

By Senator Brandes

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Senate Memorial

A memorial to the Congress of the United States and the President of the United States, urging Congress and the President to repeal the 2001 Authorization for Use of Military Force.

WHEREAS, Article I of the United States Constitution grants the power and responsibility of declaring war to Congress, and

WHEREAS, our Founding Fathers understood the importance of vesting decisions about war in the legislative branch, as it represents the people who will bear the costs of conflict, and

WHEREAS, James Madison, the "Father of the Constitution," wrote to Thomas Jefferson in 1798, "the Executive is the branch of power most interested in war, and most prone to it. It has accordingly with studied care vested the question of war in the Legislature," and

WHEREAS, the terror attacks of September 11, 2001, justified a response by the United States in order to bring the perpetrators to justice, decimate al-Qaeda, and severely punish the Taliban, and

WHEREAS, on September 14, 2001, the 107th Congress passed the joint resolution entitled the Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF) which authorized the President to "use all necessary and appropriate force against those nations, organizations, or persons he determines planned, authorized, committed, or aided the terrorist attacks that occurred on September 11, 2001," and

WHEREAS, on September 18, 2001, the President of the United States signed the joint resolution into law and it is still in

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30 effect as of today, and

31 WHEREAS, the military has accomplished these principal
32 strategic objectives through the valiant sacrifices of
33 servicemembers, but the United States' continued nation-building
34 attempts in Afghanistan have resulted in the longest war in
35 American history, and

36 WHEREAS, less than a fifth of the current members of
37 Congress voted on the 2001 AUMF, and

38 WHEREAS, due to its broad and nonspecific language, the
39 2001 AUMF has been invoked more than 41 times to deploy our
40 troops to more than 19 countries, far exceeding the intended
41 scope of the act envisioned by its drafters, and

42 WHEREAS, the decision to put members of the Armed Forces in
43 harm's way is among the most important votes a legislator can
44 take, and

45 WHEREAS, Florida is home to 21 military bases, with an
46 estimated 68,000 active duty servicemembers and more than 1.5
47 million veterans, and

48 WHEREAS, the post-9/11 wars that the United States has
49 engaged in have carried a heavy price, including more than 7,000
50 servicemembers lost and more than 53,000 wounded, an estimated
51 1.1 million veterans who have developed service-connected
52 disabilities, and expenditures of more than \$6.4 trillion, and

53 WHEREAS, the costs of these open-ended conflicts include an
54 increase in the incidence of posttraumatic stress disorder,
55 faced by nearly a quarter of Iraq and Afghanistan veterans, and
56 veterans' suicides, which increased a shocking 43 percent
57 between 2005 and 2017, to nearly 17 daily, and

58 WHEREAS, nearly 70 percent of Americans support bringing

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59 the country's troops home from Afghanistan, according to polls
60 administered in 2020 by YouGov and the Charles Koch Institute,
61 and more than 73 percent of veterans favor withdrawal, according
62 to polling done in 2020 by Concerned Veterans for America, NOW,
63 THEREFORE,

64

65 Be It Resolved by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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67 That the Florida Senate urges Congress and the President of
68 the United States to repeal the 2001 Authorization for Use of
69 Military Force and to ensure that any future authorizations for
70 use of military force feature country- and mission-specific
71 language and automatic sunsets to require periodic review,
72 debate, and approval votes.

73

74 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Florida Senate calls upon
75 the President of the United States to continue to follow through
76 on the progress made since February 2020 toward a full
77 withdrawal from Afghanistan and to bring endless wars to a
78 conclusion.

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80 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Florida Senate reaffirms
81 its support of and pride in the nation's military forces who
82 have sworn to protect and defend our freedom and prosperity.

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84 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of State dispatch
85 copies of this memorial to the President of the United States,
86 the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the
87 United States House of Representatives, and each member of the
88 Florida delegation to the United States Congress.