

SENATE STAFF ANALYSIS AND ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

BILL: SM 2818

SPONSOR: Senator Haridopolos

SUBJECT: Protection From Terrorists/Weapons

DATE: March 18, 2004 REVISED: 03/23/04 _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	<u>Dodson</u>	<u>Skelton</u>	<u>HP</u>	<u>Fav/1 amendment</u>
2.	_____	_____	<u>RC</u>	_____
3.	_____	_____	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____	_____
6.	_____	_____	_____	_____

I. Summary:

This Memorial requests the Florida Congressional Delegation’s support for the President’s effort to protect the United States from terrorists and prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

II. Present Situation:

The proliferation of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons poses a grave threat to United States citizens and military forces.¹ The discovery that the al Qaeda terrorist network has pursued the development and acquisition of weapons of mass destruction has increased attention on chemical and biological weapons proliferation. According to the U.S. Department of Defense, at least 13 countries are pursuing biological weapons and at least 16 states have chemical weapons programs.²

After the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks and the subsequent anthrax attacks on government officials and members of the media, the federal government pursued measures to respond to the threat of chemical and biological weapons. On June 12, 2002, President Bush signed the Public Health Security and Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-188). This act is designed to improve the ability of the United States to prevent, prepare for, and respond to bioterrorism and other public health emergencies.

¹ “Proliferation” refers to the actions of a country or sub-national entity to transfer, develop, or acquire nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons and the means of their delivery. “Combating Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction,” Report of the Commission to Assess the Organization of the Federal Government to Combat the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, July 14, 1999.

² Information according to Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, as reported in “Chemical and Biological Weapons Proliferation at a Glance,” Arms Control Association, September, 2002.

The United States and other members of a body known as the Australia Group recommended new measures to bolster their national export controls on biological weapons-related goods and technology in June 2002. The Group meets annually to discuss ways in which the national level export licensing measures of its 34 participants can collectively be made more effective in ensuring would-be proliferators are unable to obtain necessary inputs for CBW programs, which are banned under international law.³

In December 2002, President Bush issued The National Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction. The strategy focuses on ensuring that the U.S. military and appropriate civilian agencies be prepared to deter and defend against a full range of possible WMD employment scenarios. The strategy is also aimed at preventing states and terrorists from acquiring WMD and missiles and ensuring compliance with relevant international agreements, including the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, the Chemical Weapons Convention, and the Biological Weapons Convention. Finally, this strategy addresses the nation's ability to respond to the use of WMD against U.S. citizens, military forces, and those of the nation's allies.

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

This memorial expresses legislative findings that the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, showed that new deadly challenges have emerged from rogue states and terrorists. The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction has fundamentally changed the nature of threats against the United States and its allies. A coordinated chemical, biological, or nuclear attack against the U.S. will cost the lives of millions of innocent Americans and others and will damage the economy of the world and the nation.

The memorial finds that the U.S. cannot allow radical regimes that support terrorism to acquire or manufacture illegal weapons of mass destruction and provide them to terrorist organizations. If the U.S. does not meet this threat abroad, Americans may be forced to fight them in this country. The U.S. asserts the right to defend the country or its allies if the world community refuses to enforce the rule of law to deter or remove future threats from tyrannical regimes and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

The Legislature of the State of Florida requests that Florida's Representatives and Senators in Congress support President Bush and his efforts to keep the U.S. and its allies safe from terrorists, dangerous authoritarian regimes, and weapons of mass destruction.

The Legislature further resolves that a copy of this memorial be delivered to the President of the United States, the President of the U.S. Senate, the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, and each member of the Florida delegation to Congress.

³ "The Australia Group: An Introduction," website of the Australia Group, <http://www.australiagroup.net/en/intro.htm>.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

V. Economic Impact and Fiscal Note:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

C. Government Sector Impact:

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Amendments:

On March 23, 2004, the Committee on Home Defense, Public Security, and Ports adopted an amendment to SM 2818 to correct a typographical error.

This Senate staff analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's sponsor or the Florida Senate.
