

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 5826

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 17, 2024

Received; read twice and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

AN ACT

To require a report on sanctions under the Robert Levinson
Hostage Recovery and Hostage-Taking Accountability
Act, 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 “No Paydays for Hos-
3 tage-Takers Act”.

4 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

5 Congress finds the following:

6 (1) The Islamic Republic of Iran has a long his-
7 tory of hostage-taking and wrongful detention of
8 United States nationals, including its illegal deten-
9 tion of 52 American diplomats from 1979 to 1981.

10 (2) The Robert Levinson Hostage Recovery and
11 Hostage-Taking Accountability Act (22 U.S.C. 1741
12 et seq.), named in honor of Robert Levinson, the
13 longest-held hostage in United States history who is
14 presumed to have been killed by the regime while in
15 Iranian custody, authorizes sanctions with respect to
16 foreign persons who are responsible for or complicit
17 in hostage-taking or unlawful or wrongful detention
18 of United States nationals abroad.

19 **SEC. 3. STATEMENT OF POLICY.**

20 It shall be the policy of the United States to under-
21 take additional actions and impose strict penalties to deter
22 the Government of Iran and other hostile governments and
23 non-state actors from hostage-taking or wrongfully detain-
24 ing United States nationals.

1 **SEC. 4. REPORT AND CERTIFICATION ON RESTRICTED IRA-**
2 **NIAN FUNDS RELEASED TO QATAR.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the
4 date of the enactment of this Act, and every 180 days
5 thereafter for 6 years, the President shall submit to the
6 Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Fi-
7 nancial Services of the House of Representatives and the
8 Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on
9 Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate the
10 following:

11 (1) A report on the \$6,000,000,000 in funds
12 transferred from restricted Iranian accounts in the
13 Republic of South Korea to restricted accounts in
14 Qatar on or after August 9, 2023.

15 (2) A certification as to whether credible evi-
16 dence or intelligence exists that any of the funds
17 transferred have been used for any purpose other
18 than humanitarian purposes.

19 (3) A certification as to whether credible evi-
20 dence or intelligence exists that the funds trans-
21 ferred have enabled the Government of Iran to in-
22 crease spending on defense, intelligence, or malign
23 foreign activities.

24 (b) MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED.—The report re-
25 quired by subsection (a)(1) shall include the following:

1 (1) An itemized list of all transactions involving
2 the use of funds transferred, including the value of
3 such transactions, the parties to such transactions,
4 the financial institutions involved, the goods pur-
5 chased in each transaction, the destinations and end
6 user of such goods, the date on which the United
7 States was notified of such transaction, and the date
8 the transaction occurred.

9 (2) The quantity of funds described in sub-
10 section (a)(1) in restricted accounts in Qatar at the
11 beginning and end of each reporting period.

12 (3) A thorough description of the process the
13 United States Government utilized during the re-
14 porting period to review transactions involving the
15 use of funds transferred in order to verify that such
16 transactions were humanitarian in nature.

17 **SEC. 5. REVIEW AND DETERMINATION AND REPORTS ON**
18 **SANCTIONS UNDER THE ROBERT LEVINSON**
19 **HOSTAGE RECOVERY AND HOSTAGE-TAKING**
20 **ACCOUNTABILITY ACT.**

21 (a) REVIEW AND DETERMINATION.—Not later than
22 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and
23 on an annual basis thereafter for 6 years, the President
24 shall—

1 (1) review all cases of the hostage-taking of a
2 United States national in Iran or at the direction of
3 the Government of Iran and all cases of the unlawful
4 or wrongful detention of a United States national in
5 Iran or at the direction of the Government of Iran
6 that have occurred during the preceding 10-year pe-
7 riod; and

8 (2) make a determination as to whether any
9 foreign person, based on credible evidence—

10 (A) is responsible for or complicit in, or re-
11 sponsible for ordering, controlling, or otherwise
12 directing, the hostage-taking of the United
13 States national or the unlawful or wrongful de-
14 tention of the United States national; or

15 (B) knowingly provides financial, material,
16 or technological support for, or goods or serv-
17 ices in support of, an activity described in sub-
18 paragraph (A).

19 (b) REPORTS.—Not later than 180 days after the
20 date of the enactment of this Act, and on an annual basis
21 thereafter for 6 years, the President shall submit to the
22 appropriate congressional committees a report that—

23 (1) identifies all foreign persons with respect to
24 which the President has made a determination under
25 subsection (a)(2); and

(2) with respect to each such foreign person—

(A) states whether sanctions have been imposed under section 306 of the Robert Levinson Hostage Recovery and Hostage-Taking Accountability Act (22 U.S.C. 1741d) or will be imposed within 30 days of the date of the submission of the report; and

(B) for whom sanctions have not been imposed or will not be imposed under section 306 of such Act, provides a description of the specific authority under which otherwise applicable sanctions are being waived, have otherwise been determined not to apply, or are not being imposed and a complete justification of the decision to waive or otherwise not apply the sanctions authorized by such sanctions programs and authorities.

SEC. 6. REQUIREMENT TO LIMIT TRAVEL OF IRANIAN DIP-

LOMATS AT THE UNITED NATIONS.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

(1) United States visa restrictions on sanctioned individuals often contain exceptions for activities in order to permit the United States to comply with the Agreement regarding the headquarters of the United Nations signed at Lake Success June 26,

1 1947, and entered into force November 21, 1947,
2 between the United Nations and the United States.

3 (2) Section 6 of Public Law 80–357 (commonly
4 known as the “United Nations Headquarters Agree-
5 ment Act”) provides “Nothing in the agreement
6 shall be construed as in any way diminishing,
7 abridging, or weakening the right of the United
8 States to safeguard its own security.”.

9 (3) Congress has directed the President to use
10 the President’s authority, including the authorities
11 contained in section 6 of Public Law 80–357, to
12 deny any individual’s admission to the United States
13 as a representative to the United Nations if the
14 President determines that such individual has been
15 found to have been engaged in espionage activities
16 or a terrorist activity directed against the United
17 States or its allies and may pose a threat to United
18 States national security interests.

19 (b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Con-
20 gress that Iran’s longstanding hostage-taking and wrong-
21 ful detention of United States nationals, assassination
22 plots against United States nationals outside and within
23 the United States, and intelligence activities are a security
24 or terrorist threat to the United States and United States
25 interests and shall be a primary consideration in limiting

1 travel of Iranian diplomats seeking admission to the
2 United States for United Nations activities and their fam-
3 ily members.

4 (c) DENIAL OF VISAS.—Section 407(a)(1) of the For-
5 eign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1990 and
6 1991 (8 U.S.C. 1102 note) is amended—

7 (1) by striking “(1)” and inserting “(1)(A)”;

8 (2) by striking “and” at the end and inserting
9 “or”; and

10 (3) by adding further at the end the following:

11 “(B) has been sanctioned pursuant to Ex-
12 ecutive Order 13224 (66 Fed. Reg. 49079; re-
13 lating to blocking property and prohibiting
14 transactions with persons who commit, threaten
15 to commit, or support terrorism) or Executive
16 Order 13382 (70 Fed. Reg. 38567; relating to
17 blocking property of weapons of mass destruc-
18 tion proliferators and their supporters) as of
19 the date of the enactment of the No Paydays
20 for Hostage-Takers Act; and”.

21 (d) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date
22 of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter for
23 3 years, the President shall submit to the appropriate con-
24 gressional committees a report on whether the President
25 has taken action to restrict the travel of Iranian diplomats

1 seeking admission to the United States for United Nations
2 activities and their family members and identifying each
3 such instance in which visas were denied or travel was re-
4 stricted.

5 **SEC. 7. REPORT ON BLOCKED IRANIAN ASSETS.**

6 Not later than 180 days after the date of the enact-
7 ment of this Act, and annually thereafter for 3 years, the
8 President shall submit to the appropriate congressional
9 committees a report that includes the following:

10 (1) An itemized list of any identifiable assets
11 with a valuation of more than \$100,000 belonging to
12 Iranian individuals and entities that are or have
13 been blocked or otherwise frozen pursuant to any
14 sanctions program under any jurisdiction globally, in
15 the prior 2 years.

16 (2) Any changes to the status of such assets,
17 including unblocking, unfreezing, or transferring
18 such assets, in the prior 2 years.

19 (3) With respect to any changes identified in
20 paragraph (2), whether the United States Govern-
21 ment took any action, including waiving of sanc-
22 tions, that related to such unblocking or unfreezing,
23 and a justification for any such United States ac-
24 tions.

1 **SEC. 8. REPORT ON INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS TO FREEZE**
2 **AND SEIZE IRANIAN ASSETS.**

3 (a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Con-
4 gress that the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the
5 Treasury, and the Attorney General should, to the extent
6 practicable—

7 (1) carry out a coordinated international effort
8 to find, restrain, freeze, and where appropriate and
9 legally authorized, seize, confiscate or forfeit the as-
10 sets of those individuals and entities that have been
11 sanctioned in connection with Iran’s malign activi-
12 ties, including hostage-taking, wrongful detention,
13 and human rights violations; and

14 (2) work with foreign governments—

15 (A) to share intelligence of financial inves-
16 tigations, as appropriate;

17 (B) to oversee the assets identified pursu-
18 ant to paragraph (1); and

19 (C) to provide technical assistance to help
20 governments establish the necessary legal
21 framework to carry out asset forfeitures.

22 (b) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date
23 of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter for
24 3 years, the President shall submit to the appropriate con-
25 gressional committees a report on actions described in
26 subsection (a).

1 **SEC. 9. DETERMINATION AND REPORT ON INVALIDATING**
2 **UNITED STATES PASSPORTS FOR TRAVEL TO**
3 **IRAN.**

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

5 (1) The Secretary of State maintains authority
6 to restrict the use of United States passports for
7 travel to or use in a country or area which the Sec-
8 retary has determined is a country or area in which
9 there is imminent danger to the public health or
10 physical safety of United States travelers, in accord-
11 ance with section 51.63 of title 22, Code of Federal
12 Regulations.

13 (2) In 2017, the Secretary of State declared
14 United States passports invalid for travel to, in, or
15 through North Korea, unless specially validated for
16 such travel, after United States citizen Otto
17 Warmbier suffered grievous injuries in North Ko-
18 rean custody, which led to his death.

19 (3) The ban on use of United States passports
20 for travel to North Korea was renewed in 2023.

21 (b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Con-
22 gress that the Secretary of State should declare United
23 States passports invalid for travel to, in, or through Iran
24 due to the imminent danger to the public health and phys-
25 ical safety of United States travelers stemming from the

1 threat of wrongful detention or being taken hostage by the
2 Iranian regime.

3 (c) DETERMINATION AND REPORT.—Not later than
4 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act and annu-
5 ally thereafter for 3 years, the Secretary of State shall
6 determine and report to the Committee on Foreign Affairs
7 of the House of Representatives and the Committee on
8 Foreign Relations of the Senate—

9 (1) whether the travel of United States persons
10 to Iran presents an imminent danger to the public
11 health or physical safety of United States travelers;
12 and

13 (2) whether the Secretary is exercising his au-
14 thority to declare United States passports invalid for
15 travel to, in, or through Iran.

16 **SEC. 10. STRATEGY TO DETER HOSTAGE-TAKING.**

17 Not later than 180 days after the date of the enact-
18 ment of this Act, the President shall develop and submit
19 to Congress a strategy to deter and prevent wrongful de-
20 tention and hostage-taking by United States adversaries,
21 including identifying penalties for wrongful detention and
22 hostage-taking, identifying clear United States Govern-
23 ment policies barring the payment of ransom or trans-
24 actions that could be viewed as ransom by the United

1 States Government, and detailing plans to coordinate with
2 United States allies and partners on such strategy.

3 **SEC. 11. DEFINITIONS.**

4 In this Act:

5 (1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMIT-
6 TEES.—the term “appropriate congressional commit-
7 tees” means—

8 (A) the Committee on Foreign Affairs and
9 the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of
10 Representatives; and

11 (B) the Committee on Foreign Relations
12 and the Committee on the Judiciary of the Sen-
13 ate.

14 (2) FOREIGN PERSON.—The term “foreign per-
15 son”—

16 (A) means an individual or entity that is
17 not a United States person; and

18 (B) includes a foreign state (as such term
19 is defined in section 1603 of title 28, United
20 States Code).

21 (3) UNITED STATES NATIONAL.—The term
22 “United States national” has the meaning given that
23 term in section 307(2) of the Robert Levinson Hos-

1 tage Recovery and Hostage-Taking Accountability
2 Act (22 U.S.C. 1741e(2)).

Passed the House of Representatives April 16, 2024.

Attest: KEVIN F. MCCUMBER,
Clerk.