

July 27, 2023

Representative Jim McGovern
370 Cannon Hob
Washington, D.C. 20515

Representative Nancy Mace
1728 Longworth Hob
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives McGovern and Mace:

We, the undersigned organizations, write to express our strong support for the National Security Reforms and Accountability Act (NSRAA) and in appreciation of your leadership in introducing this important legislation for the 118th Congress.

As organizations focused varyingly on war powers, emergency powers, arms transfers, the constitutional separation of powers, human rights and civil liberties, faith-based initiatives, and broader foreign policy priorities, we agree the NSRAA has the potential to be the most important recalibration of the balance of power between the President and Congress in decades.

The concentration of national security powers in the presidency is a problem that stretches back decades and implicates both parties. All Americans have a stake in decisions to go to war, bypass ordinary laws through emergency declarations, or sell weapons to foreign regimes. That is why our constitutional system of checks and balances called for the judgment of both Congress and the President on vital questions of national security.

As we prepare for this new era in U.S. foreign policy with an evident increasing propensity for conflicts among nations, we must recalibrate the balance of national security powers to restore the proper constitutional role of Congress. The NSRAA advances several fundamental principles on which we agree, including our shared belief:

- Military interventions, emergency declarations, and arms transfers are areas where the President may act only with authorization or approval from Congress.
- In genuine emergencies where Congress has no time to act, the President may proceed without congressional approval—but only for a limited period of time.
- These national security powers must be used for clearly defined purposes, subject to regular review by Congress, and only as a last resort.

The structural reforms outlined in the NSRAA are critical to restoring constitutional checks and balances and protecting and safeguarding our democracy.

We are committed to working with you to support and promote this important legislation and we thank you for your leadership.

Sincerely,

American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)
Brennan Center for Justice
Center for Civilians in Conflict (CIVIC)
Center for International Policy
Common Defense
Concerned Veterans for America
Demand Progress
FreedomWorks
Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL)
International Crisis Group
MPower Change Action Fund
Niskanen Center
Open Society Policy Center
Oxfam America
Project on Government Oversight
Protect Democracy
Public Citizen
Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft
Secure Families Initiative
VoteVets
Win Without War