

110TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 5488

To provide for the recovery and stability of Iraq, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 26, 2008

Ms. WATERS (for herself, Ms. LEE, and Ms. WOOLSEY) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

A BILL

To provide for the recovery and stability of Iraq, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Recovery and Stability
5 of Iraq Act of 2008”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND STATEMENT OF POLICY.**

7 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

8 (1) The crisis of displaced Iraqis represents a
9 profound threat to the regional stability of the Mid-
10 dle East and confronting the humanitarian crisis in

1 Iraq is a national security interest, as well as a pro-
2 found moral responsibility.

3 (2) Congress recognizes that violence in Iraq
4 has contributed to an enormous and urgent humani-
5 tarian crisis.

6 (3) At the end of 2007, the total number of dis-
7 placed Iraqis is estimated to be approximately
8 4,500,000 people: 2,400,000 internally displaced and
9 with nearly as many Iraqi refugees having fled the
10 country.

11 (4) In 2006 the Iraq Study Group Report rec-
12 ommended that “If the [refugee and internally dis-
13 placed persons] situation is not addressed, Iraq and
14 the region could be further destabilized, and the hu-
15 manitarian suffering could be severe”, and that
16 “The United States should take the lead in funding
17 assistance requests from the United Nations High
18 Commissioner for Refugees, and other humanitarian
19 agencies.”.

20 (b) STATEMENT OF POLICY.—It is the policy of the
21 United States Government, as a party to the 1967 Pro-
22 tocol to the 1951 United Nations Convention Relating to
23 the Status of Refugees, to support the rights of displaced
24 persons and scrupulously observe the principle of non-

1 refoulement, irrespective of whether or not such persons
2 have been formally recognized as refugees.

3 **SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT OF IRAQI DISPLACEMENT COOR-**
4 **DINATOR.**

5 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—

6 (1) IN GENERAL.—There is established within
7 the Executive Office of the President a position to
8 be known as the “Iraqi Displacement Coordinator”
9 (in this Act referred to as the “Coordinator”), who
10 shall report directly to the President on the state of
11 the Iraqi displacement situation. Not later than 30
12 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the
13 President shall appoint an individual to serve as the
14 Coordinator.

15 (2) IDENTIFICATION AND COORDINATION.—The
16 Coordinator shall identify programs that address the
17 humanitarian needs and requirements of displaced
18 Iraqis, and shall review, provide advice, support, and
19 coordinate with the heads of relevant departments
20 and agencies of the United States Government, the
21 Government of Iraq, countries hosting displaced
22 Iraqis in the region, the United Nations, and other
23 involved nongovernmental organizations (NGO’s)
24 and international organizations (IO’s).

1 (3) DUTIES.—The Coordinator shall be respon-
2 sible for—

3 (A) leading the United States Government
4 effort to respond to the crisis confronting dis-
5 placed Iraqis, including refugees and internally
6 displaced persons;

7 (B) ensuring to the greatest extent pos-
8 sible that the rights and legal protections of
9 displaced Iraqis are respected and enforced by
10 host countries;

11 (C) discouraging violations in the spirit of
12 the 1967 Protocol to the 1951 Convention Re-
13 lating to the Status of Refugees by any country
14 hosting displaced Iraqis, including a country
15 that is not a party to the Protocol or Conven-
16 tion;

17 (D) pursuing coordination and support for
18 host countries of displaced Iraqis, recognizing
19 that humanitarian action is non-political by na-
20 ture;

21 (E) ensuring proper management, imple-
22 mentation, transparency, and oversight by
23 agencies of the United States Government re-
24 sponsible for assistance projects for displaced
25 Iraqis;

1 (F) resolving policy and program disputes
2 among departments and agencies of the United
3 States Government with respect to assistance
4 projects for displaced Iraqis;

5 (G) reporting directly to the President with
6 respect to assistance for displaced Iraqis; and

7 (H) encourage to the greatest extent pos-
8 sible the Government of Iraq to authorize and
9 fully support a cabinet-level ministry position to
10 support displaced Iraqis.

11 (4) LONG-TERM PLANNING FOR DISPLACED
12 IRAQIS.—

13 (A) COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY.—The Co-
14 ordinator shall design, in consultation with con-
15 cerned governments in the region, a comprehen-
16 sive strategy to address the needs of displaced
17 Iraqis. The strategy should recognize the need
18 for immediate support for the most vulnerable
19 displaced Iraqis, as well as promote durable,
20 long-term solutions to the displacement crisis.
21 The strategy should recognize the unique needs
22 in each of Iraq's 18 provinces, and the needs of
23 countries hosting Iraqi refugees.

24 (B) PLANNING FOR THE RETURN OF DIS-
25 PLACED IRAQIS.—The Coordinator shall encour-

1 age the Government of Iraq, with the coordina-
2 tion of the United States Government, the
3 United Nations, appropriate foreign govern-
4 ments, and other interested parties to develop a
5 long-term plan for the voluntary, dignified, and
6 safe return of displaced Iraqis to their homes.
7 The plan should address issues of return, repa-
8 triation, and reintegration of displaced Iraqis,
9 including providing for proper procedures for
10 settling property disputes. Long-term planning
11 for returns shall not interfere with humani-
12 tarian assistance efforts for displaced Iraqis.

13 (b) REPORTING.—

14 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after
15 the date of the enactment of this Act and every 120
16 days thereafter, the Coordinator shall submit to the
17 President and Congress a report on United States
18 status of assistance efforts for displaced Iraqis.

19 (2) CONTENTS.—The report required under
20 this subsection shall include the following informa-
21 tion:

22 (A) A description of the strategy required
23 under subsection (a)(4).

24 (B) An assessment of the progress of the
25 strategy required under subsection (a)(4), and

1 any steps taken toward implementation of the
2 strategy.

3 (C) The distribution of duties and respon-
4 sibilities regarding assistance projects for dis-
5 placed Iraqis among the agencies of the United
6 States Government.

7 (D) An assessment of assistance efforts for
8 displaced Iraqis implemented by all relevant ac-
9 tors, including the United States Government,
10 the Iraqi Government, foreign governments, the
11 United Nations, international organizations,
12 and nongovernmental organizations.

13 (E) An evaluation of the Government of
14 Iraq's ability to implement assistance for dis-
15 placed Iraqis in an effective and equitable man-
16 ner.

17 (F) An overall evaluation of the humani-
18 tarian conditions confronting Iraq and displaced
19 Iraqis, and the various regional impacts of their
20 presence.

21 (G) An assessment of the budgetary needs
22 of the agencies United States Government in
23 meeting the goals of the comprehensive strat-
24 egy.

1 (H) Recommendations for preventing fu-
2 ture displacement in Iraq.

3 (c) AUTHORIZATION OF FUNDS.—There are author-
4 ized to be appropriated such funds as may be necessary
5 for fiscal years 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2013 for the
6 establishment and operating costs of the Iraqi Displace-
7 ment Coordinator within the Department of State.

8 **SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.**

9 In this Act—

10 (1) DISPLACED IRAQIS.—The term “displaced
11 Iraqis” means Iraqis who have become refugees or
12 internally displaced persons.

13 (2) INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSON.—The
14 term “internally displaced person” means a person
15 who has been forced or obliged to flee or to leave
16 such person’s home or place of last habitual resi-
17 dence, in particular as a result of or in order to
18 avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of gen-
19 eralized violence, violations of human rights, or nat-
20 ural or human-made disasters, and who have not
21 crossed an internationally-recognized state border.

22 (3) NON-REFOULEMENT.—The term “non-
23 refolement” has the meaning given such term in
24 the 1951 United Nations Convention Relating to the
25 Status of Refugees.

1 (4) REFUGEE.—The term “refugee” means a
2 person who is outside the country of such person’s
3 nationality or, in the case of a person having no na-
4 tionality, is outside the country in which such person
5 last habitually resided, and who is unable or unwill-
6 ing to return to, and is unable or unwilling to avail
7 himself or herself of the protection of, that country
8 because of persecution or a well-founded fear of per-
9 secution on account of race, religion, nationality,
10 membership in a particular social group, or political
11 opinion.

○