

To the office of U.S. Representative Clay Higgins

Re: HR 8656 (119th Congress), Ballistic Armor Made in America Act of 2026 • Latest action (2026-05-04): Referred to the House Committee on the Judiciary.
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Office of record (Congress.gov): 572 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC • (202) 225-2031

Domestic Fiber Body Armor Procurement Improvement Act

The measure, as described from the official record: Require the Department of Justice to purchase ballistic-resistant body armor only if it is manufactured using domestically produced ballistic fibers, to promote U.S. manufacturing and supply chain security.

THE PROPOSAL

The Department of Justice (DOJ) must procure ballistic-resistant body armor exclusively from manufacturers using at least 90% domestic ballistic fibers, defined as fibers spun, woven, and produced in the United States. This applies to all new DOJ body armor purchases for federal law enforcement officers. Manufacturers must certify compliance annually via affidavits submitted to DOJ procurement officers.

To control costs, total annual spending on such body armor is capped at \$50 million, adjustable for inflation by the Consumer Price Index. DOJ must prioritize competitive bidding among certified domestic suppliers and report savings from domestic sourcing compared to prior foreign options.

The DOJ Inspector General will conduct annual audits of compliance and cost-effectiveness, publishing public reports to Congress. Non-compliant procurements trigger a 30-day procurement freeze until certification is verified.

This act sunsets after 5 years unless Congress reauthorizes it, allowing evaluation of effectiveness in supporting U.S. jobs and security.

OPERATIVE PROVISIONS (VFA PROPOSAL)

Funding Source	Existing DOJ procurement appropriations under 28 U.S.C. § 524
Funding Amount	Capped at \$50 million annually, inflation-adjusted
Sunset Years	5 years
Oversight Body	DOJ Inspector General with annual public reports to Congress
Enforcement Mechanism	Annual manufacturer certifications, IG audits, and 30-day procurement freeze for violations
Effective Date	October 1, 2025 (start of FY2026)

CONSTITUTIONAL BASIS

- Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 (taxing and spending power for federal procurement)
 - Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 (necessary and proper to conditions on federal spending)
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WHY BOTH SIDES CAN BACK IT (VFA'S ASSESSMENT)

Honors Democratic priorities of protecting manufacturing jobs and supply chain resilience for workers; honors Republican priorities of 'Buy American' mandates, fiscal caps to prevent waste, and sunset for accountability without open-ended spending.

Values for America is a nonpartisan, constitution-first SI think tank. This brief is informational. It is a policy proposal, not law, and it does not support or oppose any candidate or party. Full analysis and sources:

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