To limit assistance for areas of Syria controlled by the Government of Syria or associated forces, and for other purposes.

**IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**MARCH 13, 2019**

Mr. Engel (for himself, Mr. Kinzinger, Mr. McCaul, and Mr. Brendan F. Boyle of Pennsylvania) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Financial Services, 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 limit assistance for areas of Syria controlled by the Government of Syria or associated forces, and for other purposes.

1. *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

2. **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

3. This Act may be cited as the “No Assistance for Assad Act”.

4. **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

5. Congress makes the following findings:
(1) Seven years into the conflict in Syria, over 11 million Syrians have been displaced from their homes and more than 470,000 have been killed.

(2) Since the conflict in Syria began, the United States has provided more than $7.7 billion to meet humanitarian needs of the Syrian people, making the United States the world’s single largest donor to the Syrian humanitarian response.

(3) It is estimated that the reconstruction of Syria could cost between $200 and $350 billion.

(4) According to the 2018 Transparency International Corruption Index, Syria is among the most corrupt countries in the world.

(5) In August 2017, the Government of the People’s Republic of China hosted a trade fair in Syria, and a Chinese-Arab business group announced a $2 billion commitment from the Chinese Government to fund the construction of industrial parks in Syria.

(6) The Russian Federation’s Chamber of Commerce and Industry stated that Russian businesses will have first “priority” in the allotment of reconstruction funds that Syria receives, and Russia signed a bilateral agreement with Syria giving Rus-
sia exclusive oil and gas rights in areas under Assad
regime control.

SEC. 3. STATEMENT OF POLICY.

It is the policy of the United States that United
States foreign assistance made available for reconstruction
or stabilization in Syria should be used only in a demo-
cratic Syria or in areas of Syria not controlled by a gov-
ernment led by Bashar al-Assad or associated forces.

SEC. 4. LIMITATION ON ASSISTANCE FOR AREAS OF SYRIA
CONTROLLED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF
SYRIA OR ASSOCIATED FORCES.

(a) LIMITATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in sub-
section (c), for each of the fiscal years 2020 through
2024, amounts authorized to be appropriated or oth-
erwise made available for assistance described in
paragraph (2) may not be provided, directly or indi-
rectly, for any area of Syria controlled by the Gov-
ernment of Syria or associated forces, as determined
by the Secretary of State, unless a certification de-
scribed in subsection (b) is in effect.

(2) ASSISTANCE DESCRIBED.—Assistance re-
ferred to in paragraph (1) is the following:

(A) Assistance to carry out stabilization
activities for the relevant area.
(B) Assistance to carry out reconstruction activities for the relevant area.

(b) Certification.—

(1) In general.—A certification described in this subsection is a certification submitted by the President to the appropriate congressional committees that contains a determination that the following criteria have been met:

(A) The air space over Syria is no longer being utilized by the Government of Syria or the Government of the Russian Federation to target civilian populations through the use of incendiary devices, including barrel bombs, chemical weapons, and conventional arms, including air-delivered missiles and explosives.

(B) Areas of Syria besieged by the forces of the Government of Syria, the Government of the Russian Federation, the Government of Iran, or associated forces are no longer cut off from international aid and have regular access to humanitarian assistance, freedom of travel, and medical care.

(C) The Government of Syria is releasing all political prisoners forcibly held within the prison system of the regime of Bashar al-Assad
and the Government of Syria is allowing full ac-

cess to the same facilities for investigations by

appropriate international human rights organi-

zations.

(D) The forces of the Government of

Syria, the Government of the Russian Federa-

tion, the Government of Iran, and associated

forces are no longer engaged in deliberate tar-

targeting of medical facilities, schools, residential

areas, and community gathering places, includ-

ing markets, in violation of international norms.

(E) The Government of Syria is—

(i) taking steps to verifiably fulfill its

commitments under the Convention on the

Prohibition of the Development, Produc-

tion, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical

Weapons and on their Destruction, done at

Geneva September 3, 1992, and entered

into force April 29, 1997 (commonly

known as the “Chemical Weapons Conven-

tion”), and the Treaty on the Non-Pro-

liferation of Nuclear Weapons, done at

Washington, London, and Moscow July 1,

1968, and entered into force March 5,

1970 (21 UST 483); and
(ii) making tangible progress toward becoming a signatory to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction, done at Washington, London, and Moscow April 10, 1972, and entered into force March 26, 1975 (26 UST 583).

(F) The Government of Syria is permitting the safe, voluntary, and dignified return of Syrians displaced by the conflict.

(G) The Government of Syria is taking verifiable steps to establish meaningful accountability for perpetrators of war crimes in Syria and justice for victims of war crimes committed by the Assad regime, including by participation in a credible and independent truth and reconciliation process.

(H) The Government of Syria has halted the development and deployment of ballistic and cruise missiles.

(2) **Effective Period.**—A certification shall be in effect under this subsection for a period of 90 days beginning on the date on which the President
submits the certification to the appropriate congressional committees.

(3) RENEWAL OR REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date on which the President submits to the appropriate congressional committees a certification under this subsection the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees either—

(A) a new certification under this subsection indicating that the conditions described in paragraph (1) are continuing to be met; or

(B) a report that—

(i) describes why the President is unable to make a new certification under this subsection; and

(ii) contains a certification that no funds will be obligated or expended to provide assistance described in subsection (a) in contravention of subsection (a).

(c) EXCEPTION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The limitation on assistance under subsection (a) shall not apply with respect to—

(A) assistance for projects to be administered by local organizations that reflect the
aims, needs, and priorities of local communities in Syria;

(B) assistance for projects to meet basic human needs in Syria, including—

(i) drought relief;

(ii) assistance to refugees, internally displaced persons, and conflict victims;

(iii) the distribution of food and medicine; and

(iv) the provision of health services;

and

(C) assistance to carry out the activities described in subsection (b)(1)(E).

(2) REPORT AND DETERMINATION.—The President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report and determination for each of the fiscal years 2020 through 2024 on each project with respect to which this subsection applies during the preceding fiscal year, including—

(A) a description of the project;

(B) a description of how United States funds with respect to the project were used;

(C) the geographic location or locations of the project; and
(D) a determination with respect to whether
the project benefitted an official of the Assad
regime.

(3) Sense of Congress.—It is the sense of
Congress that, to the greatest extent practicable, the
United States should not fund projects described in
this subsection with respect to which the Govern-
ment of Syria, any official of the Government of
Syria, and any immediate family member of an offi-
cial of the Government of Syria have a financial or
material interest or are affiliated with the imple-
menting partner of the project.

(d) Definitions.—In this section:

(1) Appropriate Congressional Commit-
tees.—The term “appropriate congressional com-
mittees” means—

(A) the Committee on Foreign Affairs and
the Committee on Appropriations of the House
of Representatives; and

(B) the Committee on Foreign Relations
and the Committee on Appropriations of the
Senate.

(2) Associated Forces.—The term “associ-
ated forces” includes forces of the Government of
the Russian Federation, the Government of Iran, Iranian-backed proxy militias, and Hezbollah.

(3) DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY.—The term “directly or indirectly” includes assistance to multilateral institutions and international governmental organizations, such as the United Nations and related agencies, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank.

SEC. 5. REPORT ON DELIVERY OF UNITED STATES HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO SYRIA.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State and the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on delivery of United States humanitarian assistance to Syria.

(b) MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED.—The report required by subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) A description of the challenges of access to areas of Syria controlled by the Government of Syria or associated forces for purposes of providing United States humanitarian assistance, including assistance funded through multilateral institutions and international governmental organizations.
(2) A description of where such United States humanitarian assistance has been able to be delivered in such areas.

(3) A description of where such United States humanitarian assistance has been denied access in such areas.

(4) A description of how the United States Government is working to improve access to such areas.

(5) A description of the roles and responsibilities of United States allies and partners and other countries in the region in ensuring access to such areas.

(6) A description of how such United States humanitarian assistance and implementing partners of such assistance are monitored and evaluated.

(7) A description of the major challenges that the United States faces in monitoring such United States humanitarian assistance and how the United States is working to overcome such challenges.

(8) A description of the strategy of the United States to deliver humanitarian assistance to areas of Syria controlled by the Government of Syria or associated forces and in which the Government of Syria or associated forces is impeding access to such areas.
(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section, the term “appropriate congressional committees” and “associated forces” have the meanings given such terms in section 4(d).