

[H.R. 907, United States-Jordan Defense Cooperation Act of 2015, as amended](#)

FLOOR SITUATION

On Tuesday, July 7, 2015, the House will consider [H.R. 907](#), *the United States-Jordan Defense Cooperation Act of 2015, as amended*, under suspension of the rules. H.R. 907 was introduced on February 12, 2015, by Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL) and was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, which ordered the bill reported, as amended, by unanimous consent on April 23, 2015.

SUMMARY

H.R. 907 extends to Jordan expedited congressional review of proposed U.S. arms transfers that is otherwise reserved for NATO members and other close allies. Specifically, the bill:

- States that U.S. policy should be to: support Jordan in its response to the Syrian refugee crisis; provide necessary assistance to alleviate the domestic burden to provide for basic needs for assimilated Syrian refugees; cooperate with Jordan to combat the terrorist threat from ISIL or other terrorist organizations; and, help secure the border between Jordan, Syria, and Iraq.
- Expresses the sense of Congress that expeditious consideration of certifications of letters of offer to sell defense articles, defense services, design and construction services, and major defense equipment to Jordan is fully consistent with U.S. security and foreign policy interests and the objectives of world peace and security.
- Requires, for the three-year period beginning on the date of enactment, that Jordan shall be treated similarly to other non-North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) countries, such as Japan, Australia, the Republic of Korea, Israel, and New Zealand, eligible to receive special treatment for the transfer of U.S. defense articles and services under the Arms Export Control Act, which includes a higher dollar threshold for the formal notification of arms sales and an expedited congressional review period of such sales.

- Authorizes the Secretary of State to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Jordan to increase economic support funds, military cooperation (including joint military exercises), personnel exchanges, support for international peacekeeping missions, and enhanced strategic dialogue.

BACKGROUND

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has received nearly \$467 million in U.S. foreign assistance for its response to the Syrian humanitarian crisis. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, there are 621,937 registered Syrian refugees in Jordan, more than three-fourths of whom live outside refugee camps. In 1996, the United States granted Jordan major non-NATO ally status, which makes non-NATO countries who are exceptionally close allies of the United States eligible for certain military assistance in the same manner as other NATO allies. On February 3, 2015, Secretary of State John Kerry and Jordanian Foreign Minister Nasser Judeh signed an MOU that reflects the intention of the United States to increase annual assistance to Jordan from \$660 million to \$1 billion for each year through 2017.¹

COST

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) [estimates](#) that enacting H.R. 907, as ordered reported, would cost less than \$500,000 over the 2016 to 2020 period, assuming the availability of appropriated amounts, and “would not result in any further foreign assistance being provided to Jordan.” Enacting H.R. 907 would not affect direct spending or revenues; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures do not apply.

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 text of H.R. 907, as amended, section 2, paragraphs 1 through 10.