

Congress votes down resolutions to restrict war on Iran

Patrick Martin
6 March 2026

In what has become a political ritual, both deeply degrading and entirely predictable, the Congress of the United States has refused to take any action to limit or bring to a halt the illegal and unconstitutional war launched by President Donald Trump against Iran.

The Senate voted 53-47 Wednesday against taking up a resolution under the War Powers Act to require Trump to get congressional approval for the war. The House voted against a similar resolution Thursday by 219-212.

Both votes were largely by party line, with one Republican senator and two Republican House members voting against Trump's war, while one Democratic senator, John Fetterman of Pennsylvania, and four Democratic House members—Henry Cuellar of Texas, Jared Golden of Maine, Greg Landsman of Ohio and Juan Vargas of California—voting for the war.

Even if the votes had gone the other way, there would have been no effect on the massive military violence unleashed on the Iranian people. Trump would veto the resolution, with no possibility of a two-thirds vote by both houses of Congress to override. All of those participating in the perfunctory debates and roll call votes were aware they were engaged in an exercise in political posturing.

Moreover, if Trump complied with the provisions of the War Powers Act—a largely toothless measure enacted after the Vietnam War—this would result in a congressional vote to authorize the war, as in the Persian Gulf War of 1991, and the later wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. The war on Iran would continue, but with a congressional stamp of approval as well as orders from the White House.

The Democratic leadership in the House and Senate made it clear from the beginning that they did not really oppose war with Iran, only objecting to Trump's

failure to consult with Congress and obtain authorization in advance. Virtually every Democrat who spoke in the debates began their remarks by denouncing the Iranian regime as evil, autocratic, terroristic and a threat to the United States—the very reasons given by Trump for launching the military action.

Senator Tim Kaine, the lead Senate sponsor of the resolution, began his remarks by declaring that he prayed for the US troops—not the Iranian people targeted by massive bombing. He only criticized the hypocrisy of the Republicans, who opposed a war powers resolution on US air strikes against fishing boats in the Caribbean on the grounds that these were “pinpricks” that did not rise to the level of war. Now, with the Pentagon unleashing an aerial onslaught twice as intense as the “shock and awe” attack on Iraq, the Republicans again opposed a war powers resolution.

In his closing remarks in the Senate debate, Minority Leader Chuck Schumer described the decision to go to war as haphazard and incompetent. Trump “bumbles America into another war” the American people did not want, he said. He cited the press briefing given by Secretary of War Pete Hegseth earlier in the day, not for its fascistic, Christian-nationalist language, but because he advanced “no plans, no strategy,” for what comes after the war.

After noting the multiple, shifting explanations for the war offered by the Trump administration, Schumer concluded: “This is madness. Americans spent the last two decades fighting and dying in the Middle East. Suffering and anguish that scarred an entire generation.”

Schumer did not refer to his own votes in 2001 and 2002 for Authorizations for the Use of Military Force in Afghanistan and Iraq, resolutions which are still in

effect today. The Democratic Party is just as responsible as the Republicans for the bloodbath of the past two decades. Nor, of course, did Schumer refer to the far greater consequences of these wars for the people of Iraq and Afghanistan. Both countries were destroyed as functioning societies.

At a press briefing before the House vote, Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries was asked whether he would support a supplementary Pentagon appropriation to rebuild stockpiles of bombs and other weaponry being depleted by the war. Jeffries responded equivocally, not rejecting the suggestion, only complaining that the war against Iran was a waste of US military resources.

Significantly, neither Senator Bernie Sanders nor Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, the supposed leaders of the mythical “left” wing of the Democratic Party, even bothered to speak in the debate. They sat silently, cast their votes along with nearly all other Democrats, and that was the end of their “opposition” to the mass murder taking place against the Iranian people.

Both have posted statements on social media, striking an anti-war posture, appealing to the position shared by the vast majority of the American people. But the purpose of such actions is not to actually bring a halt to imperialist wars—both Sanders and AOC have voted regularly for military appropriations and military aid to Israel—but to divert anti-war sentiment back within the framework of the Democratic Party and the corporate-controlled two-party system.



To contact the WSWWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

[wsws.org/contact](https://www.wsws.org/contact)