

H.R. 5917, Strengthening Tools to Counter the Use of Human Shields Act
As ordered reported by the House Committee on Foreign Affairs on December 13, 2023

By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars	2024	2024-2028	2024-2033
Direct Spending (Outlays)	*	*	*
Revenues	*	*	*
Increase or Decrease (-) in the Deficit	*	*	*
Spending Subject to Appropriation (Outlays)	*	*	not estimated
Increases <i>net direct spending</i> in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2034?	< \$2.5 billion	Statutory pay-as-you-go procedures apply?	Yes
Increases <i>on-budget deficits</i> in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2034?	No	Mandate Effects	
		Contains intergovernmental mandate?	No
		Contains private-sector mandate?	Yes, Under Threshold
* = between -\$500,000 and \$500,000.			

H.R. 5917 would reinstate sanctions against people who use civilians as human shields in conflict zones. The authority to impose those specific sanctions, which expired at the end of calendar year 2023, would be extended through calendar year 2030. The bill also would add members and supporters of the Palestine Islamic Jihad militant group who are involved in the use of civilians as human shields to the list of people who would be subject to mandatory sanctions.

H.R. 5917 would require the Administration to respond in writing to requests from certain Congressional committees regarding whether people identified by the committee should be subject to those sanctions. Lastly, the bill would require the Department of Defense to report to the Congress on how it addresses the use of human shields.

The Administration may sanction such persons and entities under other existing authorities. If enactment of the bill leads the Administration to broaden those sanctions, more people would be denied visas by the Department of State, resulting in an insignificant decrease in revenues from fees. Although most visa fees are retained by the Department of State and spent, some collections are deposited into the Treasury as revenues. Denying foreign nationals entry into the United States also would reduce direct spending on federal benefits



(emergency Medicaid or federal subsidies for health insurance, for example) for which those people might otherwise be eligible.

In addition, the bill would block transactions involving certain assets and property that are in the United States or that come under the control of people in the United States. People who violate those sanctions would be subject to civil or criminal monetary penalties. Those penalties are recorded as revenues, and a portion can be spent without further appropriation.

Using data about similar sanctions, CBO estimates that any additional sanctions would affect a small number of people; thus, enacting H.R. 5917 would have insignificant effects on revenues and direct spending, and would, on net, reduce deficits by insignificant amounts over the 2024-2033 period.

Based on the cost of reports similar to those required by H.R. 5917, CBO estimates that preparing those reports would cost less than \$500,000 over the 2024-2028 period. Such spending would be subject to the availability of appropriated funds.

H.R. 5917 would impose a private-sector mandate as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA) by reinstating and expanding the President's authority to impose sanctions against entities that use civilians as human shields in conflict zones. Sanctions would prohibit individuals or entities in the United States from engaging in transactions involving assets and property that have been frozen. Those transactions are otherwise permitted under current law. The cost of the mandate would be any income lost because of the prohibition. CBO expects that because a small number of people or entities would be affected, the loss of income from any incremental increase in restrictions imposed by the bill would be small as well. CBO estimates that the cost of the mandate would fall well below the annual threshold established in UMRA for private-sector mandates (\$198 million in 2023, adjusted annually for inflation).

H.R. 5917 contains no intergovernmental mandates as defined in UMRA.

The CBO staff contacts for this estimate are Sunita D'Monte (for federal costs) and Brandon Lever (for mandates). The estimate was reviewed by Christina Hawley Anthony, Deputy Director of Budget Analysis.

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