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9<sup>th</sup> District of Virginia  
Written Testimony  
Committee on Foreign Affairs  
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Thank you for holding this hearing today and providing me the opportunity to highlight matters of great importance to the execution of our nation's foreign policy and to our congressional duties under the Constitution.

In the coming year, our country will send 18-year old soldiers to Afghanistan. Notably, these young men and women were born after the war in Afghanistan began. This is unheard of in our history. None of this country's foreign conflicts have lasted this long. The Authorizations for the Use of Military Force (AUMFs), passed in 2001 and 2002. They have been in effect roughly 18 years. That is more than ten years beyond the length of the Revolutionary War and more than four times the length of U.S. involvement in World War II.

Specifically, I hope that this Committee will debate and consider revisions to previous AUMFs and propose new resolutions to be approved by Congress.

The 2001 and 2002 AUMF resolutions used to justify American military involvement are broad and have been applied in several situations where the connection to the circumstances of the original AUMF seems tenuous at best.

These AUMFs should be replaced to reflect new international political realities, to better define the scope of operations and to reflect the will of Congress.

It is also important for any new AUMFs to include a sunset date. This provision will force periodic debate and ensure that any military activity occurs not merely because of inertia, but because it has been judged by the duly elected representatives to be necessary for national security.

Currently, only 68 of the 435 Members of the 116<sup>th</sup> Congress have had an opportunity to vote on the 2001 AUMF. This is an abdication of our responsibility.

I was pleased to see Congress debate and pass a resolution regarding the use of U.S. troops in conjunction with Saudi forces in Yemen and providing a clearer definition of our operations in the region. Though Congress did not debate the initial commitment of troops, these votes are progress. I look forward to working with you to increase oversight of all military engagements and to make sure that we truly are a co-equal branch of government.

Congress should not shirk its responsibilities merely because it is easier to allow the President to take responsibility. I believe we were elected to take tough votes and to decide the important matters of state such as war and peace. Thank you.