

[H.R. 2297, Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015](#) [\(Senate amendment\)](#)

FLOOR SITUATION

On Wednesday, December 16, 2015, the House will consider the Senate amendment to [H.R. 2297](#), *the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015*, under suspension of the rules. H.R. 2297 was introduced on May 13, 2015, by Rep. Ed Royce (R-CA) and passed the House by a vote of [423 to 0](#) on May 14, 2015. The Senate passed the bill, with an amendment, by unanimous consent, on November 17, 2015.

SUMMARY

H.R. 2297 places mandatory financial sanctions on banks that conduct significant transactions with Hizballah and requires reporting on: Al-Manar (Hizballah's television station), Hizballah's narcotics trafficking and organized criminal activities; the Department of State's Rewards for Justice Program and Hizballah; and on mapping Hizballah's global support networks.

Major changes to the House-passed bill made by the Senate amendment include:

- Requiring explicit reporting on foreign central banks that violate the financial sanctions in the legislation (but no longer explicitly includes central banks in a definition);
- Expressly allowing classified information to be provided to a court for in camera review;
- Dramatically expanding the definition of money laundering;
- Replacing determinations regarding narcotics trafficking and transnational organized crime with reports and briefings; and,
- Providing for termination of the bill's provisions only with the delisting of Hizballah as a terrorist organization (dropping the certification requirement that Hizballah does not constitute a threat to the security of the U.S. or our allies).

Click [here](#) for the previous Legislative Digest on the House-passed version of H.R. 2297.

BACKGROUND

Hizballah is a Lebanese-based Shia militia that serves as Iran's main terrorist proxy. In 1983, with backing from Iran, Hizballah suicide bombers struck the U.S. Marine Barracks in Beirut, killing 241 American Servicemen. A similar 1996 attack orchestrated by Iran and Hizballah on the Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia killed 19 American Servicemen. In 1997 the United States designated Hizballah as a foreign terrorist organization.

Hizballah continues to serve as Iran's front line against Israel. Since the militia's 2006 war with Israel, it is believed to have grown its missile and rocket supply to over 100,000 rockets or projectiles, including a number of long-range, precision rockets that allow it to strike anywhere in Israel.

Hizballah also plays a key role in Iran's effort to prop up Syria's murderous Assad regime. Thousands of the group's fighters freely cross the border between Lebanon and Syria to fight under the direction of Iran's Quds Force operatives.

In order to fund its terrorist operations, Hizballah has created worldwide criminal networks engaged in money laundering and the counterfeiting of goods and pharmaceuticals.

House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Ed Royce has said that "Prior to September 11th, 2001, Hizballah was responsible for more American deaths than any other terrorist organization. Since that time their capabilities have grown, enabling them to attack the U.S. and our allies around the world—from the Philippines, to Bulgaria, and even on our doorstep in South America."¹ H.R. 2297 is designed to better enable the Administration to strike at Hizballah's fundraising and international financing.

In the 113th Congress, the House passed a similar bill ([H.R. 4411](#)) by a vote of [404 to 0](#) on July 22, 2014. The Senate did not act on the measure before the Congress adjourned.

COST

A cost estimate from the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) is currently unavailable.

STAFF CONTACT

For questions or further information please contact [Jerry White](#) with the House Republican Policy Committee by email or at 5-0190.

¹ See Press Release—"[Reps. Meadows, Schneider, Royce, Engel to Author Tougher Sanctions against Hezbollah](#)," April 3, 2014.