

# Democrats Split on US Intervention in Israel–Iran Conflict as Party Leaders Push for Diplomacy

Party leaders urge restraint and demand answers from the president, while others back Israeli strikes or stay silent on possible U.S. military action.



Sen. Chris Coons (D-Del.) speaks during a breakfast for Pennsylvania delegates at the Palmer House Hilton hotel in Chicago, Illinois on Aug. 22, 2024. Travis Gillmore/The Epoch Times



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Top Senate Democrats raised concerns about President Donald Trump's potential military intervention against Iran in a statement on June 18, warning against unilateral action and calling for answers from the White House before any escalation.

In the joint statement Tuesday, Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.), Appropriations Committee Ranking Member Patty Murray (D-Wash.), Defense Appropriator Chris Coons (D-Del.), Armed Services Ranking Member Jack Reed (D-R.I.), and Intelligence Vice Chair Mark Warner (D-Va.) called the

growing conflict between Israel and Iran a “dangerous escalation” that could ignite a broader regional war. They urged Trump to prioritize diplomacy and warned of the risks to thousands of U.S. personnel stationed across the Middle East.

“Iran poses a risk to the United States and our allies and must not be allowed to attain a nuclear weapon,” the senators [wrote](#). “The United States stands firm in our support for the continued defense of Israel, our partner and ally. Our commitment to Israel remains ironclad and we urge the administration to defend Israel against the barrage of Iranian airstrikes, including through the provision of additional air defense capabilities.”

The senators urged the president “to prioritize diplomacy and pursue a binding agreement that can prevent a nuclear-armed Iran and reduce the risk to our diplomats, our service members, and the hundreds of thousands of Americans living in the Middle East.”

The statement laid out more than a dozen questions about the scope, goals, legal basis, and cost of a possible U.S. strike, including the president’s recent call for Iran’s “unconditional surrender” via a post on Truth Social. It also asked for a detailed evacuation plan for Americans in the region and current intelligence on Iran’s military and nuclear capabilities.

While the statement signals rising concern among Democrats, many lawmakers in the party have remained publicly silent on the prospect of war. Some are backing Israel’s right to respond to Iranian attacks without directly addressing potential U.S. involvement. Sen. John Fetterman (D-Pa.) has said he has been supportive of Israeli actions.

“Imagine a nuclear- and proxy-free Iran,” Fetterman [wrote](#) in a post on X on June 14. “The only and true path for enduring peace in the region. As I’ve only maintained: NO negotiations. Join Israel in extinguishing Iran’s nuclear ambitions and ignite a movement within Iran to free itself of that cancerous regime.”

But others in the party have sharply criticized the Israeli strikes. Sen. Jack Reed (D-R.I.), the top Democrat on the Senate Armed Services Committee, [called](#) Israel’s airstrikes on Iran a “reckless escalation” and warned they could ignite broader regional violence.

“While tensions between Israel and Iran are real and complex, military aggression of this scale is never the answer,” he said.

He urged both sides to show restraint and called on Trump to pursue diplomacy before the conflict spirals “out of control.”

Rep. Pramila Jayapal (D-Wash.) had similar sentiments, posting on X: “Israel’s reckless, escalatory strikes on Iran risk igniting a larger regional war, & undermine planned negotiations for a potential new nuclear deal. Netanyahu

must not be allowed to pull America into another forever war. Instead, we must immediately push for negotiated de-escalation.”

Earlier this week, Sen. Tim Kaine (D-Va.) [introduced](#) a resolution aimed at reinforcing congressional war powers, with a [similar](#) House measure backed by Reps. Ro Khanna (D-Calif.) and Thomas Massie (R-Ky).

Republicans have been publicly [divided](#) over the issue. Pro-intervention voices, including Sens. Ted Cruz (R-Texas) and Tom Cotton (R-Ark.), have pushed for swift U.S. military involvement to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon. Others, including Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene (R-Ga.), Steve Bannon, and Tucker Carlson, have warned against foreign entanglements, arguing such moves would betray Trump’s “America First” promises.

Trump has yet to announce a final decision but [said](#) on Wednesday that his patience with Tehran has already run out. Speaking to reporters at the White House, Trump said he had “ideas” but was waiting to make a call, citing the fluid nature of war.

“I like to make the final decision one second before it’s due,” he said.

While reiterating that he does not want the United States drawn into another war, Trump warned that action may be needed to stop Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon.

“You’re going to have to make a choice, because it’s possible that you’re going to have to fight for them not to have nuclear,” he said.

He also dismissed a public warning from Iranian leader Ali Khamenei, who said any U.S. military intervention would “result in irreparable damage for them.”

“I say good luck,” Trump said.

The Democratic lawmakers added: “Congress is an equal partner in preserving and defending U.S. national security around the world, and Congress has not provided authorization for military action against Iran – we will not rubberstamp military intervention that puts the United States at risk. Our foremost duty is to safeguard American citizens wherever they reside and to protect our troops serving on the front lines. The United States cannot sleepwalk into a third war in as many decades. Congress has a critical role to play in this moment.”

*Emel Akan and Joseph Lord contributed to this report.*

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