

BILL SUMMARY

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The United States-Israel Security Assistance Authorization Act of 2018

The United States-Israel Security Assistance Authorization Act of 2018 seeks to ensure Israel has the means to defend itself, by itself, against growing threats—most significantly Iran’s presence on its northern border. The legislation—authored by Reps. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL) and Ted Deutch (D-FL) and Sens. Marco Rubio (R-FL) and Chris Coons (D-DE)—authorizes agreed-upon increases in Israel’s security assistance, expanded weapons stockpiles, and new U.S.-Israel cooperation in anti-drone technologies, cybersecurity and space.

Key Provisions:

- Authorizes U.S. security assistance for Israel, as called for in the 2016 U.S.-Israel Memorandum of Understanding on security assistance.
 - Authorizes a joint assessment of the quantity and type of precision-guided munitions necessary for Israel to defend itself against Hezbollah, Hamas and other terrorist groups. Mandates rapid acquisition and deployment procedures for such munitions.
 - Extends authorization for the U.S. War Reserve Stockpile in Israel by five years and authorizes an additional \$1 billion in stocks; authorizes the president to add precision guided munitions to the stockpile for potential Israeli use in a conflict with Hezbollah.
 - Extends authorization for loan guarantees to Israel by four years.
 - Establishes a U.S.-Israel cybersecurity research and development grant program.
 - Requires the NASA administrator to continue working with the Israel Space Agency to identify and cooperatively pursue peaceful space exploration and science initiatives.
 - Authorizes the administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development to enter into a memorandum of understanding with Israel to advance common goals.
 - Authorizes the president to establish a counter-drone program with Israel.
 - Mandates improved reporting on enhancing Israel’s qualitative military edge (QME), including assessments of Israel’s ability to effectively defend against non-state actors.
 - Presses the administration to expedite export licensing for Israel by adding it to the list of nations eligible for the Strategic Trade Authorization Exception.
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