

Sen. Durbin to Colleagues: Stand Up & Support Iran War Powers Resolution

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WASHINGTON – U.S. Senate Democratic Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL), Vice Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Defense Subcommittee, today cautioned President Donald Trump from plunging the United States into yet another endless war in the Middle East following Iran’s ballistic missile attack at two military bases in Iraq where American troops are based. In a speech on the Senate floor, Durbin also urged his colleagues to support a [war powers resolution](#), introduced by Durbin and Senator Tim Kaine (D-VA) last week, to force a debate and vote in Congress to prevent further escalation of hostilities with Iran without congressional approval.

“Our first order of business must be the safety of our military and civilian personnel in Iraq and the region, and I call on the Trump Administration to make that the highest priority,” Durbin said. “Another immediate requirement is that the Congress step up and play one of the most important and long neglected constitutional roles that we can envision. Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution is clear in stating that the power to declare war is an explicit authority and power of Congress, as it should be.”

Durbin continued, “This Congress should not be a rubber stamp for President Trump’s worst instincts. It’s time for this body to show some courage and do their constitutional jobs. If you want a war with Iran, step up and face your constituents and record your

vote accordingly... Ultimately, this President cannot start a war with Iran without the approval, under the Constitution, of Congress, and the Republican leadership should not roll over and play the role of lap dog when it comes to such a serious life-and-death matter.”

Video of Durbin’s remarks on the Senate floor are available [here](#).

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Footage of Durbin’s remarks on the Senate floor is available [here](#) for TV Stations.

War powers resolutions are privileged, meaning that the Senate will be forced to vote on the legislation. The resolution underscores that Congress has the sole power to declare war, as laid out in the Constitution. The resolution requires that any hostilities with Iran must be explicitly authorized by a declaration of war or specific authorization for use of military force, but does not prevent the United States from defending itself from imminent attack. The resolution will force a public debate and vote in Congress as intended by the framers of the Constitution to determine whether United States forces should be engaged in these hostilities.

In June, Durbin voted for a bipartisan [measure](#) to prohibit funds from being used for military operations against Iran without explicit authorization from Congress. He was also a cosponsor of this measure.

In 2015, Durbin led the effort in the Senate that ultimately allowed the Iran nuclear agreement, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), to proceed, securing enough votes to block an effort to derail it.