To amend the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020, to make improvements relating to cooperation between the United States and Israel to counter unmanned aerial systems, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. Gottheimer introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on

A BILL

To amend the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020, to make improvements relating to cooperation between the United States and Israel to counter unmanned aerial systems, and for other purposes.

1 Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

3 SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

4 This Act may be cited as the “U.S.-Israel Anti-Killer Drone Act of 2023”.

SEC. 2. IMPROVEMENTS RELATING TO UNITED STATES-ISRAEL COOPERATION TO COUNTER UNMANNED AERIAL SYSTEMS.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

(1) The growing arsenal of unmanned aerial systems of Iran includes—

(A) unmanned aerial systems that engage in intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance;

and

(B) armed unmanned aerial systems capable of striking battlefield targets, including loitering munitions, also known as “suicide drones” or “one-way attack drones”.

(2) Iran-origin unmanned aerial systems represent a threat to the Armed Forces and facilities of the United States in the Middle East, as well as to United States allies and partners such as Israel, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates.

(3) In February 2018, Iran allegedly launched an armed unmanned aerial vehicle from Syria into Israeli airspace which was ultimately destroyed by Israeli warplanes.

(4) In September 2019, Iran launched cruise missiles and loitering munitions at key oil installations in Saudi Arabia.
Throughout the takeover of Yemen by the Houthi, beginning in 2014 and continuing into the present, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Quds-Force, the al-Ghadir Missile Command of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Aerospace Force, and the Research and Self-Sufficiency Jihad organization of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps has supported the capabilities of Yemeni rebels, including through the provision of unmanned aerial systems and other relevant technology, such as cruise missiles and ballistic missiles. Such support enables the Houthis to routinely strike civilian targets in both Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

In January 2021, Iran-backed Shiite militia groups in Iraq launched armed unmanned aerial vehicles at Saudi Arabia.

In March 2021, Iran attempted to send two delta-wing unmanned aerial vehicles toward Israel which were ultimately downed by Israeli warplanes over the territory of an undisclosed Arab country.

In July 2021, Iran launched an attack employing unmanned aerial vehicles, including loitering munitions against a Liberian-flagged, Israeli-operated tanker, “M/T Meree Street”, near the coast of
Oman that killed two people, a British and a Romanian national.

(9) On March 27 and 28, 2022, Secretary of State Blinken met in Israel with counterparts from the governments of Israel, Bahrain, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, and Morocco to promote normalization in the region and declared, “Our commitment to the core principle that Iran can never acquire a nuclear weapon is unwavering. One way or another, we will continue to cooperate closely.”

(10) In May 2022, Iran inaugurated an unmanned aerial system factory in Tajikistan to manufacture and export the Ababil–2, a multipurpose unmanned aerial system with reconnaissance, combat, and suicide capabilities.

(11) On June 2, 2022, Iran-backed Hezbollah sent three unmanned aerial vehicles toward the Israeli-controlled Karish gas field, one of which was intercepted by an F–16 fighter jet, and two of which were intercepted by Barak 8 missiles launched from the Sa’ar 5-class corvette “INS Eilat”.

(12) On July 2, 2022, the Israeli military reportedly shot down three unmanned aerial vehicles launched by Hezbollah in the vicinity of where an
Israeli gas platform had been recently installed in the Mediterranean Sea.

(13) On July 14, 2022, the United States and Israel adopted the Joint Declaration on the U.S.-Israel Strategic Partnership, reaffirming the unbreakable bonds between the two countries and the enduring commitment of the United States to the security of Israel.

(14) In late August 2022, Iran reportedly sent its first batch of Shahed–136 unmanned aerial systems to Russia for use against Ukraine. While Russia is rebranding these systems the Geran–2, United States officials revealed the agreement in the summer of 2022.

(15) On September 12, 2022, Brigadier General Kioumars Heydari, who heads the ground forces of the Armed Forces of Iran, announced that the Armed Forces of Iran had developed the Arash–2 unmanned aerial system specifically designed to attack Tel Aviv and Haifa.

(16) On November 13, 2022, and on February 10, 2023, Iran-origin unmanned aerial systems allegedly targeted Israeli-owned oil tankers off the coast of Oman.
On February 14, 2023, United States forces in Syria reportedly shot down an Iran-origin unmanned aerial vehicle surveilling United States positions around oil facilities.

On November 1, 2021, the Secretary of Defense and the Defense Minister of Israel signed a memorandum of understanding establishing the United States-Israel Operations Technology-Working Group, which includes six sub-working groups, including sub-working groups focused on countering unmanned aerial systems and directed energy capabilities.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the United States should—

(1) enhance ongoing cooperation with Israel in researching, developing, and fielding, as expeditiously as possible, mutually beneficial technologies and capabilities to counter unmanned aerial systems, for the purpose of addressing common military requirements and growing threats;

(2) exchange with Israel information about the evolving threat of Iran-origin unmanned aerial systems; and

(3) use the United States-Israel Operations- Technology Working Group established pursuant to
section 1299M(c) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 (Public Law 116–283; 134 Stat. 4014), or any successor working group, as the epicenter of such efforts.


(1) in subsection (b)(4), by striking "$40,000,000" and inserting "$55,000,000";

(2) by redesignating subsections (e) and (f) as subsections (g) and (h), respectively; and

(3) by inserting after subsection (d) the following new subsections:

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(e) Report on Status of Cooperation and Certain Iranian Threat.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this subsection, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report containing the following:

“(1) An assessment of the status of cooperation between the United States and Israel on countering unmanned aerial systems, including an assessment of—
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“(A) capabilities to counter unmanned aerial systems under research and development;

“(B) capabilities to counter unmanned aerial systems that have been fielded to the Armed Forces of the United States or Israel pursuant to this section;

“(C) proposed changes to authorizations, appropriations, or other provisions of law that would result in more effective capabilities to counter unmanned aerial systems and expedite the provision to the Armed Forces of the United States and Israel of capabilities to counter unmanned aerial systems; and

“(D) the extent to which the United States-Israel Operations-Technology Working Group established pursuant to section 1299M(c) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 (Public Law 116–283; 134 Stat. 4014), or any successor working group, is being used to carry out the activities described in subsection (a)(1).

“(2) An assessment of the threat to the United States and Israel posed by unmanned aerial systems from Iran and associated proxies of Iran, including an assessment of deployed or otherwise available
anti-unmanned aircraft capabilities of the United
States and Israel and the adequacy of such capabili-
ties to offset such threat.

“(f) UNMANNED AERIAL SYSTEM DEFINED.—In this
section, the term ‘unmanned aerial system’ includes loi-
tering munitions.”.