



## *The Quincy Award for Responsible Statecraft*

**2021 Recipients Sens. Lee, Murphy, and Sanders and Reps. McGovern and Meijer**

*In no part of the Constitution is more wisdom to be found than in the clause which confides the question of war or peace to the legislature, and not to the executive department.*

*-James Madison, Helvidius No. 4*

The U.S. Constitution explicitly grants Congress the power to declare war. Yet Congress' authority over national security matters has been routinely challenged by American presidents since the Constitutional Convention in 1787—a dynamic that James Madison foresaw clearly when he told Thomas Jefferson that the executive was “the branch of power most interested in war, and most prone to it.” For generations, Congress largely succeeded in guarding their prerogative. But since the end of World War II, U.S. foreign policy has been dictated by presidents from both parties who eroded and evaded congressional war powers, often to disastrous effect.

After 1945, U.S. presidents found both a vast and capable global security apparatus at their disposal, and a co-equal branch of government unwilling or unable to challenge how the president deployed these awesome powers. Increasingly, American national security strategy was not the product of a constitutional process designed to ensure that American interests were being represented and served, but rather the wills and whims of the president and his national security advisors. This concentration of power encouraged the executive branch to think of military action as the first, best tool for addressing global challenges—regardless of the efficiency or effectiveness of this approach. Over the course of many subsequent ill-fated interventions and wars of choice, we lost sight of John Quincy Adams' prescient warning: that if the U.S. goes abroad “in search of monsters to destroy” and comes to prize force over liberty, she “might become the dictatress of the world. She would be, no longer, the ruler of her own spirit.”

It is in honor of Adams' principled vision for American foreign policy that the Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft awards a yearly citation to Members of Congress, currently serving or retired members of the U.S. Armed Services, members of the Diplomatic Corps, elected officials or ordinary citizens. The recipients of the Quincy Award for Responsible Statecraft for 2021—the Americans who best exemplify the moral courage and strategic clarity of our sixth President—are Senators Mike Lee of Utah, Chris Murphy of Connecticut and Bernie Sanders of Vermont, and Representatives Jim McGovern of Massachusetts and Peter Meijer of Michigan.

This principled, bipartisan group of lawmakers are championing two measures to reclaim congressional authority over arms sales, emergency declarations, and the use of military force: The National Security Powers Act in the Senate and The National Security Reforms and Accountability Act in the House. These bills would ensure that the American people have a say in some of the most consequential decisions our government makes. Peace and security sustain many of the freedoms that Americans cherish most dearly; few questions fundamentally implicate our interests more than how, whether, and where we wage war.



In citing **Sens. Lee, Murphy and Sanders and Reps. McGovern and Meijer**, the Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft reaffirms its founding mission to promote ideas that move U.S. foreign policy away from endless war and toward vigorous diplomacy in the pursuit of international peace.

The citation reads:

*For their efforts to reclaim the peoples' power in matters of war and peace, the Board of Directors of the Quincy Institute proudly confers on Senators Michael Shumway Lee, Christopher Scott Murphy, and Bernard Sanders, and Representatives James Patrick McGovern and Peter James Meijer the Quincy Award for Responsible Statecraft for 2021. In working to end executive overreach in matters of national security and democratize U.S. foreign policy, these leaders affirm that America's glory lies not in dominion, but liberty.*