

U.S. House of Representatives set to vote on bill of fines or prison for boycott of Israel



Washington, May 3 (RHC)-- The U.S. House of Representatives is set to vote on a controversial bill that proposes fines or prison terms for Americans participating in boycotts of Israel or Israeli settlements, promoted by international governmental organizations such as the United Nations or the European Union.

The House is scheduled to vote Monday on the contentious anti-boycott act, which seeks to penalize American citizens with fines up to \$1 million or prison terms as long as 20 years for boycotting the Israeli regime.

Sponsored by pro-Israel congressmen Mike Lawler and Josh Gottheimer, the bill will broaden the U.S. anti-boycott law by targeting voluntary, values-based political actions undertaken by American citizens. The underlying objective is to shield the Israeli regime from non-violent international pressure campaigns, notably the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions movement (BDS).

Rights groups warned that the legislation will criminalize constitutionally protected political expression. The move, according to rights groups, is part of a broader push by the US government to suppress opposition to Israeli genocide, apartheid, and illegal settlement expansion, under the guise of fighting anti-Semitism.

The original act was introduced in 2024. Back then, the Republican-controlled Congress passed this bill with broad bipartisan support, but the Senate Democrats blocked the legislation. Now that Republicans control the Senate as well, there is a significant chance that the act will pass both Congress and Senate.

The American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), the most powerful Israeli lobby group in the US, said it "strongly supports" the act. The Foundation for Defense of Democracies (FDD) Action has already supported the legislation and broader congressional campaigns to push back against anti-Israeli boycotts.

The majority of anti-Israeli boycotts aim to force the regime to end its genocidal war on Gaza that has taken the lives of more than 52,500 Palestinians and injured at least 118,000, most of whom are children and women.

The Israeli regime has put Gaza on a total blockade for 2 months and barred the entry of all humanitarian aid, including food, which according to the UN's Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC), has driven the territory's 2.3 million population toward famine.

[SOURCE: teleSUR and NEWS AGENCIES]

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