredible hypocrisy on the International Criminal Court, which failed to issue rulings about driving the Rohingya from their home, about the complete depopulation of the Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh, of the Republic of Artsakh where the entire country was driven into exile in ethnic cleansing. It failed to issue a ruling dealing with northern Ethiopia, where 600,000 people died. This illegitimate court failed to issue a ruling on the Yazidis,

who were subjected to a genocide, as the world watched thousands of Yazidis being butchered and burned alive and subjected to sexual slavery.

Instead of focusing our attention on the hypocrisy of the court, we are focused on this poorly drafted resolution. I tried making suggestions to the author. Every suggestion I made was rejected. This was not an attempt to pass a pro-Israel bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman from California.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, this was not a pro-Israel bill. Instead it was a poorly drafted, rush-to-the-floor, strictly partisan messaging bill that distracts the world from the hypocrisy of the ICC and focuses us instead on a supposedly pro-Israel, performatively pro-Israel Republican bill.

We will have to vote "no," and then we will have to work later to demonstrate how wrong and how putrid the action of the ICC is.

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers. I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

I think it is important for me to say, Mr. Speaker, at the outset that I really do appreciate the efforts that were made to make this legislation bipartisan. Trying to get to good in a bipartisan way is always my goal on the Foreign Affairs Committee, and Chairman MCCAUL has, indeed, been a partner in that effort. I thank him for his partnership.

That said, the bill as it is on the floor, I can't support because I believe it will be counterproductive to our interests, harm our relations with allies, and undermine American global leadership. Unfortunately, I believe the bill on the floor will do exactly that. Sanctioning the court and all those who support it will backfire badly on us, and I must oppose this legislation and urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

Let me say first, I am extremely troubled by how the ICC has acted, and I think everybody in this body should be, both Republican and Democrat. Americans should be concerned.

More than 20 years ago, our predecessors had the foresight to know full well that the ICC would one day try to target democratic countries that had their own robust judicial systems over which the ICC has no legitimate jurisdiction.

In 2020, the ICC decided to authorize a formal investigation into alleged war crimes in Afghanistan. A large bipartisan group of House Members wrote to the Secretary of State at that time in response with a strong concern stating: "Both Democratic and Republican ad-

ministrations have refused to join the court in part because they feared its politicization and misuse."

That is exactly what has happened here today. They have no basis for these actions, and by seeking warrants for Israel's Prime Minister and Defense Minister, they have cheapened this court's reputation and exposed it for what it really is—an illegitimate court that puts politics over justice.

Today it is Israel, Mr. Speaker, but tomorrow it could be the United States. We must sanction those who deliberately abuse their power for political gain. Their actions seek to undermine Israel and its people, who are in a fight for their very existence. We must act not only to protect Israel, but ourselves, from these unelected international bureaucrats.

If they willingly seek to imprison our allies or the United States, we must send a clear message—you are neither welcome nor wanted on American soil. America always stands behind our allies and their legitimate governments.

If I could just say to my dear friend, Mr. MEEKS, and to our colleagues in the House, we did work very hard to get to a bipartisan agreement, a bipartisan bill that the Speaker approved and Mr. JEFFRIES approved, but when it went to the White House, it was rejected.

I always think—and I think Mr. MEEKS agrees—that we are always strongest, particularly this committee, when we speak with one voice as one nation, in this case to the ICC and to the judges. A partisan messaging bill was not my intention here, nor do I believe it was Mr. MEEKS' intention, but that is where we are right now.

I remain forever hopeful and optimistic, however, that during the process and during the course of this legislation that we can still get back to that bipartisan bill that we talked about, whether it is reached when this goes over to the Senate or perhaps Mr. MEEKS and I can mark up that bipartisan bill on our committee, on the Foreign Affairs Committee, and then get it to the House floor where we can then proceed with regular order in a bipartisan fashion that I believe would be best for this Nation, best for Israel, and best to send deterrents to the International Criminal Court.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on this, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 1269, the previous question is ordered on the bill, as amended.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. McCAUL. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

□ 1200

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, VETERANS AFFAIRS, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2025

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CLINE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 8580, and that I may include tabular material on the same.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 1269 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 8580.

The Chair appoints the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROSE) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 1204

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 8580) making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2025, and for other purposes, with Mr. ROSE in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed 1 hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations or their respective designees.

The gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CLINE) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. CLINE. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I am pleased today to speak in support of this year's Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies appropriations bill.

Under current leadership, the Veterans Health Administration has been distracted from its core mission, using official resources for political purposes such as lobbying Congress, pushing for DEI policies, and even going so far as to process medical care claims for illegal aliens.

Our veterans deserve better. Therefore, House Republicans are moving forward with a bill that refocuses the VA back to its core mission by fully funding veterans' healthcare programs and benefits while cutting out radical prerogatives that divert resources away from critical veteran care.

In addition to supporting those who have served, this bill would bolster our national security interests in the Indo-Pacific region to counter China by improving our defense posture in the region.

The funding allocated in this bill would equip our Active-Duty servicemembers by constructing the facilities they so desperately need and honor our commitment to the veterans who have so dutifully served us here at home.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chair, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 8580, the fiscal year 2025 Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies bill.

While I unfortunately cannot support the bill on the floor today, I am grateful to Chairman CARTER for the work that we have been able to accomplish together over the years on this subcommittee.

I know we both prioritize quality of life for our servicemembers and their families and caring for our veterans, but, sadly, the bill before us today is built on a framework that once again walks away from the bipartisan Fiscal Responsibility Act agreement, which is law, which was the basis for the bills that we passed just a couple of months ago.

While the FY25 MILCON-VA bill doesn't face cuts nearly as dramatic as the other bills, veterans, servicemembers, and their families rely on programs throughout the Federal Government.

These funding levels only move us further from a bipartisan agreement on all of the funding bills that those who served our Nation rely on.

On the military construction side, this bill cuts funding for servicemembers and their families by \$718 million, compared to last year's bill. This cut will slow crucial progress to modernize and improve DOD's infrastructure.

In fiscal year '24, we provided DOD with \$30 million in dedicated funding for resiliency, a comparatively small sum of funding now, which will pay huge dividends in the future and ensure our national security in the face of our changing climate.

By eliminating the dedicated resiliency funding this year, this bill will threaten future military readiness because we are not making sure we invest in hardening facilities to make sure that they can withstand the impact of natural disasters.

Cutting military construction now slows our historically bipartisan efforts to reduce the infrastructure back-

log to strengthen our national security and to improve the quality of life of our servicemembers and their families.

Perhaps the most egregious part of the bill is all the partisan riders it includes. This bill is usually first up on the floor, like we are this fiscal year, because we have a bipartisan process.

Unfortunately, partisan culture war riders have distracted from our ability to accomplish that. We have riders that include preventing the VA from implementing its interim final rule on abortion care, which is now final, by the way, to provide abortion services under limited circumstances, abortion counseling, and to ensure that veterans have equal access to healthcare regardless of what State they live in, especially in a time when reproductive rights are under attack around the country.

A woman's decision whether or not to have an abortion should be made between her and her doctor and her family. It should not be made by politicians in this Chamber.

This bill includes riders that do everything from prohibiting VA from implementing diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives, as well as training, to a petty, bigoted prohibition from flying the Pride flag over VA facilities during Pride Month, to add insult to injury, from protecting people who speak or act under the guise of religious freedom, essentially authorizing the arbitrary discrimination against LGBTQI+ people and to prohibiting access to gender-affirming care, just to name a few, all aimed to disenfranchise veterans from the VA.

Let me just note: The United States did not make exceptions to the promises that we made our servicemembers in exchange for their service and sacrifice. We made promises to everyone.

This bill undermines VA's ability to report a beneficiary to the National Instant Criminal Background Check system to keep guns out of the hands of people who are prohibited under Federal law from purchasing or possessing firearms. It is prohibiting VA from following the law that is intended to protect veterans and those around them.

We have a dramatic suicide problem among our veteran population, and allowing people who are prohibited by law to possess a gun makes that suicide more likely, not less, and puts other people around them in their care circle at risk. That is unacceptable, irresponsible, and unnecessary.

This bill prioritizes guns over protecting veterans. It is truly a shame that this bill includes these poison pill riders.

They create division between us when we all should have a shared goal of providing healthcare and benefits to our veterans.

These culture war riders were rejected in conference negotiations last year, and we know that they will be rejected again this year in order to reach a final agreement. This bill can't pass with all of these poison pill riders attached to it.