

**Suspend the Rules and Pass the Bill, H. R. 5826, With an  
Amendment**

**(The amendment strikes all after the enacting clause and inserts a  
complete new text)**

118TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 5826

To require a report on sanctions under the Robert Levinson Hostage Recovery  
and Hostage-Taking Accountability Act, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 28, 2023

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina (for himself and Mr. MOSKOWITZ) introduced  
the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Af-  
fairs, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period  
to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consider-  
ation of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee  
concerned

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## A BILL

To require a report on sanctions under the Robert Levinson  
Hostage Recovery and Hostage-Taking Accountability  
Act, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “No Paydays for Hos-  
5 tage-Takers Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 Congress finds the following:

3 (1) The Islamic Republic of Iran has a long his-  
4 tory of hostage-taking and wrongful detention of  
5 United States nationals, including its illegal deten-  
6 tion of 52 American diplomats from 1979 to 1981.

7 (2) The Robert Levinson Hostage Recovery and  
8 Hostage-Taking Accountability Act (22 U.S.C. 1741  
9 et seq.), named in honor of Robert Levinson, the  
10 longest-held hostage in United States history who is  
11 presumed to have been killed by the regime while in  
12 Iranian custody, authorizes sanctions with respect to  
13 foreign persons who are responsible for or complicit  
14 in hostage-taking or unlawful or wrongful detention  
15 of United States nationals abroad.

16 **SEC. 3. STATEMENT OF POLICY.**

17 It shall be the policy of the United States to under-  
18 take additional actions and impose strict penalties to deter  
19 the Government of Iran and other hostile governments and  
20 non-state actors from hostage-taking or wrongfully detain-  
21 ing United States nationals.

22 **SEC. 4. REPORT AND CERTIFICATION ON RESTRICTED IRA-  
23 NIAN FUNDS RELEASED TO QATAR.**

24 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the  
25 date of the enactment of this Act, and every 180 days  
26 thereafter for 6 years, the President shall submit to the

1 Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Fi-  
2 nancial Services of the House of Representatives and the  
3 Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on  
4 Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate the  
5 following:

6 (1) A report on the \$6,000,000,000 in funds  
7 transferred from restricted Iranian accounts in the  
8 Republic of South Korea to restricted accounts in  
9 Qatar on or after August 9, 2023.

10 (2) A certification as to whether credible evi-  
11 dence or intelligence exists that any of the funds  
12 transferred have been used for any purpose other  
13 than humanitarian purposes.

14 (3) A certification as to whether credible evi-  
15 dence or intelligence exists that the funds trans-  
16 ferred have enabled the Government of Iran to in-  
17 crease spending on defense, intelligence, or malign  
18 foreign activities.

19 (b) MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED.—The report re-  
20 quired by subsection (a)(1) shall include the following:

21 (1) An itemized list of all transactions involving  
22 the use of funds transferred, including the value of  
23 such transactions, the parties to such transactions,  
24 the financial institutions involved, the goods pur-  
25 chased in each transaction, the destinations and end

1 user of such goods, the date on which the United  
2 States was notified of such transaction, and the date  
3 the transaction occurred.

4 (2) The quantity of funds described in sub-  
5 section (a)(1) in restricted accounts in Qatar at the  
6 beginning and end of each reporting period.

7 (3) A thorough description of the process the  
8 United States Government utilized during the re-  
9 porting period to review transactions involving the  
10 use of funds transferred in order to verify that such  
11 transactions were humanitarian in nature.

12 **SEC. 5. REVIEW AND DETERMINATION AND REPORTS ON**  
13 **SANCTIONS UNDER THE ROBERT LEVINSON**  
14 **HOSTAGE RECOVERY AND HOSTAGE-TAKING**  
15 **ACCOUNTABILITY ACT.**

16 (a) REVIEW AND DETERMINATION.—Not later than  
17 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and  
18 on an annual basis thereafter for 6 years, the President  
19 shall—

20 (1) review all cases of the hostage-taking of a  
21 United States national in Iran or at the direction of  
22 the Government of Iran and all cases of the unlawful  
23 or wrongful detention of a United States national in  
24 Iran or at the direction of the Government of Iran

1 that have occurred during the preceding 10-year pe-  
2 riod; and

3 (2) make a determination as to whether any  
4 foreign person, based on credible evidence—

5 (A) is responsible for or complicit in, or re-  
6 sponsible for ordering, controlling, or otherwise  
7 directing, the hostage-taking of the United  
8 States national or the unlawful or wrongful de-  
9 tention of the United States national; or

10 (B) knowingly provides financial, material,  
11 or technological support for, or goods or serv-  
12 ices in support of, an activity described in sub-  
13 paragraph (A).

14 (b) REPORTS.—Not later than 180 days after the  
15 date of the enactment of this Act, and on an annual basis  
16 thereafter for 6 years, the President shall submit to the  
17 appropriate congressional committees a report that—

18 (1) identifies all foreign persons with respect to  
19 which the President has made a determination under  
20 subsection (a)(2); and

21 (2) with respect to each such foreign person—

22 (A) states whether sanctions have been im-  
23 posed under section 306 of the Robert Levinson  
24 Hostage Recovery and Hostage-Taking Ac-  
25 countability Act (22 U.S.C. 1741d) or will be

1 imposed within 30 days of the date of the sub-  
2 mission of the report; and

3 (B) for whom sanctions have not been im-  
4 posed or will not be imposed under section 306  
5 of such Act, provides a description of the spe-  
6 cific authority under which otherwise applicable  
7 sanctions are being waived, have otherwise been  
8 determined not to apply, or are not being im-  
9 posed and a complete justification of the deci-  
10 sion to waive or otherwise not apply the sanc-  
11 tions authorized by such sanctions programs  
12 and authorities.

13 **SEC. 6. REQUIREMENT TO LIMIT TRAVEL OF IRANIAN DIP-**  
14 **LOMATS AT THE UNITED NATIONS.**

15 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

16 (1) United States visa restrictions on sanc-  
17 tioned individuals often contain exceptions for activi-  
18 ties in order to permit the United States to comply  
19 with the Agreement regarding the headquarters of  
20 the United Nations signed at Lake Success June 26,  
21 1947, and entered into force November 21, 1947,  
22 between the United Nations and the United States.

23 (2) Section 6 of Public Law 80–357 (commonly  
24 known as the “United Nations Headquarters Agree-  
25 ment Act”) provides “Nothing in the agreement

1 shall be construed as in any way diminishing,  
2 abridging, or weakening the right of the United  
3 States to safeguard its own security.”.

4 (3) Congress has directed the President to use  
5 the President’s authority, including the authorities  
6 contained in section 6 of Public Law 80–357, to  
7 deny any individual’s admission to the United States  
8 as a representative to the United Nations if the  
9 President determines that such individual has been  
10 found to have been engaged in espionage activities  
11 or a terrorist activity directed against the United  
12 States or its allies and may pose a threat to United  
13 States national security interests.

14 (b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Con-  
15 gress that Iran’s longstanding hostage-taking and wrong-  
16 ful detention of United States nationals, assassination  
17 plots against United States nationals outside and within  
18 the United States, and intelligence activities are a security  
19 or terrorist threat to the United States and United States  
20 interests and shall be a primary consideration in limiting  
21 travel of Iranian diplomats seeking admission to the  
22 United States for United Nations activities and their fam-  
23 ily members.

1           (c) DENIAL OF VISAS.—Section 407(a)(1) of the For-  
2 eign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1990 and  
3 1991 (8 U.S.C. 1102 note) is amended—

4           (1) by striking “(1)” and inserting “(1)(A)”;

5           (2) by striking “and” at the end and inserting  
6           “or”; and

7           (3) by adding further at the end the following:

8           “(B) has been sanctioned pursuant to Ex-  
9           ecutive Order 13224 (66 Fed. Reg. 49079; re-  
10           lating to blocking property and prohibiting  
11           transactions with persons who commit, threaten  
12           to commit, or support terrorism) or Executive  
13           Order 13382 (70 Fed. Reg. 38567; relating to  
14           blocking property of weapons of mass destruc-  
15           tion proliferators and their supporters) as of  
16           the date of the enactment of the No Paydays  
17           for Hostage-Takers Act; and”.

18          (d) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date  
19 of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter for  
20 3 years, the President shall submit to the appropriate con-  
21 gressional committees a report on whether the President  
22 has taken action to restrict the travel of Iranian diplomats  
23 seeking admission to the United States for United Nations  
24 activities and their family members and identifying each



1 such instance in which visas were denied or travel was re-  
2 stricted.

3 **SEC. 7. REPORT ON BLOCKED IRANIAN ASSETS.**

4 Not later than 180 days after the date of the enact-  
5 ment of this Act, and annually thereafter for 3 years, the  
6 President shall submit to the appropriate congressional  
7 committees a report that includes the following:

8 (1) An itemized list of any identifiable assets  
9 with a valuation of more than \$100,000 belonging to  
10 Iranian individuals and entities that are or have  
11 been blocked or otherwise frozen pursuant to any  
12 sanctions program under any jurisdiction globally, in  
13 the prior 2 years.

14 (2) Any changes to the status of such assets,  
15 including unblocking, unfreezing, or transferring  
16 such assets, in the prior 2 years.

17 (3) With respect to any changes identified in  
18 paragraph (2), whether the United States Govern-  
19 ment took any action, including waiving of sanc-  
20 tions, that related to such unblocking or unfreezing,  
21 and a justification for any such United States ac-  
22 tions.

1 **SEC. 8. REPORT ON INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS TO FREEZE**  
2 **AND SEIZE IRANIAN ASSETS.**

3 (a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Con-  
4 gress that the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the  
5 Treasury, and the Attorney General should, to the extent  
6 practicable—

7 (1) carry out a coordinated international effort  
8 to find, restrain, freeze, and where appropriate and  
9 legally authorized, seize, confiscate or forfeit the as-  
10 sets of those individuals and entities that have been  
11 sanctioned in connection with Iran’s malign activi-  
12 ties, including hostage-taking, wrongful detention,  
13 and human rights violations; and

14 (2) work with foreign governments—

15 (A) to share intelligence of financial inves-  
16 tigations, as appropriate;

17 (B) to oversee the assets identified pursu-  
18 ant to paragraph (1); and

19 (C) to provide technical assistance to help  
20 governments establish the necessary legal  
21 framework to carry out asset forfeitures.

22 (b) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date  
23 of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter for  
24 3 years, the President shall submit to the appropriate con-  
25 gressional committees a report on actions described in  
26 subsection (a).

1 **SEC. 9. DETERMINATION AND REPORT ON INVALIDATING**  
2 **UNITED STATES PASSPORTS FOR TRAVEL TO**  
3 **IRAN.**

4 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

5 (1) The Secretary of State maintains authority  
6 to restrict the use of United States passports for  
7 travel to or use in a country or area which the Sec-  
8 retary has determined is a country or area in which  
9 there is imminent danger to the public health or  
10 physical safety of United States travelers, in accord-  
11 ance with section 51.63 of title 22, Code of Federal  
12 Regulations.

13 (2) In 2017, the Secretary of State declared  
14 United States passports invalid for travel to, in, or  
15 through North Korea, unless specially validated for  
16 such travel, after United States citizen Otto  
17 Warmbier suffered grievous injuries in North Ko-  
18 rean custody, which led to his death.

19 (3) The ban on use of United States passports  
20 for travel to North Korea was renewed in 2023.

21 (b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Con-  
22 gress that the Secretary of State should declare United  
23 States passports invalid for travel to, in, or through Iran  
24 due to the imminent danger to the public health and phys-  
25 ical safety of United States travelers stemming from the

1 threat of wrongful detention or being taken hostage by the  
2 Iranian regime.

3 (c) DETERMINATION AND REPORT.—Not later than  
4 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act and annu-  
5 ally thereafter for 3 years, the Secretary of State shall  
6 determine and report to the Committee on Foreign Affairs  
7 of the House of Representatives and the Committee on  
8 Foreign Relations of the Senate—

9 (1) whether the travel of United States persons  
10 to Iran presents an imminent danger to the public  
11 health or physical safety of United States travelers;  
12 and

13 (2) whether the Secretary is exercising his au-  
14 thority to declare United States passports invalid for  
15 travel to, in, or through Iran.

16 **SEC. 10. STRATEGY TO DETER HOSTAGE-TAKING.**

17 Not later than 180 days after the date of the enact-  
18 ment of this Act, the President shall develop and submit  
19 to Congress a strategy to deter and prevent wrongful de-  
20 tention and hostage-taking by United States adversaries,  
21 including identifying penalties for wrongful detention and  
22 hostage-taking, identifying clear United States Govern-  
23 ment policies barring the payment of ransom or trans-  
24 actions that could be viewed as ransom by the United

1 States Government, and detailing plans to coordinate with  
2 United States allies and partners on such strategy.

3 **SEC. 11. DEFINITIONS.**

4 In this Act:

5 (1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMIT-  
6 TEES.—the term “appropriate congressional commit-  
7 tees” means—

8 (A) the Committee on Foreign Affairs and  
9 the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of  
10 Representatives; and

11 (B) the Committee on Foreign Relations  
12 and the Committee on the Judiciary of the Sen-  
13 ate.

14 (2) FOREIGN PERSON.—The term “foreign per-  
15 son”—

16 (A) means an individual or entity that is  
17 not a United States person; and

18 (B) includes a foreign state (as such term  
19 is defined in section 1603 of title 28, United  
20 States Code).

21 (3) UNITED STATES NATIONAL.—The term  
22 “United States national” has the meaning given that  
23 term in section 307(2) of the Robert Levinson Hos-  
24 tage Recovery and Hostage-Taking Accountability  
25 Act (22 U.S.C. 1741e(2)).