

## Senate Passes Tillis Bill To Combat Genocide

By Administrator

Monday, 17 December 2018 10:00 -

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Today, U.S. Senator Thom Tillis (R-NC) applauded Senate passage of bipartisan legislation he co-introduced to bolster U.S. government efforts to prevent genocide and other human rights atrocities around the world. This bill, named in honor of the courageous, inspiring Holocaust survivor and Nobel Laureate Elie Wiesel, strengthens the U.S. government's capability to prevent, mitigate, and respond to genocide and other mass atrocities wherever they may occur.

The *Elie Wiesel Genocide and Atrocities Prevention Act (S. 1158)* would establish a Mass Atrocities Task Force within the State Department to adequately 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 the Director's 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 United States must continue to be a leader in preventing genocide and other human rights violations around the world," said Senator Tillis. "This bipartisan legislation will strengthen our government's effectiveness in combatting these atrocities, and I hope this legislation is quickly taken up by the House so it can be signed into law."

The legislation:

- Affirms the importance of strengthening U.S. efforts around mass atrocities through interagency tools like the Atrocities Prevention Board (APB);
- States that preventing genocide and mass atrocities are core U.S. national security interests and calls on the Administration to pursue a government-wide strategy to: strengthen U.S. diplomatic, risk analysis/monitoring, early warning, and response capacities around atrocity crimes; improve the use of U.S. foreign assistance to address the root causes of violent conflict; strengthen support to transitional justice mechanisms and local civil society groups in countries at risk of or experiencing mass atrocities; prioritize preventative diplomacy through unilateral, bilateral, and multilateral mechanisms;
- Requires specialized training for Foreign Service Officers who will be deployed to a country experiencing or at risk of mass atrocities; and
- Mandates annual reporting to Congress of Administration efforts to prevent and respond to mass atrocities and an assessment of countries and regions at risk of such violence.

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Joining the bill as cosponsors were U.S. Senators Ben Cardin (D-MD), Todd Young (R-IN), Dick Durbin (D-Ill.), Marco Rubio (R-Fla.), Bob Menendez (D-N.J.), Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska), Richard Blumenthal (D-Conn.), Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.), Sheldon Whitehouse (D-R.I.), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-N.Y.), Amy Klobuchar (D-Minn.), Jeanne Shaheen (D-N.H.), Al Franken (D-Minn.), Gary Peters (D-Mich.), Chris Coons (D-Del.), Debbie Stabenow (D-Mich.), Cory Booker (D-N.J.), Ed Markey (D-Mass.), Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio), Tammy Baldwin (D-Wis.), and Ron Wyden (D-Ore.).