



Written by [Joe Wolverton, II, J.D.](#) on September 15, 2012

Sen. Paul Calls for End of Aid to Pakistan, Egypt, Libya

Pointing to recent attacks on American consulates and embassies — including the murder of U.S. Libyan Ambassador Christopher Stevens — Senator Rand Paul (R-Ky.) on September 13 offered [an amendment to the foreign aid bill](#) that would deny funds to Pakistan, Egypt, and Libya.

Paul's amendment is a revised version of a measure he [put forward in July that would have held up aid to Pakistan pending the release of Dr. Shakil Afridi](#).



Dr. Afridi is believed to have played a vital role in the manhunt that led to the locating and killing of Osama bin Laden. He is being held in a Pakistani prison on a 33-year sentence. Afridi ran a vaccination program that was allegedly just a front for a CIA operation to obtain a DNA sample that would verify bin Laden's presence in Pakistan. A senior CIA official [told the New York Times](#) that the effort ultimately was unsuccessful.

Following a debate on the Senate floor with Senate Democrat Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.), Senator Paul changed his tack and called for the money that would have been sent to the three countries to be diverted to the veterans jobs bill instead.

The total amount of foreign aid to Pakistan, Libya, and Egypt is roughly \$4 billion annually. Sen. Paul's revised amendment would strip that money from those three countries and send \$2 billion of the money saved and add it to the veterans job bill. According to a statement released by Sen. Paul's office, the remaining \$2 billion would "go to deficit reduction."

[In a statement](#), Paul said,

I urge Sen. Reid to do the right thing for taxpayers and veterans: To send a message to countries that our aid can't be taken for granted, and to stand up for our troops abroad now, and those who have returned home after serving. He can do all of this by allowing a vote on my amendment. My amendment would halt all foreign aid to Pakistan, Egypt, and Libya, and would use those funds to triple the size of the veterans jobs bill. The only thing now standing in the way of this is the Democratic Senate Leadership.

"I do this because I think it's important for our allies to act like allies," Paul said during debate on the measure late Wednesday night.

In response to Paul's statement, [Politico reports](#) that Reid said he disagreed and that "I think my friend from Kentucky should have run for Secretary of State rather than the Senate."

Democrats accused their Republican colleagues of using the [Veterans Job Corps Act \(S. 3457\)](#) to "play party politics," the Politico piece says.

While speaking at the [Value Voters Summit](#) taking place at the Omni Shoreham Hotel in Washington, D.C., Representative Michele Bachmann received a standing ovation when she echoed Paul's sentiments, declaring, "We will immediately put an end to the United States taxpayer gravy train!"



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A vote on Senator Paul's amendment has been delayed by a procedural vote taken late Thursday night. [Roll Call reports](#) that senators agreed to put off until next Wednesday procedural votes scheduled for the pre-dawn hours on Friday.

According to the *Roll Call* article, the new schedule will give Sen. Reid time to "avoid a vote" on Sen. Paul's amendment. "I respect the interest of the Senator from Kentucky in relation to Pakistan, Egypt, Libya, but every now and then the Senate should be able to focus on a small good thing," *Roll Call* quotes Reid as saying on the Senate floor.

For his part, Paul says he's fine with the new time frame for the vote on his amendment to the Veterans Job Corps Act. When presented with the new schedule, Paul said he needed only 15 minutes for a vote on his proposal. "I am more than happy to work with the majority. I care deeply about the veterans. I care deeply about housing and helping the veterans who have fought for their country. But this is about whether we as a country and the American taxpayers will be asked to send good money after bad to allies that are not acting like allies," Paul said.

Opposition to Paul's amendment came not only from Democrats, but from some members of his own party, as well. [A reliable beater of the war drums, Senator Lindsey Graham](#) (R-S.C.) railed against the potential harm to Pakistan should Paul's amendment be approved and warned of the rise of "extremists" that could follow if the money supply is cut off. "Pakistan is a country with nuclear weapons that is hanging by a thread. I think it would be a very bad idea," Graham said. "They've opened up the supply routes; they have been helpful in some areas."

"We live in dangerous times, and I am very worried about the possibility of a nuclear-armed Pakistan falling into extremist hands," he added.

Paul's fellow senator from Kentucky, Mitch McConnell, joined Graham in warning of the danger of turning our backs on Pakistan, Libya, and Egypt:

This is a moment for Americans to show our closest allies in the Middle East that we unequivocally stand with them. No mixed signals. Neither Israel, nor any of our allies, should ever have any reason to doubt that resolve.

In [a speech calling for a vote on his amendment](#), Sen. Paul painted a different picture of the situation in Pakistan and their role as an ally:

I'm not saying don't have relations with Pakistan. Many in Pakistan have been sympathetic to our country. Many in Pakistan have helped our country. But many in Pakistan with a wink and a nod look at us, take our money and laugh at us. They cash our check and they laugh at us.

Senator Paul's amendment is [one of 60 attached to the veterans job bill](#). Pending additional procedural maneuvers, senators will vote on the bill and the amendments Wednesday, September 19.

Photo of Sen. Rand Paul: AP Images

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