

S 431

UNRWA Accountability and Transparency Act

Congress: 118 (2023–2025, Ended)

Chamber: Senate

Policy Area: International Affairs

Introduced: Feb 15, 2023

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

Latest Action: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations. (Feb 15, 2023)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/senate-bill/431>

Sponsor

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

Party: Republican • **State:** ID • **Chamber:** Senate

Cosponsors (24 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Sen. Blackburn, Marsha [R-TN]	R · TN		Feb 15, 2023
Sen. Budd, Ted [R-NC]	R · NC		Feb 15, 2023
Sen. Cassidy, Bill [R-LA]	R · LA		Feb 15, 2023
Sen. Cornyn, John [R-TX]	R · TX		Feb 15, 2023
Sen. Crapo, Mike [R-ID]	R · ID		Feb 15, 2023
Sen. Ernst, Joni [R-IA]	R · IA		Feb 15, 2023
Sen. Hagerty, Bill [R-TN]	R · TN		Feb 15, 2023
Sen. Hyde-Smith, Cindy [R-MS]	R · MS		Feb 15, 2023
Sen. Lee, Mike [R-UT]	R · UT		Feb 15, 2023
Sen. Rubio, Marco [R-FL]	R · FL		Feb 15, 2023
Sen. Scott, Rick [R-FL]	R · FL		Feb 15, 2023
Sen. Scott, Tim [R-SC]	R · SC		Feb 15, 2023
Sen. Thune, John [R-SD]	R · SD		Feb 15, 2023
Sen. Wicker, Roger F. [R-MS]	R · MS		Feb 16, 2023
Sen. Collins, Susan M. [R-ME]	R · ME		Feb 28, 2023
Sen. Vance, J. D. [R-OH]	R · OH		Feb 28, 2023
Sen. Daines, Steve [R-MT]	R · MT		Mar 27, 2023
Sen. Braun, Mike [R-IN]	R · IN		Jul 27, 2023
Sen. Barrasso, John [R-WY]	R · WY		Oct 17, 2023
Sen. Hoeven, John [R-ND]	R · ND		Oct 17, 2023
Sen. Tuberville, Tommy [R-AL]	R · AL		Oct 17, 2023
Sen. Capito, Shelley Moore [R-WV]	R · WV		Oct 24, 2023
Sen. Romney, Mitt [R-UT]	R · UT		Nov 2, 2023
Sen. Fischer, Deb [R-NE]	R · NE		Jan 10, 2024

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Foreign Relations Committee	Senate	Referred To	Feb 15, 2023

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

International Affairs

Related Bills

Bill	Relationship	Last Action
118 HR 1102	Identical bill	Feb 17, 2023: Referred to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs.

Summary (as of Feb 15, 2023)

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. Furthermore, under U.S. policy, derivative refugee status may only extend to the spouse or minor child of such a Palestinian refugee.

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 disseminating certain rhetoric, such as calling for the destruction of Israel or describing Israelis as *occupiers* or *settlers*. Additionally, the State Department must certify that the UNRWA is (1) subject to comprehensive independent financial audits, and (2) not affiliated with any financial institutions complicit in money laundering or terror financing.

The State Department must also implement a plan to encourage other countries to align their UNRWA-related activities with U.S. policy objectives, including the phaseout of the UNRWA by resettling Palestinian refugees outside of Israel.

Actions Timeline

- **Feb 15, 2023:** Introduced in Senate
- **Feb 15, 2023:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations.