



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on September 1, 2020

Indiana Congressman Introduces Bill to Strip Rioters of Unemployment Benefits

Representative Jim Banks (R-Ind.) introduced the “Support Peaceful Protest Act” on August 28, a bill that would require arrested rioters who were caught committing crimes such as acts of violence, looting, or vandalism to pay for the cost of federal policing of the riot and also be ineligible for federal unemployment assistance.

A news release posted on Banks’ House website on the day he introduced the legislation quoted his statement:



Antifa thugs are descending on suffering communities, disrupting peaceful protests and leaving violence, looting and vandalism in their wake. They turned Milwaukee, Seattle and Portland into warzones, and now they’re moving the chaos to Kenosha, Wisconsin. Who knows which community is next?... Due to enhanced federal benefits, taxpayers are giving wages to jobless rioters that are destroying our communities. We need to cut them off from their funding and make them feel the full financial consequences of their actions.

“If you’re convicted of a crime that caused more manpower and law enforcement officers to deal with it, then perhaps you should be on the hook to pay for that,” Banks told WIBC-FM in Indianapolis.

Banks stressed that he did support *peaceful* protests, telling WIBC: “There are a lot of Americans who are showing up at peaceful protests,” adding that his bill is a “common sense” step to add some “accountability for some of these angry mob protests that are occurring around our country. The people who are acting out in violence are very different from those who are showing up peacefully and it’s easy to see the difference.”

Banks emphasized that while the right to engage in peaceful protest is part of being an American, causing harm to another person or defacing federal property is not acceptable.

“We should take those tax dollars away and say that those who break the law in violent protest shouldn’t receive taxpayer dollars,” he said.

During a *Fox & Friends Weekend* interview on August 30, Banks said that he decided to sponsor the bill after an older couple, who are his constituents, were harassed by protesters after leaving the Republican National Convention at the White House on the evening of August 27.

“When I saw this happen to friends of mine walking out of the White House on a historic night, they came to see the president, one of the best presidents in a lifetime speak at the White House, they never could have imagined what they would be met with when they left the White House that night,” Banks said.

The most notable individuals attacked by the violent protestors after the RNC were Senator Rand Paul (R-Ky.) and his wife, Kelley — a frightening event captured on widely shown video.



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Paul described the attack in a tweet, saying: “Just got attacked by an angry mob of over 100, one block away from the White House. Thank you to @DCPoliceDept for literally saving our lives from a crazed mob.”

Image: alexsl/iStock/Getty Images Plus

Warren Mass has served The New American since its launch in 1985 in several capacities, including marketing, editing, and writing. Since retiring from the staff several years ago, he has been a regular contributor to the magazine. Warren writes from Texas and can be reached at wmass@thenewamerican.com.

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