



Elie Wiesel Genocide and Atrocities Prevention Act of 2017

[The Elie Wiesel Genocide and Atrocities Prevention Act of 2017](#) (S.1158) was introduced by a bipartisan group of 22 Senators, led by Senators Ben Cardin (D-Md.) and Todd Young (R-Ind.) A current list of co-sponsors can be found [here](#).

The Act would establish a Mass Atrocities Task Force within the State Department to monitor, analyze and address atrocities worldwide by coordinating multiple agencies across the U.S. government; identifying gaps in U.S. policy; and consulting with NGOs and other groups dedicated to atrocity prevention. The bill also recommends that the Director of National Intelligence include atrocity crime information in their annual report to Congress on U.S. national security threats, and authorizes training for U.S. Foreign Service Officers in recognizing and reporting on early signs of atrocities and transitional justice measures. The legislation also authorizes the Complex Crises Fund, which supports U.S. prevention of or response to atrocities. A section-by-section summary of the bill is [at this link](#).

Senator Cardin: “Our values and national security interests require us to ensure that the United States utilizes the full arsenal of diplomatic, economic, and legal tools to take meaningful action before atrocities occur.”

Senator Young : “The United States has a moral and strategic imperative to help prevent and respond to acts of genocide and other mass atrocities, and this legislation would ensure the U.S. government is better prepared to fulfill this serious responsibility.”

Senator Tillis. “The rise of terrorist organizations like ISIL and al-Shabaab that are committing genocide against minority ethnic and religious groups has created a desperate need for American leadership and moral clarity.”

Senator Durbin: “Elie Wiesel taught us that ‘silence encourages the tormenter, never the tormented.’ We cannot turn our backs on suffering wherever it occurs, or we will again be judged by history.”

Clint Williamson, former Ambassador-at-large for war crimes: This Act will “defend our core values as a nation and protect our national security interests by countering instability around the world that arises from the commission of mass atrocities.

Stephen Rapp, former Ambassador-at-large for war crimes: “This bill crucially strengthens the capacity of the U.S. government to anticipate and respond to mass atrocities. It promotes our core values and protects our national security by preventing the massive crimes that can destabilize whole regions and create breeding grounds for terrorism.

David Scheffer, former Ambassador-at-large for war crimes: “The cost of atrocity prevention will always be far less than the costs of massive military interventions....”