

S 2479

UNRWA Accountability and Transparency Act

Congress: 117 (2021–2023, Ended)

Chamber: Senate

Policy Area: International Affairs

Introduced: Jul 27, 2021

Current Status: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

Latest Action: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations. (Jul 27, 2021)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/senate-bill/2479>

Sponsor

Name: Sen. Risch, James E. [R-ID]

Party: Republican • State: ID • Chamber: Senate

Cosponsors (13 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Sen. Blackburn, Marsha [R-TN]	R · TN		Jul 27, 2021
Sen. Boozman, John [R-AR]	R · AR		Jul 27, 2021
Sen. Collins, Susan M. [R-ME]	R · ME		Jul 27, 2021
Sen. Crapo, Mike [R-ID]	R · ID		Jul 27, 2021
Sen. Daines, Steve [R-MT]	R · MT		Jul 27, 2021
Sen. Hyde-Smith, Cindy [R-MS]	R · MS		Jul 27, 2021
Sen. Portman, Rob [R-OH]	R · OH		Jul 27, 2021
Sen. Rubio, Marco [R-FL]	R · FL		Jul 27, 2021
Sen. Scott, Rick [R-FL]	R · FL		Jul 27, 2021
Sen. Thune, John [R-SD]	R · SD		Jul 27, 2021
Sen. Tillis, Thomas [R-NC]	R · NC		Jul 27, 2021
Sen. Young, Todd [R-IN]	R · IN		Jul 27, 2021
Sen. Wicker, Roger F. [R-MS]	R · MS		Aug 9, 2021

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Foreign Relations Committee	Senate	Referred To	Jul 27, 2021

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

International Affairs

Related Bills

Bill	Relationship	Last Action
117 S 3467	Identical bill	Jan 18, 2022: Read the second time. Placed on Senate Legislative Calendar under General Orders. Calendar No. 247.
117 HR 4721	Identical bill	Aug 4, 2021: Referred to the Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific, Central Asia and Nonproliferation.

Summary (as of Jul 27, 2021)

UNRWA Accountability and Transparency Act

This bill makes changes to U.S. foreign policy in matters concerning the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).

For purposes of this policy, the bill defines *Palestinian refugee* as a person who (1) resided from June 1946 to May 1948 in Mandatory Palestine (a region controlled by Britain until 1948), (2) was personally displaced as a result of the 1948 Arab-Israeli conflict, and (3) has not accepted citizenship or other permanent adjustment in status in another country.

The bill withholds U.S. funding for the UNRWA unless the Department of State makes certifications concerning the UNRWA's staff, partners, and funding. Specifically, the State Department must certify that neither UNRWA staff and partners nor its funding and facilities are affiliated with terrorism or engaged in the dissemination of anti-American, anti-Israel, or anti-Semitic ideologies. Additionally, the State Department must certify that the UNRWA is subject to comprehensive financial audits by an independent auditing firm and is unaffiliated with any financial institutions that the United States considers to be complicit in money laundering or terror financing.

The bill also requires the State Department to implement a plan to encourage other countries to align their activities and efforts regarding the UNRWA with U.S. policy objectives, including the phase out of the UNRWA by resettling Palestinian refugees in countries other than Israel and in territories not controlled by Israel. The State Department must report to Congress on this plan.

Actions Timeline

- **Jul 27, 2021:** Introduced in Senate
- **Jul 27, 2021:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations.