

House Approves Limits to Key Anti-Corruption Checks on U.S. Arms Sales

A statement from Transparency International U.S.
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Washington, D.C. – Last night, the U.S. House Foreign Affairs Committee approved H.R. 6609, the Foreign Military Sales Technical, Industrial, and Governmental Engagement for Readiness Act, or “TIGER” Act. The bill would significantly decrease the number of proposed U.S. arms sales that require congressional review before proceeding, by increasing the dollar thresholds that trigger the Defense and State Departments to notify Congress about such sales.

The legislation follows a [U.S. defense industry lobbying campaign](#) to expedite the delivery of U.S. weapons to foreign allies and partners. However, the State Department recently stated that they approve nearly 95% of U.S. Foreign Military Sales in 48 hours.

Coby Goodman, Senior Researcher to TI US and TI Defense and Security, released the following statement in response to the bill’s approval:

The TIGER Act would limit key executive, congressional, and public anti-corruption checks on U.S. arms sales. Congress plays a vital role in ensuring U.S. weapons are not used for repressive or corrupt purposes. It supports the executive branch in assessing whether a U.S. company’s political contributions to foreign parties or their side deals to win a sale could fuel corrupt, foreign political actors. Congressional notifications also provide key opportunities for the public in the United States and abroad to identify deals that suit politicians’ political goals rather than the countries’ security needs.

Beyond the increased corruption risk, the bill is unlikely to achieve its stated goal of quickening approvals. U.S. Representatives stated during the bill’s markup that more of the delays come from executive reviews than from congressional checks.

As the U.S. House of Representatives continues to debate this bill outside the committee, it is important to consider the associated risks of arms sales before limiting critical congressional oversight.

We encourage the U.S. House of Representatives to reject this bill if it comes to the floor for a vote.

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TI US is part of the world's largest coalition against corruption. In collaboration with national chapters in more than 100 countries, through research, policy development, and advocacy, we are leading the fight to turn our vision of a world free from corruption into reality.

Related Resources

- Read a [blog post](#) on how the TIGER Act would curb Congressional oversight on arms sales;
- Read [Holes In The Net: US Arms Export Control Gaps In Combatting Corruption](#).

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