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French national assembly approves draft law to fight Islamist extremism in the country; Senate ratification pending



The French National Assembly this week approved draft legislation with the stated purpose of reinforcing “republican principles” , although the legislation is widely considered as aiming to combat sources of Islamist extremism across the country.

The draft law heads to the French Senate next month for final approval.

Debate was acrimonious in the legislature, with leftist deputies claiming the bill is an infringement on civil liberties, whereas several right-wing deputies pointed to a weak compromise. A handful of Muslim lawmakers also claimed that the law aims to outlaw Islam in France.

According to a dispatch by the NY Times, the draft law reflects a decision by French President Emmanuel Macron to defeat what he calls “Islamist separatism” – and to reinforce the unifying principles of French secularism.