



RPC Highlight

H.R. 4215 - *International Traffic in Arms Regulations Licensing Reform Act*

Sponsored by Rep. Michael Baumgartner (WA-05),
RPC Freshman Representative

Bill Summary:

The legislation would require the Secretary of State to develop a list of countries and end-users for whom expedited licensing is considered vital to U.S. national security. This list must be updated annually and submitted to Congress, ensuring transparency and oversight.

For these priority partners, the bill mandates that license applications be processed within 45 days, while all other applications must be processed within 60 days, unless specific exceptions apply (such as Congressional review periods or Department of Defense security assessments). If these deadlines are not met, the State Department must report to Congress every six months, detailing the reasons for delays and the anticipated timeline for resolution.

Policy Background:

The International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR), administered by the Department of State's Directorate of Defense Trade Controls, regulates the export of defense related articles and services. ITAR regulates any items on the U.S. Munitions List (USML), such as military equipment, weapon parts, and defense-related software, as well as defense services and technical data.

On April 9th, President Trump signed an Executive Order (EO) to improve speed and accountability in the defense sales system. The Executive Order required the Secretary of Defense and Secretary of State, along with the Secretary of Commerce, to submit a plan to the President within 90 days that improves defense sales transparency via accountability metrics; secures exportability as a requirement earlier in the acquisition cycle; and consolidates the sale approvals process. This legislation would codify the prioritization requirement for arms transfers in this EO.

Committee Action:

This legislation received a markup and was reported favorably by the House Foreign Affairs Committee on July 22, 2025, by a vote of 47-03.