

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1998

To require the imposition of sanctions with respect to foreign persons engaged in piracy, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 10, 2025

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To require the imposition of sanctions with respect to foreign persons engaged in piracy, 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 “Sanction Sea Pirates
5 Act of 2025”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) In 2011, there were 212 attempted attacks
9 against vessels off of the Somali coast, more than

1 1,000 crew were held hostage, and 35 seafarers were
2 killed.

3 (2) Over the past decade through the beginning
4 of 2023, rates of piracy in the Western Indian
5 Ocean subsided.

6 (3) Houthi attacks against commercial vessels
7 in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden since the Hamas
8 terrorist attack against Israel on October 7th have
9 impacted global shipping markets.

10 (4) There has been a surge in Somali pirate at-
11 tacks, beginning in the fall of 2023 and lasting into
12 2024, that has coincided with and taken advantage
13 of Houthi aggression.

14 (5) On March 12, 2024, Somali pirates hi-
15 jacked a Bangladeshi-flagged ship and took its crew
16 hostage.

17 **SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

18 It is the sense of Congress that—

19 (1) the United States Government should seek
20 to stop piracy all around the world, including off the
21 Somali Coast and in the Gulf of Aden;

22 (2) high seas pirates, and the criminal networks
23 and enterprises with whom they are affiliated,
24 should be sanctioned upon identification; and

1 (3) the United States should seek to work with
2 allies and partners around the globe to combat pi-
3 racy around the globe and to curb the surge in pi-
4 racy off of the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of
5 Aden.

6 **SEC. 4. SANCTIONS.**

7 (a) **IN GENERAL.**—The President shall impose sanc-
8 tions described in subsection (b) with respect to any for-
9 eign person the President determines knowingly engages
10 in piracy.

11 (b) **SANCTIONS DESCRIBED.**—The sanctions de-
12 scribed in this subsection are the following:

13 (1) **ASSET BLOCKING.**—Notwithstanding the re-
14 quirements of section 202 of the International
15 Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701),
16 the President may exercise of all powers granted to
17 the President by that Act to the extent necessary to
18 block and prohibit all transactions in all property
19 and interests in property of the foreign person if
20 such property and interests in property are in the
21 United States, come within the United States, or are
22 or come within the possession or control of a United
23 States person.

24 (2) **VISAS, ADMISSION, OR PAROLE.**—

1 (A) IN GENERAL.—An alien who the Sec-
2 retary of State or the Secretary of Homeland
3 Security (or a designee of one of such Secre-
4 taries) knows, or has reason to believe, is de-
5 scribed in subsection (a) is—

6 (i) inadmissible to the United States;

7 (ii) ineligible for a visa or other docu-
8 mentation to enter the United States; and

9 (iii) otherwise ineligible to be admitted
10 or paroled into the United States or to re-
11 ceive any other benefit under the Immigra-
12 tion and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101 et
13 seq.).

14 (B) CURRENT VISAS REVOKED.—

15 (i) IN GENERAL.—The issuing con-
16 sular officer, the Secretary of State, or the
17 Secretary of Homeland Security (or a des-
18 ignee of one of such Secretaries) shall, in
19 accordance with section 221(i) of the Im-
20 migration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C.
21 1201(i)), revoke any visa or other entry
22 documentation issued to an alien described
23 in subparagraph (A) regardless of when
24 the visa or other entry documentation is
25 issued.

1 (ii) EFFECT OF REVOCATION.—A rev-
2 ocation under clause (i)—

3 (I) shall take effect immediately;
4 and

5 (II) shall automatically cancel
6 any other valid visa or entry docu-
7 mentation that is in the alien's pos-
8 session.

9 (c) EXCEPTIONS.—

10 (1) EXCEPTION TO COMPLY WITH INTER-
11 NATIONAL OBLIGATIONS.—Sanctions under sub-
12 section (b)(2) shall not apply with respect to the ad-
13 mission of an alien if admitting or paroling the alien
14 into the United States is necessary to permit the
15 United States to comply with the Agreement regard-
16 ing the Headquarters of the United Nations, signed
17 at Lake Success June 26, 1947, and entered into
18 force November 21, 1947, between the United Na-
19 tions and the United States, or other applicable
20 international obligations.

21 (2) EXCEPTION RELATING TO THE PROVISION
22 OF HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE.—Sanctions under
23 this section may not be imposed with respect to
24 transactions or the facilitation of transactions for—

1 (A) the sale of agricultural commodities,
2 food, medicine, or medical devices;

3 (B) the provision of humanitarian assist-
4 ance;

5 (C) financial transactions relating to hu-
6 manitarian assistance; or

7 (D) transporting goods or services that are
8 necessary to carry out operations relating to
9 humanitarian assistance.

10 (3) EXCEPTION FOR INTELLIGENCE, LAW EN-
11 FORCEMENT, AND NATIONAL SECURITY ACTIVI-
12 TIES.—Sanctions under this section shall not apply
13 to any authorized intelligence, law enforcement, or
14 national security activities of the United States.

15 (d) CLASSIFIED INFORMATION.—In any judicial re-
16 view of a determination made under this section, if the
17 determination was based on classified information (as de-
18 fined in section 1(a) of the Classified Information Proce-
19 dures Act) such information may be submitted to the re-
20 viewing court ex parte and in camera. This subsection may
21 not be construed to confer or imply any right to judicial
22 review.

23 (e) IMPLEMENTATION; PENALTIES.—

24 (1) IMPLEMENTATION.—The President may ex-
25 ercise all authorities provided to the President under

1 sections 203 and 205 of the International Emer-
2 gency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1702 and
3 1704) to carry out this section.

4 (2) PENALTIES.—The penalties provided for in
5 subsections (b) and (c) of section 206 of the Inter-
6 national Emergency Economic Powers Act (50
7 U.S.C. 1705) shall apply to a person that violates,
8 attempts to violate, conspires to violate, or causes a
9 violation of regulations promulgated to carry out
10 this section to the same extent that such penalties
11 apply to a person that commits an unlawful act de-
12 scribed in section 206(a) of that Act.

13 (f) WAIVER.—The President may waive the applica-
14 tion of sanctions imposed with respect to a foreign person
15 under this section if the President certifies to the Com-
16 mittee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives
17 and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate
18 not later than 15 days before such waiver is to take effect
19 that the waiver is crucial to the national security interests
20 of the United States.

21 (g) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

22 (1) FOREIGN PERSON.—The term “foreign per-
23 son” means an individual or entity that is not a
24 United States person.

1 (2) UNITED STATES PERSON.—The term
2 “United States person” means—

3 (A) a United States citizen;

4 (B) a permanent resident alien of the
5 United States; or

6 (C) an entity organized under the laws of
7 the United States or of any jurisdiction within
8 the United States, including a foreign branch of
9 such an entity.

10 (3) PIRACY.—The term “piracy” means any act
11 in violation of one or more provisions of chapter 81
12 of title 18, United States Code.

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