



Written by [Joe Wolverton, II, J.D.](#) on March 8, 2016

## Rand Paul to Force a Vote Blocking Sale of More F-16s to Pakistan

A resolution filed by Senator Rand Paul (R-Ky.) will likely come up for a vote this week. The measure would block the planned sale of upgraded F-16 fighter planes to the government of Pakistan.

*The Hill* is reporting that the former GOP presidential candidate will use a provision of the Arms Export Control Act (AECA) to force a floor vote on his resolution.

A report published by the Congressional Research Service explains that Paul must wait 10 days before launching his legislative attempt to block the United States from supplying high-tech aviation to Pakistan.

Paul's resolution specifically prohibits the sale of 16 F-16 fighter jets, as well as 14 Helmet Mounted Cueing Systems (JHMCS), eight N/APG-68(V)9 radars, and eight ALQ-211(V)9 Advanced Integrated Defensive Electronic Warfare Suites (AIDEWS).

Applicable sections of the AECA permits only limited debate (10 hours) on the resolution, but that's not quite the end of the story procedurally.

In an interview with the blog Rare, Paul reaffirmed his commitment to blocking "any arm sales to Pakistan" until Islamabad releases Dr. Shakil Afridi and Asia Bibi, a Christian woman being held in prison for violating the country's strict blasphemy laws.

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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.

"Pakistan has been an uncertain ally as far as the War on Terrorism goes," Paul said, as reported by Rare. "We have no business sending hundreds of millions of dollars overseas, and fueling an arms race at the same time."

A similar effort by Senator Paul in 2012 to stop the sale of weapons to Pakistan, Egypt, and Libya was rejected in the Senate by a vote of 81-10.

The United States has been selling F-16s to Pakistan for use in the Pakistani Air Force (PAF) since 1983, and Pakistan currently possesses 84 of the aircraft, with 76 of those in service. Pakistan ordered upgraded F-16s several years ago, and Paul's resolution would stop the most recent installment from being sent out.





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The White House insists that the sale of the weapons systems is necessary to help a trusted ally in the War on Terror protect itself from militants who would see the Islamic nation sever ties with the United States. “[A] resilient U.S.-Pakistan partnership is vital to regional and global security,” reads a Fact Sheet published by the Obama administration.

In total, the United States has committed to send more than \$6 billion to Pakistan aimed at “fostering a deeper, stronger, more multi-dimensional partnership to cooperatively tackle the global challenges of the 21st century.”

The money sent to the government of Pakistan, in addition to the sale of military materiel, is earmarked for the following programs and projects in the country:

- “the construction and rehabilitation of a number of hydropower dams and thermal power plants”
- “facilitating Pakistan’s access to international liquefied natural gas (LNG)”
- “financing and insurance for projects in Pakistan”
- “the construction and rehabilitation of approximately 1,000 kilometers of roads, including major trade routes between Pakistan and Afghanistan”
- “the development of the Central Asia South Asia Electricity Transmission and Trade Project (CASA-1000) project, which will transmit 1300 MW of electricity from Central Asia to Afghanistan and Pakistan, and supports the CASA-1000 Secretariat”
- “over \$150 million in financing available for small businesses”
- “increased incomes for more than 800,000 farm households”
- “help producers and processors increase export sales”
- “\$250 million to assist in the relief, recovery, and rehabilitation of the [Federally Administered Tribal Areas]”
- “increase women’s entrepreneurship and employment”
- “Gender Equity Program promotes women’s access to information, justice, and economic opportunities and helps address and prevent gender-based violence”
- “create important intellectual and business links between U.S. and Pakistani institutions”
- “the Merit and Needs Based Scholarship Program, which provides scholarships to talented but under resourced candidates to attend university in Pakistan, with over 40 percent awarded to women”
- “nearly \$34 million in collaborative research projects”
- “facilitate professional development for faculty, curriculum reform, joint research, and peer-to-peer interaction”
- “foster long-term research collaboration, industry linkages and innovation, and university governance, prepare approximately 1,000 Pakistani graduates for employment, and provide scholarships”
- “enable Pakistanis in higher education to travel to the United States to learn about the U.S. community college system”
- “funding reading programs to improve the reading skills of 1.9 million primary grade students”
- “the construction of state-of-the-art Faculty of Education buildings at 16 universities”



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- “English language training to 9,400 underprivileged Pakistani teenagers countrywide”
- “bring underprivileged Pakistani high school girls to explore education and career options at top U.S. universities”
- “provide two years of after-school English language instruction to more than 10,000 Pakistani adolescents from disadvantaged backgrounds”
- “strengthen human rights, advance rule of law reforms, combat intolerance, strengthen civil society, enhance media capacity, and safeguard media autonomy”
- “support for legal aid centers for vulnerable populations, strengthening university journalism programs for media professionals, and enhancing the skills of provincial women parliamentarians”
- “build capacity in the public and veterinary health workforce, advance an effective, safe, and secure laboratory system, counter antimicrobial resistance, integrate health surveillance information systems, and enhance multi-sectoral emergency response capability for epidemic threats”
- “enhance civilian law enforcement and justice institutions’ response to serious crime and terrorism”
- “address the needs of Pakistan’s judiciary, prosecution services, and corrections system”
- “sponsor exchanges and provide training for over 1,000 Pakistani prosecutors and 212 judges and train over 130 corrections and policy officials”
- “critical equipment and training to enhance key counterinsurgency and counterterrorism capabilities such as precision strike, air mobility, and counter improvised explosive devices”
- “provides Pakistan’s military with training to promote regional stability, strengthen its counterterrorism and defense capabilities, enhance professionalism, promote human rights, and improve civilian-military relations”
- “conduct military staff exchanges and joint training exercises to enhance coordination and interoperability between our militaries”
- “foster a stable Pakistan, increase capacity to counter violent extremist narratives, and reduce the number of individuals in Pakistan who accept the legitimacy of narratives that justify the use of violence”
- “documentary films, interfaith dialogues, and madrassa training”
- “training in interfaith harmony and peacebuilding”
- “share technical expertise and equipment to improve Pakistan’s ability to detect and defeat [improvised explosive devices]”

Notably, the White House’s Fact Sheet listing the preceding programs and policies has left an important item off that extensive inventory: a single syllable of the U.S. Constitution wherein the federal government is authorized to spend a single penny on foreign aid — any foreign aid.

Senator Paul expects a vote on his resolution this week.

*Photo: Pakistani Air Force F-16s in 2010*



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