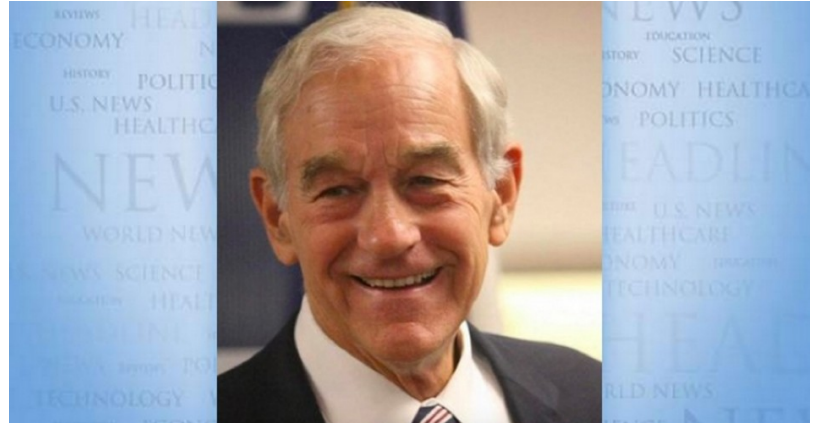




Written by [Ron Paul](#) on September 18, 2017

## Rand Paul's Senate Vote Rolls Back the Warfare State

Last week, Senator Rand Paul (R-KY) reminded Congress that in matters of war, they have the authority and the responsibility to speak for the American people. Most Senators were not too happy about the reminder, which came in the form of a forced vote on whether to allow a vote on his amendment to repeal the Afghanistan and Iraq war resolutions of 2001 and 2002.



It wasn't easy. Sen. Paul had to jump through hoops just to get a vote on whether to have a vote.

That is how bad it is in Congress! Not only does Congress refuse to rein in presidents who treat Constitutional constraints on their war authority as mere suggestions rather than as the law of the land, Congress doesn't even want to be reminded that they alone have war authority.

Congress doesn't even want to vote on whether to vote on war!

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In the end, Sen. Paul did not back down and he got his vote. Frankly, I was more than a little surprised that nearly 40 percent of the Senate voted with Rand to allow a vote on repealing authority for the two longest wars in US history. I expected less than a dozen "no" votes on tabling the amendment and was very pleasantly surprised at the outcome.

Last week, Rand said, "I don't think that anyone with an ounce of intellectual honesty believes that these authorizations from 16 years ago and 14 years ago ... authorized war in seven different countries."

Are more Senators starting to see the wars his way? We can only hope so. As polls continue to demonstrate, the American people have grown tired of our interventionist foreign policy, which burns through trillions of dollars while making the world a more dangerous place rather than a safer place.

Some might argue that losing the vote was a defeat. I would disagree. For the first time in years we saw US Senators on the Senate Floor debating whether the president should have authority to take the US to war anywhere he pleases. Even with just the small number of votes I thought we might have gotten on the matter, that alone would have been a great victory. But getting almost 40 percent of the Senate to vote our way? I call that a very good start!

The first step toward rebalancing the separation of powers is for Congress to re-assert its authority and responsibility for declaring war. To this point, Congress has preferred to transfer its war responsibility to the president.

The second step, once Congress understands its obligations, is to convince our representatives that war was not designed to be the first choice in foreign policy, but rather to be the last resort when we are under attack or when a direct attack is imminent!

Just because Congress decides to approve the use of force does not mean that the war is just, justified,



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or wise. Congress is just as susceptible to war propaganda as the rest of America and unfortunately it is dominated by the false opinion that if you are not enthusiastic about US military solutions to disputes overseas then you are not being tough enough. In fact, it takes far more strength to exercise restraint in the face of the constant war propaganda and disinformation coming from the media and the neocons.

We have achieved a small victory last week, thanks to Senator Paul. But we still have a lot of work to do! We must keep the pressure on and convert more to the cause of peace and prosperity!

*Ron Paul is a former U.S. congressman from Texas. This article originally appeared at the [Ron Paul Institute for Peace and Prosperity](#) and is reprinted here with permission.*



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