

Statement by the President on the House of Representatives Vote to Authorize the Title X Train and Equip Program for the Moderate Syrian Opposition

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The White House

Office of the Press Secretary

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Today, the United States House of Representatives took an important step forward as our nation unites to confront the threat posed by the terrorist group known as ISIL. Last week, I spoke to the American people about what the United States will do with our friends and allies to degrade and ultimately destroy ISIL. I made clear that we must pursue a comprehensive and sustained counter-terrorism strategy, and a bipartisan coalition in the House voted to support a critical component of that strategy. As we continue to take targeted military action against ISIL terrorist targets, today's vote is another step closer to having the authorization to train and equip vetted elements of the moderate Syrian opposition so they can defend themselves against, and ultimately push back on, ISIL forces in Syria, while creating the conditions for the political solution necessary to solve Syria's crisis once and for all. This training program will be conducted outside of Syria, in partnership with regional countries. There will be no U.S. military personnel in Syria as part of this program. We've learned over the last decade, and through our successful campaign to degrade al-Qaeda, that it is more effective to use America's unique capabilities to take out terrorist targets in support of our partners' efforts on the ground to secure their own future. Countries in the region and around the world are coming together to confront ISIL. The United States can make a decisive difference. Today's House vote is a step towards making that difference, and I urge the Senate to pass this bill without delay.