



A Long, Hot Summer for National Defense Authorization Act Negotiations Begins

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The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) remains must-pass legislation for Congress each year due to its importance in both framing U.S. national security policy across a broad spectrum of issues on a bipartisan basis and enabling effective congressional oversight of the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD). After lengthy debate, the House of Representatives passed their version of the NDAA in a [vote of 217-199](#) on June 14. On July 8, the Senate Armed Services Committee [released](#) their version of the NDAA. While there may still be some additional changes to the Senate bill when it is considered by the full Senate, the broad contours of the two bills are now clear. The two chambers will shortly begin the hard work of resolving hundreds of significant differences between their respective versions of the bill to get a consolidated final product to the president's desk and signed into law.

There are dozens of key provisions to strengthen U.S. security in the Middle East that are under consideration in either both, just the Senate, or just the House versions of this year's NDAA. Important provisions inspired or impacted by JINSA research this year include:

- **Multiple provisions to strengthen American and Israeli subterranean warfare capabilities** as recommended by JINSA's recent [The October 7 War: Observations](#) report, such as by holding annual joint warfare exercises, bolstering joint cooperation to develop new technology to interdict terrorists and smuggling operations, and expanding such cooperation to maneuvering within tunnels more effectively;
- **The "Space Technology and Regional Security Act of 2024," or "STARS Act,"** which requires DoD to develop a strategy and data-sharing agreement to protect allies and partners in the Middle East from hostile Iranian activities in space, consistent with JINSA's [U.S. Should Leverage Middle East Partners to Boost Space Capabilities](#) brief; and
- **Further improvements to integrated Air and Missile Defense (IAMD) efforts with U.S. allies and partners in the Middle East, including a provision to accelerate the development of an IAMD data-sharing network,** which would mandate a strategy on how the United States and its regional allies and partners can leverage existing and new technologies to increase the speed and precision with which data is shared and used to counter Iran-backed missile and drone attacks, in line with recommendations in JINSA's [Build it and They Will Come](#) report.

Table of Key Provisions in the House and Senate FY2025 NDAA Bills



Provision Description	House	Senate
Iron Dome and Israel Cooperative Missile Defense Program	X	X
U.S.-Israel Subterranean Warfare Cooperation	X	X
The 2024 STARS Act on Space Cooperation	X	X
IAMD Data-Sharing Network in CENTCOM	X	X
Middle East Exchange Program	X	X
Assessment of Iran’s Support of Non-State Actors in North Africa	X	X
Prohibition of Funds to Iranian Entities	X	X
Countering ISIS	X	X
Assistance to Vetted Syrian Groups and Individuals	X	X
Securing Gaza-Egypt Border	X	
Funding Restriction for Gaza JLOTS Pier	X	
Accuracy of Gaza Health Ministry Casualty Reporting	X	
Report on Iranian Oil Sales Proceeds	X	
U.S.-Israel Anti-Drone Cooperation	X	
Report on Iran-China Relations	X	
Assessment of Iranian Centrifuge Installation	X	
Boosting Israel’s Weapons Stocks	X	
Protecting America’s Al-Tanf Base in Syria	X	
Countering Iran-backed Proxies in Syria	X	
Report on Russian Support of Terrorists in Syria	X	
U.S-Israel Emerging Technologies Cooperation	X	
U.S.-Israel Intelligence Cooperation on Senior Hamas Officials		X
Assessment of America’s Al-Udeid Air Base in Qatar		X
Notification to Congress Regarding Iranian Arms Trafficking		X
Preserving Security in Northeast Syria		X

What’s In Both Bills

Iron Dome Short-Range Rocket Defense System and Israel Cooperative Missile Defense Program Co-Development and Co-Production

- House Version ([Funding Tables](#)): Authorizes \$110 million in funding for the Government of Israel to procure components for Iron Dome through co-production of relevant components in the United States. Also includes \$40 million for the David’s Sling Weapon System and \$50 million for the Arrow 3 Upper Tier Interception Program.
- Senate Version ([Sec. 1533](#)): Same.
- Analysis: Consistent with the 10-year U.S.-Israel Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and President’s Budget request, both NDAA’s fully authorize funding for these important joint cooperative missile defense programs, which are vital to helping Israel maintain its Qualitative Military Edge (QME) and defend civilians from rockets and missiles. While important, unfortunately [Iron Dome Is Not Enough to Make Israel Safe](#) by itself.

Subterranean Warfare Provisions

- **House Version:** Authorizes \$30 million in funding for the United States-Israel anti-tunnel cooperation program this year. One provision ([Sec. 1214](#)) further authorizes the Secretary of Defense to provide Israel with military training and assistance, such as hostage rescue planning, intelligence support and coordination, and other forms of military and intelligence cooperation, to help Israel rescue the remaining hostages in Gaza and put increased military pressure on Hamas. Another provision ([Sec. 1233](#)) calls for annual subterranean warfare military exercises between American and Israeli forces and for bolstering joint cooperation to develop technology to interdict terrorists and smuggling operations in the future. A third ([Sec. 2859](#)) mandates continued access to subterranean warfare training facilities for American special operation units.
- **Senate Version:** Similarly authorizes \$30 million in funding for U.S.-Israel anti-tunnel cooperation but also increases the annual cap on such potential cooperation to \$80 million. A provision ([Sec. 1206](#)) also modifies the terms of what constitutes anti-tunnel cooperation to clarify funding can be used to develop technology to *maneuver* in tunnels, in addition to detecting, mapping, and neutralizing underground tunnels.
- **Analysis:** Hamas' use of tactical and strategic tunnels under Gaza has presented serious challenges for the IDF. House Sec. 1233 and Senate Sec. 1206 in particular were impacted by observations from JINSA's recent [The October 7 War: Observations](#) report which describes the effectiveness of IDF operations to dismantle Hamas's tactical and strategic tunnel network, including by adapting its tactics and maneuvering simultaneously above and below ground, and the potential value to American forces adopting such tactics and procedures.

Expanding and Deepening Defense Cooperation in Space Within CENTCOM's Area of Responsibility

- **House Version ([Sec. 1607](#)):** Directs the Secretary of Defense to prepare a space and satellite security assessment for partners in the Middle East to identify mechanisms to improve data sharing agreements; better coordinate intelligence, reconnaissance, and surveillance (ISR) capabilities; and better protect space systems from Iranian threats. Another provision ([Sec. 1735](#)) requires a study by the Comptroller General on the use of satellites by adversarial states such as Iran, China, and Russia for combat purposes and that seek to knowingly damage or destroy U.S. and allied satellites. Finally, [Sec. 1752](#) expresses general support for cooperation between the United States and Israel for both military and civilian purposes in space.
- **Senate Version ([Sec. 1288](#)):** The "Space Technology and Regional Security Act of 2024" or "STARS Act", [introduced](#) in June by Senate Abraham Accords Caucus Co-Chairs Sens. Jacky Rosen (D-NV) and Joni Ernst (R-IA), was successfully adopted as an amendment to the Senate NDAA during Senate Armed Services Committee markup. The language is substantially similar to House Sec. 1607.
- **Analysis:** Previously JINSA-supported NDAA provisions such as the DEFEND Act, passed into law two years ago, helped strengthen U.S. efforts to foster better cooperation between Israel and its Arab neighbors against the mounting threat of Iran's missile arsenal. These efforts paid significant dividends in April 2024, when the region's nascent air and missile defense alliance successfully neutralized a barrage of over 300 Iranian projectiles fired at Israel. The STARS Act looks to further improve this air defense architecture by seeking ways to utilize 21st Century technology to better deter Iranian aggression in the space domain, in

line with recommendations from JINSA's brief: [U.S. Should Leverage Middle East Partners to Boost Space Capabilities](#). For more on this topic, also see: [U.S., Israeli, Arab Coordination in Mideast Against Iran Comes to Fruition](#) and our [Build it and They Will Come](#) report.

Further Improvements to Integrated Air and Missile Defense (IAMD) Efforts with U.S. Allies and Partners in the Middle East

- **House Version ([Sec. 1512](#)):** The House bill requires the Secretary of Defense to submit a strategy on improving cooperation with respect to air and missile defense efforts between the DoD and U.S. allies and partners in the Middle East. The strategy would include an assessment of new tools, techniques, and methodologies for data-driven decision making, including data visualization, analysis tools, and capabilities powered by artificial intelligence (AI). Additionally, the strategy would contain an assessment on how such a partner sharing network capability could leverage multi-cloud computing environments to reduce the reliance on solely hardware-based networking solutions and increase the speed with which data is shared.
- **Senate Version ([Sec. 1615](#)):** Substantively similar. Another provision ([Sec. 1536](#)) requires the Secretary of Defense to work to establish or further capabilities for countering air and missile threats from Iran and its terrorist proxies, including the threat from unmanned aerial systems, that threaten the United States, Jordan, and other allies and partners of the United States. Urges Jordanian participation in the multinational integrated air and missile defense architecture strategy required by the DEFEND Act.
- **Analysis:** These provisions are reflective of recommendations made in JINSA's 2023 [Build It and They Will Come](#) report, which argued that the first critical step for building out an integrated air and missile defense (IAMD) network is for America's Middle East partners to share their national air pictures with each other in real-time. The provision accelerates the development of data-sharing initiatives and utilizes groundbreaking new technologies to counter Iranian missile aggression at the speed of war. Given Jordan's key role in the defeating Iran's attack in April, Senate Sec. 1536 helpfully and explicitly underlines the importance of including Jordan in the emerging IAMD architecture.

Implementation of a Middle East Exchange Program

- **House Version ([Sec. 1216](#)):** Establishes a Middle East exchange program with military officers from the United States, Israel, and other Middle East defense partners. The program seeks to enhance regional cooperation and integration between participating militaries by facilitating interaction, cultural exchange, and mutual learning regarding joint defense planning, military law, counterterrorism, and more.
- **Senate Version ([Sec. 1211](#)):** Substantially similar language.
- **Analysis:** As JINSA previously recommended in our groundbreaking 2022 report: "[A Stronger and Wider Peace: A U.S. Strategy for Advancing the Abraham Accords](#)," finding ways to encourage Israel and its new Arab partners to train and plan together under U.S. auspices helps build military-to-military ties, increases interoperability, and bolsters deterrence and operational effectiveness against shared threats.

Analysis of Iran's Support for Non-State Actors in North Africa

- House Version (Sec. 1220B): Requires a DoD briefing on Iran's material support for non-state actors in North Africa, the threats posed by this Iranian support to the security of U.S. regional allies, and recommendations for actions the U.S. can take to thwart Iran's support for these non-state actors.
- Senate Version (Sec. 1227): Amends the annual report on Iran's military power by requiring an additional assessment of the material, financial, and logistical support provided by Iran and proxy groups affiliated with Iran to nonstate actors in the Maghreb region.
- Analysis: Gaining a stronger understanding of how Iran may be attempting to expand its so-called "Axis of Resistance" to North Africa will improve efforts to counter such malign activity. However, the Department of Defense has yet to release its required annual military power report on Iran (and has not done so since 2019), nor has the Director of National Intelligence submitted required reports on Iran's nuclear program. Congress should be prepared to force the submission of mandated reporting requirements if these submissions continue to lag on these vitally important issues.

Prohibition on the Use of Funds to Iranian Entities

- House Version: Similar to provisions included in [last year's House NDAA](#), two provisions this year would prohibit the use of DoD funding to Iran and Iranian-linked entities. The first ([Sec. 1219](#)) bars the use of DoD funds for the Iranian government, any person controlled by the Iranian government, or any person on the List of Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons maintained by the Office of Foreign Assets Control of the Department of the Treasury. The second ([Sec. 1049E](#)) further bars the use of DoD funds for the Iraqi Badr Organization.
- Senate Version: The Senate bill contains a provision ([Sec. 1224](#)) mandating a report on various Iran-backed terrorist organizations in Iraq to determine the extent of their involvement in attacks on U.S. forces and allied forces in the region and prohibit funding to these organizations. The report would additionally provide a description of connections between the Iraqi Badr Organization, the People of the Cave, al-Mohandeh's Revenge Brigade, the League of Revolutionaries, the Inheritors, and the Bridge of Victors to Iran's IRGC and other foreign terrorist groups.
- Analysis: The House provisions are intended to prevent a repeat of the 2016 transfer of \$1.7 billion in dollars and other currencies to Iran as part of a deal to release several U.S. hostages held by Iran. The Departments of State and Treasury have been reluctant to issue sanctions against the Iraqi Badr Organization, a Shia Islamist political party and military organization, despite its deep ties to Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, over concern about the potential destabilizing impact of such a move on the Iraqi government, whose governing coalitions include these pro-Iranian groups.

Countering the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS)

- Both the House ([Sec. 1211](#)) and Senate ([Sec. 1222](#)) bills reauthorize U.S. assistance to counter the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria for one year and add a requirement for equipment and training to counter threats from unmanned aerial systems. They additionally increase the Overseas Contingency Fund from \$242 million to \$380 million to help counter the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria.

- **Analysis:** Given shifting regional dynamics, ISIS has altered its terror operations and efforts to destabilize Iraq and Syria, prompting the need for increased U.S. support of trusted Syrian groups and officials who fight to prevent ISIS' rise. These provisions help ensure that the United States maintains its footprint in a region marred by the effects of terrorism.

Extension of Authority to Provide Assistance to Vetted Syrian Groups and Individuals

- Both the House ([Sec. 1212](#)) and Senate ([Sec. 1221](#)) bills contain provisions extending DoD authority to provide assistance to vetted Syrian groups for one year. The Senate bill increases the cap on the cost of construction and repair projects from \$20 million to \$30 million.
- **Analysis:** Despite recent moves by Arab states to recognize the Assad regime, the NDAA shows Congress remains focused on maintaining Syria policy: it continues to support the Syrian Democratic Forces opposed to Assad, including through military assistance.

What's In Just the House-Passed NDAA

Developing Strategies to Secure the Gaza-Egypt Border from Hamas' Smuggling Operations

- **House Version ([Sec. 1218](#)):** Requires the Secretary of State to submit a report studying measures that Israel, Egypt, and the United States can take to enhance international security cooperation on the Gaza-Egypt border. The report would develop effective strategies to counter Hamas' use of tunnels or shipping methods in the Mediterranean to smuggle weapons and illicit goods across the border.
- **Analysis:** The sizable number of cross-border tunnels between Gaza and Egypt continue to pose a security threat to Israelis and Palestinians alike, threatening the rise of a resurgent Hamas by enabling Hamas to smuggle further arms in and allowing Hamas leaders to escape from the Gaza Strip and continue to plot attacks from abroad. For more on this topic from JINSA, see: [Egypt-Gaza Tunnels Pose Threat to Israel's War Aims](#).

Funding Restrictions on the U.S.-deployed Joint Logistics Over the Shore System (JLOTS) Gaza Pier

- **House Version:** Two provisions concern the U.S.-deployed Joint Logistics Over the Shore System (JLOTS) pier designed to ferry aid to the coast of Gaza. The first ([Sec. 1705](#)) would block the use of DoD funding in fiscal year 2025 to construct, maintain, operate, or repair a pier off the coast of Gaza as well as prohibit the transportation of humanitarian aid via the pier and the deployment of U.S. armed forces in support of the pier. The second provision ([Sec. 1749](#)) similarly would prohibit the acquisition, construction, installation, maintenance, or restoration of a temporary or permanent pier located in Gaza or off the western coast of Gaza in already authorized appropriations bills for fiscal year 2024.
- **Analysis:** The two provisions reflect widespread concern over the effectiveness of the Gaza pier, including by JINSA Senior Fellow John Hannah who [argued](#) that "figuring out how things went so badly awry should be a target-rich environment for congressional oversight." The pier has faced significant operational challenges since its deployment in May, despite the investment of more than [\\$230 million](#) into the project. These challenges include two instances of the pier breaking apart due to rough waters and instances of humanitarian aid piling up on the nearby beach due to the [unwillingness](#) of UN workers to distribute the aid.

Inspectors General at the Pentagon and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) have also [launched](#) independent investigations. Recent press reporting indicates the pier is being decommissioned.

Assessment on the Accuracy of Gaza Health Ministry Casualty Reporting

- **House Version (Sec. 1733):** Requires the Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) to submit a report detailing the accuracy of the Gaza Ministry of Health’s casualty statistics, specifically the total reported casualty figure and the age and gender distributions.
- **Analysis:** This provision echoes concerns highlighted in JINSA’s [brief](#) on the challenges presented by Hamas’ manipulation of casualty statistics in order to achieve information warfare objectives. The Hamas-run Gaza Health Ministry has never distinguished between Hamas military operatives and civilians in its casualty reporting, nor has it distinguished between those killed as a result of IDF action and those as a result of Hamas action. The lack of consistent and precise casualty reporting remains problematic when assessing the human toll of the war in Gaza.

Report on Iranian Oil Sales Proceeds

- **House Version (Sec. 1728):** Would require the President to submit a report assessing how the proceeds from illicit Iranian oil sales contribute to Iran’s military and security budget. In particular, the report would examine how these proceeds are distributed between Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), Hamas, Hezbollah, and other Iranian proxies.
- **Analysis:** JINSA has long advocated that the key mechanism to deprive the Iranian regime of war funds is to limit its oil exports through strict enforcement of oil sanctions. When it came into office, the Biden administration suspended enforcement of most Iran sanctions in an unsuccessful bid to entice the regime to rejoin the 2015 nuclear deal. The results of this gambit have been disastrous. Iran’s foreign currency reserves have skyrocketed, [“golden days”](#) have returned for the regime’s various terror and repression arms, and attacks against America and our allies in the Middle East have [increased dramatically](#). Getting greater clarity on exactly how much oil revenue Iran has been able to divert to fund its terrorist proxies would be a valuable exercise.

Report on U.S.-Israel Cooperation to Counter Iranian Drones

- **House Version (Sec. 1251):** Mandates a report on the status of U.S.-Israel cooperation on efforts to counter Iranian unmanned aerial systems, including “suicide” and “kamikaze” drones.
- **Analysis:** As noted above, cooperation between Israel and its Arab neighbors paid significant dividends in April when the region’s nascent air and missile defense (IAMD) alliance successfully neutralized a barrage of over 300 Iranian projectiles aimed at Israel. Additional insight into the evolving threats in the region to further improve these defensive systems would be valuable as a broader IAMD construct continues to evolve.

Monitoring Developments on Iran’s Relationship with China

- **House Version (Sec. 1243):** Requires the Secretary of Defense to include an analysis of the PRC’s burgeoning relationship with Iran in the DoD’s annual defense report.

- **Analysis:** JINSA has previously [noted](#) that since the October 7th attacks, China has calculated it can better advance its strategic goal of supplanting the United States on the world stage by siding with Hamas and Iran. China and Iran likely view each other's empowerment as strategically useful—if each initiates simultaneous aggression in the Indo-Pacific and the Middle East, respectively, both countries hope that U.S. power will be spread too thin to respond effectively in both theaters.

Assessment of Iranian Centrifuge Installation

- **House Version (Sec. 1736):** Mandates an assessment on Iran's installation of advanced centrifuges since May 2021, Iran's plans to install centrifuges at new facilities, the current timeline for Iran to produce weapons-grade uranium, and whether Iran is constructing a heavily fortified nuclear facility near the Natanz site.
- **Analysis:** Despite the inclusion of [stringent reporting requirements](#) sponsored by Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-SC) in last year's NDAA on the state of the Iranian nuclear program, the Biden administration [thus far](#) has refused to provide Congress with the statutorily required reports. This provision is illustrative of continued congressional concern regarding Iran's efforts to develop a nuclear capability, and skepticism regarding President Biden's [claimed](#) "unshakeable commitment to prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon."

Ensuring Israel's Defense

- **House Version (Sec. 1232):** This provision seeks to ensure Israel has adequate stocks of components and munitions to defend against threats posed by Iran and its proxies. It would mandate a report on the extent of aerial attacks against Israel and how these attacks diminish Israel's weapons stocks. According to these findings, the report would then detail the components and munitions required for the replenishment of the defense systems.
- **Analysis:** This provision is substantially similar to a JINSA-backed provision included in last year's NDAA, the "[Ensuring Peace Through Strength in Israel Act](#)," which required an annual assessment for three years of the type and quantity of precision-guided munitions in the U.S. War Reserve Stockpile in Israel (WRSA-I) necessary for Israel to protect itself against threats posed by Iran and its proxies. JINSA first began raising the importance of replenishing this stockpile in a 2018 report, delved into it in greater detail our 2020 report, [Anchoring the U.S.-Israel Alliance: Rebuilding America's Arms Stockpile in Israel](#), and most recently highlighted the issue in a Wall Street Journal op-ed by JINSA President & CEO Michael Makovsky and JINSA Vice President for Policy Blaise Misztal, [The Arsenal of Democracy's Stockpile in Israel](#).

Strategy to Protect the Al-Tanf Garrison

- **House Version (Sec. 1222):** Requires the Secretary of Defense to develop a strategy to protect U.S. and partner forces at Al-Tanf Garrison in Syria from threats posed by Iran-backed militias, ISIS, Russia, and the Assad Regime. The strategy would include a description on how to prevent and deter future attacks on Al-Tanf as well as increase humanitarian assistance efforts through the Denton Humanitarian Assistance Program with respect to internally displaced persons at the Al-Rukban camp, located next to Al-Tanf Garrison.
- **Analysis:** The provision seeks to bolster the U.S. presence at Al-Tanf Garrison and deter threats to American troops and partner forces following the death of three American soldiers

from a [drone strike](#) on the facility on January 28. A group calling itself “Islamic Resistance in Iraq,” a conglomerate of Shiite factions supported by Iran across Syria, Iraq, Yemen and Lebanon, claimed responsibility for the attack. The attack came as the group has dramatically expanded its antagonistic behavior towards U.S. forces in the region.

Provisions Focused on the Assad Regime

- House Version (Sec. 1226): Bars U.S. recognition of or normalization with any government of Syria that is led by Bashar al-Assad due to the Assad regime’s ongoing crimes against the Syrian people. An additional provision ([Sec. 1223](#)) requires a report on the extent to which the Assad regime has both aided and hindered operations against ISIS and mandates the development of a strategy on how to counter the Assad regime’s cooperation, assistance, and association with ISIS.
- Analysis: This provision demonstrates that Congress remains highly opposed to any possibility of rapprochement with Assad’s regime in Syria or a Syrian rapprochement with any other countries in the region.

Strategy to Counter the Assad Regime’s Support and Cooperation with Iran-Backed Militias in Syria

- House Version (Sec. 1224): Requires a strategy on how to disrupt and degrade threats posed by Iran-backed militias in Syria. The strategy would entail an evaluation of how existing procedures and resources of DoD attempt to counter Iran-backed militias in Syria and a description of how those procedures and resources can also be used to undermine the Assad regime’s support of such militias. Additionally, the strategy would address the potential capability of such militias to transport weapons and weapons systems from Syria to Lebanon and include a plan for how to thwart these smuggling operations.
- Analysis: Since the increase in proxy warfare in Syria following the October 7th attacks, JINSA has [argued](#) that the United States must prioritize countering Iran in Syria and work to diminish Iran’s footprint and freedom to maneuver in one of the United States’ most strategically significant areas of operation. The State Department and Defense Department alike have condemned the [Iran-backed proxy violence](#) and weapons smuggling operations in Syria since October 7th but largely refrained from taking significant steps to address these threats outside of a series of U.S. strikes on February 2nd. This provision puts words into action and will outline effective steps the DoD can take to impose consequences on Iran’s regional terror network.

Report and Strategy on Russia’s Support for Foreign Terrorist Organizations in Syria

- House Version (Sec. 1225): Requires a report and strategy on how to counter Russia’s support of foreign terrorist organizations and specially designated global terrorists in Syria. The report would include a description of past Russian support for Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) in Syria and any current potential support, including military coordination between Russia and the IRGC. The report would additionally address military coordination between Russia and Hezbollah in Syria, particularly on the extent on Hezbollah’s role training Russian forces to use unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) of Iranian origin in Syria. The strategy component of the provision would outline measures the DoD can take to detect, monitor, and counter Russia’s military support of the IRGC and terrorists in Syria.

- **Analysis:** This provision reflects congressional concern regarding [increased cooperation](#) between Iran and Russia, particularly in light of how Iran’s drone arsenal has been used by Russian forces in Ukraine and by Iranian-proxy groups such as Hezbollah and the Houthis.

Cooperation Between the U.S. and Israel on Emerging Technologies

- **House Version (Sec. 1764):** Authorizes a program for the United States and Israel to jointly develop military capabilities in emerging technology fields. Allocates \$47,500,000 to jointly carry out research, development, testing, and evaluation with Israel in the areas of artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, robotics, quantum, and automation to meet emerging defense challenges posed by regional and global adversaries. Another provision ([Sec. 252](#)) further requests a report on the potential benefit to US national security of Israel’s inclusion in the National Technology Industrial Base (NTIB). The report would assess the impact of Israel’s inclusion in the NTIB on U.S.-Israel collaborative research and development projects as well as on U.S.-China strategic competition. A third ([Sec. 1249](#)) seeks to establish a partnership between the U.S. Defense Innovation Unit (DIU) and the Israeli military to enhance market opportunities for U.S.-based and Israeli-based defense technology companies, bolster Israel’s industrial base, harmonize global security posture, and counter Iranian development of dual-use defense technologies.
- **Analysis:** JINSA has frequently contended examining ways for the U.S. military to take full advantage of Israel’s capabilities as a Start Up Nation could provide significant long-term dividends to both nations.

What’s In Just the Senate Bill

Targeting Senior Hamas Officials

- **Senate Version (Sec. 1546):** Urges the Department of Defense to provide Israel intelligence, advice, and support, to the extent practicable and consistent with United States objectives, to assist in either capturing or killing senior Hamas officials in support Israel’s pursuit of the lasting defeat of Hamas.
- **Analysis:** The measure is in response to a Washington Post [story](#) in May that seemed to imply the Biden administration was withholding “sensitive intelligence to help the Israeli military pinpoint the location of Hamas leaders” to limit IDF operations in Rafah. Such an implication provoked an immediate strong backlash, since Hamas has been [designated](#) as a Foreign Terrorist Organization by the United States since 1997. This language is designed to remove any ambiguity regarding U.S. policy on this matter.

Assessment of Al-Udeid Air Base in Qatar

- **Senate Version (Sec. 1287):** Report and briefing requirement on the operational value of the Al-Udeid Air Base in Qatar, taking into consideration the relationship of the Government of Qatar with Hamas and other terrorist organizations and the effect on United States Air Force operations in the Middle East if the United States were to redeploy from the base.
- **Analysis:** JINSA has long been skeptical of Qatar’s dual role hosting an important U.S. air base while simultaneously undermining American security by providing sanctuary to radical Islamic groups like Hamas. Clarifying the operational value of Al-Udeid and potential costs and benefits to leaving it will provide strengthened diplomatic leverage with Qatar. For more, see: [The Two Faces of Qatar, a Dubious Mideast Ally](#) from 2017, [Qatar is Helping Iran](#).

[Trump Has the Leverage to Force a Change — But Will He?](#) from 2019, and our recent webinar [Until They All Come Home: Congressional Efforts to Help Free U.S. Hostages in Gaza](#).

Notification to Congress Relating to Iranian Arms Trafficking

- **Senate Version (Sec. 1225):** Requires the Secretary of Defense to notify Congress about any identified transfer of weapons, ammunition, or component parts by Iran to a terrorist proxy group or state actor outside of Iranian territory no later than 30 days after this occurs. The notification would also include a description of actions taken or planned to be taken by U.S. armed forces or a U.S. partner in the region to expose or thwart such transfers of weaponry.
- **Analysis:** Iran's vast network of smuggling routes have fueled its proxy groups and fomented instability throughout the region. In particular, supply lines through Iraq, Syria, and Jordan have created a direct pipeline of Iranian arms to Hezbollah, Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) militants, which place millions of Israeli and Palestinian lives at risk. JINSA has [argued](#) that the United States must play a larger role in detecting, exposing, and preventing Iran's smuggling operations, especially with regards to the West Bank and Lebanon.

Preserving Security and Stability in Northeast Syria

- **Senate Version (Sec. 1223):** Bars the Secretary of Defense from reducing the total number of U.S. armed forces members in northeast Syria to fewer than 400 such personnel unless U.S.-backed Syrian groups and individuals can sufficiently degrade and defeat threats from the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria independent of any U.S. assistance, equipment, and training. Additionally, another requirement entails that such groups and individuals must be able to effectively detain members of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria and repatriate detained foreign terrorist fighters to their countries of citizenship in accordance with the law of armed conflict before the U.S. reduces personnel to fewer than 400 armed forces members.
- **Analysis:** This is an effort to guarantee a bulwark against Iranian influence in Syria, as well as to ensure the continued efforts against ISIS, moving forward.

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