



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on July 12, 2018

Unmasking Antifa Act Proposed in U.S. House; Left Responds Accordingly

Several lawmakers in Washington have proposed a bill known as the “Unmasking Antifa Act of 2018” (H.R. 6054) that would criminalize “certain offenses while in disguise.” Predictably, the response from the Left has been less than positive.

Proposed by Representative Dan Donovan (R-N.Y.), Representative Peter King (R-N.Y.), Representative Paul Gosar (R-Ariz.), and Representative Ted Budd (R-N.C.), the bill could imprison anyone guilty of wearing a mask while threatening, injuring, intimidating, or interfering with the “free exercise or enjoyment of any right or privilege” for up to 15 years.



The bill reads: “Whoever, whether or not acting under color of law, while in disguise, including while wearing a mask, injures, oppresses, threatens, or intimidates any person in any State, Territory, Commonwealth, Possession, or District in the free exercise or enjoyment of any right or privilege secured to him by the Constitution or laws of the United States, or because of his having so exercised the same, shall be fined under this title, imprisoned not more than 15 years, or both.”

The bill was proposed last month but was recently bolstered by a push from conservative commentator Mike Cernovich on Tuesday, the Epoch Times reports.

Many states already have “anti-masking” laws similar to the “Unmasking Antifa Act,” most of which were passed to address violence from the Ku Klux Klan. And yet, while much of the Left would applaud such a law in the case of the KKK, their tolerance for Antifa’s behavior against conservatives prevents them from viewing the group in the same light.

But Antifa is not the innocent group of demonstrators that the Left attempts to claim it is. Just this month, four people were injured in Portland, Oregon, after Antifa crashed a permitted march by the right-wing group Patriot Prayer. Tensions escalated quickly, and the police were forced to cancel the permit and declare the situation a riot.

Antifa has become something of an anti-hero to the Left because the movement seeks to target those they label as “fascists.” However, members have also used [violence and intimidation](#) against conservatives and pro-Trump groups, as well, despite their having no connection to white supremacy groups. This includes violent protests on the day of Trump’s Inauguration, when members of Antifa rioted in downtown Washington, D.C.

Even groups that have been labeled as “fascists” and “white supremacists” have the right to congregate peacefully and exercise their freedom of speech under the U.S. Constitution. But Antifa has attempted to take the law into their own hands by infringing on the rights of these groups and has broken the law



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numerous times in the process.

And the anarchist group does not limit its targets to political activists. Last month, a Nebraska affiliate of Antifa tweeted out a list of names and photos of nearly 1,600 ICE employees.

But liberals and the Left have looked upon Antifa rather favorably. Following the riots in Charlottesville, Virginia, and Berkeley, California, last year, conservatives criticized what they called a double-standard from liberals and the media on the violent behaviors of Antifa versus that of right-wing groups.

“After Charlottesville, the media rightly demanded that President Trump and all Republicans condemn the neo-Nazis and the KKK,” Marc Thiessen, a former speechwriter for President George W. Bush and a fellow at the conservative-leaning American Enterprise Institute, wrote in an op-ed for [the Washington Post](#). “So where are the calls for Democrats to condemn Antifa — and the brutal public condemnation for those who fail to do so?”

In an op-ed published on Fox News, former House Speaker Newt Gingrich observed the media’s double-standard in their coverage of left-wing and right-wing violence. “Members of the elite media have failed to condemn this violence — and instead have worked tirelessly to mute and downplay terror being committed by fellow liberals,” he wrote.

The media’s response to the Unmasking Antifa Act has been predictably negative. Outlets such as the Huffington Post presented a scathing view of the act. “Anyone who doubts the speed with which paranoid authoritarianism is becoming the dominant worldview of today’s GOP should read the Unmasking Antifa Act, a short bill recently introduced in Congress by four House Republicans,” HuffPo’s Zach Carter wrote.

And the *Daily Beast* reporter Kelly Weill spent most of her [piece](#) defending Antifa, including its use of masks.

Of course, left-wing groups have responded even more harshly to the bill, outright accusing it of being pro-fascist. “This bill explicitly targets the tactics used by anti-fascists to protect themselves against the violence and harassment of the far-right groups who routinely target them,” said Janine Renee Cunningham, a member of New York’s Metropolitan Anarchist Coordinating Council, in a statement to *The Independent*. She added: “As a result, it should be considered tacit support of not only fascism, but also dangerous alt-right groups in this country.”

Generally, however, mainstream media outlets have virtually ignored the bill, which currently sits in the House Committee on the Judiciary.

Regardless of one’s opinion of Antifa, however, the fact remains that this bill is dangerous. It represents an attempt by the federal government to involve itself in what should be a state or local criminal matter. If cities, counties, or states want to pass anti-masking laws (which, as noted above, many already have), that’s fine. Constitutionally speaking, though, the federal government has no authority over such matters, and such a law would be another step toward a national police force. Nationalization of the police is not a good thing, even if it’s used to combat unappealing groups such as Antifa, since such a “national” criminal code could easily be used against anyone opposed to federal overreach. Police need to be kept local and independent.



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Image: Screenshot of a YouTube video [produced by the Trump Fan Network](#)



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