

Statement of Support: H.R. 1677 – Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act of 2018

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The Administration strongly supports the passage of H.R. 1677, the “Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act of 2018.” The bill would add to a robust set of tools at the Administration’s disposal to help bring to an end the heartbreaking ongoing tragedy in Syria and to hold Syrian officials accountable for the slaughter of civilians and other atrocities. This bill will help provide additional leverage to achieve the United States government’s objectives to de-escalate the military conflict and support the United Nations-led peace process and a transition to a government in Syria that honors the will of the Syrian people, respects the rule of law and human rights, and peacefully co-exists with its neighbors in the region.

At its core, the bill provides additional tools designed to deny the Assad regime and its proxies access to the international financial system and to block the financial and other support that fuels the murder of innocent Syrians. In addition, it would facilitate the continued use of economic sanctions and visa restrictions to hold accountable members of the Assad regime who are responsible for or complicit in the serious human rights abuses and war crimes committed against innocent Syrians. As the President has said, every solution to the humanitarian crisis in Syria must also include a strategy to address the brutal regime that has fueled and financed it: the corrupt dictatorship in Iran.

The Administration remains committed to our objectives in Syria of liberating remaining territory from ISIS control, enabling the safe delivery of humanitarian aid, de-escalating the violence, deterring the Assad regime’s further use of chemical weapons, and advancing the United Nations-led political resolution track called for in United Nations Security Council Resolution 2254. The President has made clear that United States partners and allies must share the burden in achieving these aims. The Administration would interpret the bill consistent with these objectives, which are in the national security interest of the United States.

The Administration would also interpret the bill consistent with the protections provided under the American Servicemembers’ Protection Act of 2002.