



Senate Passes \$95 Billion Foreign Military Aid Bill

Description

WORLD : On Tuesday night, the Senate passed a \$95 billion spending bill that includes military aid for Ukraine, Israel, and Taiwan in a vote of 79-18. The bill has already passed through the House and now heads to President Biden's desk for his signature.

Earlier in the day, the Senate rejected an effort by some senators to add amendments to the legislation in a vote of 48-50. The legislation, which also includes a provision that could ban TikTok, was passed through the House as four separate bills but was combined into one in the Senate.

The legislation includes \$61 billion for the proxy war in Ukraine, much of which will go to US weapons makers to replenish US stockpiles. It includes over \$9 billion in economic aid in the form of repayable loans, but Ukraine is not actually expected to pay it back.

Another provision will authorize the US to sell off frozen Russian assets, which could be used to pay the loans. CNN previously reported that the Biden administration will also be able to cancel the debt.

The bill also includes \$26 billion to support Israel. About \$9 billion will go toward humanitarian aid in Gaza and other places, while the remaining \$17 billion will go toward military aid to support the slaughter of Palestinians in Gaza and replenish Israeli air defenses. The aid is on top of the \$3.8 billion in military assistance that Israel receives from the US each year.

Another \$8 billion will go toward military aid for Taiwan and other spending in the Indo-Pacific region to prepare for a future war with China.

It includes \$1.9 billion to replenish weapons sent to Taiwan and regional countries and \$2 billion in Foreign Military Financing, a State Department program that gives foreign governments money to purchase US weapons. Over \$3.3 billion will go toward submarine infrastructure in the region.

The massive spending on foreign military aid was put forward by House Speaker Mike Johnson (R-LA), who previously killed a deal that would have included similar foreign aid spending and billions for border security and changes to migrant policies.

Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) hailed the bipartisan cooperation in remarks on the floor. "Today's outcome yet confirms another thing we've stressed from the beginning of this Congress.

In divided government, the only way to ever get things done is bipartisanship," he said. "I thank leader McConnell, as I've mentioned before, working hand in hand with us, not letting partisanship get in the way.

I thank Speaker Johnson, who rose to the occasion, in his own words, that he had to do the right thing, despite the enormous political pressure on him."

On Monday, former President Donald Trump defended Johnson's action and the lack of border measures in the legislation by pointing to the slim majority Republicans have over Democrats in the House due to recent resignations.

"Remember, the Speakership we're talking about has, you know, we're a majority by one. One vote. And you can't really get too tough when — Look, we all want to be tough guys and all, and I have a lot of friends, and frankly I have friends on both sides," Trump said on Monday.

"You know, if you look at the vote, a lot of Republicans, a lot of good Republicans, voted for it. But Mike is in there and he's trying, and some people were disappointed, and a lot of people were very disappointed that nothing happened with the border. I'll straighten out the border."

by Dave DeCamp

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