



Durbin: The Power to Declare War Rests Solely With Congress

January 15 2020 4:26 PM

WASHINGTON – U.S. Senate Democratic Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL), Vice Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Defense Subcommittee, today continued to caution President Donald Trump from plunging the United States into yet another endless war in the Middle East. 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) earlier this month, to force a debate and vote in Congress to prevent a war with Iran without congressional approval. Last week, the House passed a similar war powers resolution 224 to 194, and the Senate could vote on the resolution as early as this week.

“The Constitution is clear. Article I, Section 8 says the power to declare war is an explicit power of Congress, as it should be. One should never send our sons and daughters into war without the knowledge and consent of the American people,” Durbin said. “This Congress, already afraid to stand up to many of President Trump’s worst instincts, must not do so in a march to another war in the Middle East. As such, I urge my colleagues here to do our job and reaffirm the Senate’s constitutional role in matters of war.”

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.