

118TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 4709

To amend the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020, to make improvements relating to cooperation between the United States and Israel to counter unmanned aerial systems, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 18, 2023

Mr. GOTTHEIMER (for himself, Mr. GARBARINO, Mr. BACON, Mr. CROW, Mr. DAVIS of North Carolina, Mr. GALLAGHER, Mr. GOLDEN of Maine, Mr. GOLDMAN of New York, Mr. HOYER, Mr. JAMES, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota, Mr. JOYCE of Ohio, Mr. KEAN of New Jersey, Mr. LALOTA, Mr. LIEU, Ms. MACE, Mr. MAST, Mr. MEUSER, Mr. NICKEL, Mr. PETERS, Mr. RUTHERFORD, Ms. SCHOLTEN, Mr. SHERMAN, Ms. SLOTKIN, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Ms. STEVENS, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. TORRES of New York, Mr. TRONE, Mr. VALADAO, Mr. VARGAS, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. WENSTRUP, Mr. WESTERMAN, Ms. WILD, and Mr. D'ESPOSITO) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services, and in addition to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, 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

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## A BILL

To amend the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020, to make improvements relating to cooperation between the United States and Israel to counter unmanned aerial systems, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “U.S.-Israel Anti-Killer  
3 Drone Act of 2023”.

4 **SEC. 2. IMPROVEMENTS RELATING TO UNITED STATES-**  
5 **ISRAEL COOPERATION TO COUNTER UN-**  
6 **MANNED AERIAL SYSTEMS.**

7 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

8 (1) The growing arsenal of unmanned aerial  
9 systems of Iran includes—

10 (A) unmanned aerial systems that engage  
11 in intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance;  
12 and

13 (B) armed unmanned aerial systems capa-  
14 ble of striking battlefield targets, including loi-  
15 tering munitions, also known as “suicide  
16 drones” or “one-way attack drones”.

17 (2) Iran-origin unmanned aerial systems rep-  
18 resent a threat to the Armed Forces and facilities of  
19 the United States in the Middle East, as well as to  
20 United States allies and partners such as Israel,  
21 Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates.

22 (3) In February 2018, Iran allegedly launched  
23 an armed unmanned aerial vehicle from Syria into  
24 Israeli airspace which was ultimately destroyed by  
25 Israeli warplanes.

1           (4) In September 2019, Iran launched cruise  
2           missiles and loitering munitions at key oil installa-  
3           tions in Saudi Arabia.

4           (5) Throughout the takeover of Yemen by the  
5           Houthi, beginning in 2014 and continuing into the  
6           present, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps  
7           Quds-Force, the al-Ghadir Missile Command of the  
8           Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Aerospace  
9           Force, and the Research and Self-Sufficiency Jihad  
10          organization of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard  
11          Corps has supported the capabilities of Yemeni  
12          rebels, including through the provision of unmanned  
13          aerial systems and other relevant technology, such as  
14          cruise missiles and ballistic missiles. Such support  
15          enables the Houthis to routinely strike civilian tar-  
16          gets in both Saudi Arabia and the United Arab  
17          Emirates.

18          (6) In January 2021, Iran-backed Shiite militia  
19          groups in Iraq launched armed unmanned aerial ve-  
20          hicles at Saudi Arabia.

21          (7) In March 2021, Iran attempted to send two  
22          delta-wing unmanned aerial vehicles toward Israel  
23          which were ultimately downed by Israeli warplanes  
24          over the territory of an undisclosed Arab country.

1           (8) In July 2021, Iran launched an attack em-  
2           ploying unmanned aerial vehicles, including loitering  
3           munitions against a Liberian-flagged, Israeli-oper-  
4           ated tanker, “M/T Mercer Street”, near the coast of  
5           Oman that killed two people, a British and a Roma-  
6           nian national.

7           (9) On March 27 and 28, 2022, Secretary of  
8           State Blinken met in Israel with counterparts from  
9           the governments of Israel, Bahrain, Egypt, the  
10          United Arab Emirates, and Morocco to promote nor-  
11          malization in the region and declared, “Our commit-  
12          ment to the core principle that Iran can never ac-  
13          quire a nuclear weapon is unwavering. One way or  
14          another, we will continue to cooperate closely.”.

15          (10) In May 2022, Iran inaugurated an un-  
16          manned aerial system factory in Tajikistan to manu-  
17          facture and export the Ababil-2, a multipurpose un-  
18          manned aerial system with reconnaissance, combat,  
19          and suicide capabilities.

20          (11) On June 2, 2022, Iran-backed Hezbollah  
21          sent three unmanned aerial vehicles toward the  
22          Israeli-controlled Karish gas field, one of which was  
23          intercepted by an F-16 fighter jet, and two of which  
24          were intercepted by Barak 8 missiles launched from  
25          the Sa’ar 5-class corvette “INS Eilat”.

1           (12) On July 2, 2022, the Israeli military re-  
2           portedly shot down three unmanned aerial vehicles  
3           launched by Hezbollah in the vicinity of where an  
4           Israeli gas platform had been recently installed in  
5           the Mediterranean Sea.

6           (13) On July 14, 2022, the United States and  
7           Israel adopted the Joint Declaration on the U.S.-  
8           Israel Strategic Partnership, reaffirming the un-  
9           breakable bonds between the two countries and the  
10          enduring commitment of the United States to the  
11          security of Israel.

12          (14) In late August 2022, Iran reportedly sent  
13          its first batch of Shahed-136 unmanned aerial sys-  
14          tems to Russia for use against Ukraine. While Rus-  
15          sia is rebranding these systems the Geran-2, United  
16          States officials revealed the agreement in the sum-  
17          mer of 2022.

18          (15) On September 12, 2022, Brigadier Gen-  
19          eral Kioumars Heydari, who heads the ground forces  
20          of the Armed Forces of Iran, announced that the  
21          Armed Forces of Iran had developed the Arash-2  
22          unmanned aerial system specifically designed to at-  
23          tack Tel Aviv and Haifa.

24          (16) On November 13, 2022, and on February  
25          10, 2023, Iran-origin unmanned aerial systems al-

1       legedly targeted Israeli-owned oil tankers off the  
2       coast of Oman.

3               (17) On February 14, 2023, United States  
4       forces in Syria reportedly shot down an Iran-origin  
5       unmanned aerial vehicle surveilling United States  
6       positions around oil facilities.

7               (18) On November 1, 2021, the Secretary of  
8       Defense and the Defense Minister of Israel signed a  
9       memorandum of understanding establishing the  
10      United States-Israel Operations Technology-Working  
11      Group, which includes six sub-working groups, in-  
12      cluding sub-working groups focused on countering  
13      unmanned aerial systems and directed energy capa-  
14      bilities.

15      (b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Con-  
16      gress that the United States should—

17              (1) enhance ongoing cooperation with Israel in  
18      researching, developing, and fielding, as expedi-  
19      tiously as possible, mutually beneficial technologies  
20      and capabilities to counter unmanned aerial systems,  
21      for the purpose of addressing common military re-  
22      quirements and growing threats;

23              (2) exchange with Israel information about the  
24      evolving threat of Iran-origin unmanned aerial sys-  
25      tems; and

1           (3) use the United States-Israel Operations-  
2           Technology Working Group established pursuant to  
3           section 1299M(c) of the National Defense Author-  
4           ization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 (Public Law 116-  
5           283; 134 Stat. 4014), or any successor working  
6           group, as the epicenter of such efforts.

7           (c) REPORT ON UNITED STATES-ISRAEL COOPERA-  
8           TION TO COUNTER UNMANNED AERIAL SYSTEMS.—Sec-  
9           tion 1278 of the National Defense Authorization Act for  
10          Fiscal Year 2020 (Public Law 116-92; 133 Stat. 1702;  
11          22 U.S.C. 8606 note) is amended—

12           (1) in subsection (b)(4), by striking  
13           “\$40,000,000” and inserting “\$55,000,000”;

14           (2) by redesignating subsections (e) and (f) as  
15           subsections (g) and (h), respectively; and

16           (3) by inserting after subsection (d) the fol-  
17           lowing new subsections:

18           “(e) REPORT ON STATUS OF COOPERATION AND  
19           CERTAIN IRANIAN THREAT.—Not later than 180 days  
20           after the date of the enactment of this subsection, the Sec-  
21           retary of Defense shall submit to the appropriate commit-  
22           tees of Congress a report containing the following:

23           “(1) An assessment of the status of cooperation  
24           between the United States and Israel on countering

1       unmanned aerial systems, including an assessment  
2       of—

3               “(A) capabilities to counter unmanned aer-  
4               ial systems under research and development;

5               “(B) capabilities to counter unmanned aer-  
6               ial systems that have been fielded to the Armed  
7               Forces of the United States or Israel pursuant  
8               to this section;

9               “(C) proposed changes to authorizations,  
10              appropriations, or other provisions of law that  
11              would result in more effective capabilities to  
12              counter unmanned aerial systems and expedite  
13              the provision to the Armed Forces of the  
14              United States and Israel of capabilities to  
15              counter unmanned aerial systems; and

16              “(D) the extent to which the United  
17              States-Israel Operations-Technology Working  
18              Group established pursuant to section  
19              1299M(c) of the National Defense Authoriza-  
20              tion Act for Fiscal Year 2021 (Public Law  
21              116–283; 134 Stat. 4014), or any successor  
22              working group, is being used to carry out the  
23              activities described in subsection (a)(1).

24              “(2) An assessment of the threat to the United  
25              States and Israel posed by unmanned aerial systems



1 from Iran and associated proxies of Iran, including  
2 an assessment of deployed or otherwise available  
3 anti-unmanned aircraft capabilities of the United  
4 States and Israel and the adequacy of such capabilities  
5 to offset such threat.

6 “(f) UNMANNED AERIAL SYSTEM DEFINED.—In this  
7 section, the term ‘unmanned aerial system’ includes loitering  
8 munitions.”

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