

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 8696

To provide for the designation of the Russian Federation as a state sponsor
of terrorism.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 7, 2026

Mr. LIEU (for himself, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, and Mr. COHEN) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

A BILL

To provide for the designation of the Russian Federation
as a state sponsor of terrorism.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Russia is a State Spon-
5 sor of Terrorism Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) Pursuant to existing law, it is United States
9 policy to designate countries that have repeatedly

1 provided support for acts of international terrorism
2 as state sponsors of terrorism.

3 (2) Cuba, the Democratic People's Republic of
4 North Korea, Iran, and Syria are designated as
5 state sponsors of terrorism.

6 (3) At the direction of President Vladimir
7 Putin, the Government of the Russian Federation
8 has and continues to promote acts of international
9 terrorism against political opponents and nation
10 states.

11 (4) Under the orders of President Putin, the
12 Government of the Russian Federation engaged in a
13 campaign of terror, utilizing brutal force targeting
14 civilians during the Second Chechen War.

15 (5) Actions by the Government of the Russian
16 Federation against civilian centers, such as Grozny,
17 the capital of Chechnya, left countless innocent men,
18 women, and children dead or wounded.

19 (6) Since Russia's initial invasion of Ukraine in
20 2014 followed by a full-scale invasion of Ukraine
21 starting in 2022, the Government of the Russian
22 Federation has facilitated and supported acts of vio-
23 lence against Ukrainian civilians.

24 (7) As of September 2025, the Government of
25 Ukraine estimates at least 648 children have been

1 killed, more than 2,100 have been wounded, and mil-
2 lions are suffering trauma and disrupted education
3 since the start of President Vladimir Putin's full-
4 scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.

5 (8) The Government of Ukraine estimates that
6 the Russian Federation has kidnapped, deported, or
7 displaced at least 20,000 Ukrainian children to the
8 Russian Federation, Russian-occupied territories,
9 and other locations, and continues to practice such
10 illegal and inhumane actions.

11 (9) The Yale School of Public Health's Human-
12 itarian Research Lab has assessed that children
13 from Ukraine have been taken to at least 210 facili-
14 ties inside Russia and temporarily occupied terri-
15 tories of Ukraine since the start of Russia's full-
16 scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022. Re-education ac-
17 tivities involving children from Ukraine have oc-
18 curred in at least 130 identified sites.

19 (10) The Government of the Russian Federa-
20 tion provided material support to the regime of
21 former Syrian leader Bashar Al Asad, a nation cur-
22 rently designated as a state sponsor of terrorism,
23 that was used to target the Syrian people.

24 (11) According to the Congressional Research
25 Service, the Russian Federation uses networks of

1 mercenaries, such as the Wagner Group and its suc-
2 cessors, which are overseen by the Ministry of De-
3 fense of the Russian Federation, to support the for-
4 eign policy objectives of the Russian Federation.
5 These mercenary networks supported by the Russian
6 Federation have spread terror in various parts of the
7 world.

8 (12) In 2020, the Department of the Treasury
9 identified the Wagner Group as “a designated Rus-
10 sian Ministry of Defense proxy force” and stated
11 that “Wagner’s activities in other countries, includ-
12 ing Ukraine, Syria, Sudan, and Libya, have gen-
13 erated insecurity and incited violence against inno-
14 cent civilians”.

15 (13) On January 26, 2023, the Department of
16 the Treasury designated the Wagner Group as a
17 Transnational Criminal Organization, citing that
18 “Wagner personnel have engaged in an ongoing pat-
19 tern of serious criminal activity, including mass exe-
20 cutions, rape, child abductions, and physical abuse
21 in the Central African Republic (CAR) and Mali”.

22 (14) The Wagner Group has also been sanc-
23 tioned by Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand,
24 Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the European
25 Union.

1 (15) On March 1, 2022, Jason Blazakis, the di-
2 rector of the Department of State’s Counterter-
3 rorism Finance and Designations Office in the Bu-
4 reau of Counterterrorism from 2008 to 2018, wrote
5 in reference to White supremacist groups that “Rus-
6 sia provides sanctuary to a U.S.-designated terrorist
7 group, the Russian Imperial Movement, which oper-
8 ates with impunity in Russian territory.”.

9 (16) On March 17, 2022, President Volodymyr
10 Zelensky called for the world to acknowledge the
11 Russian Federation as a terrorist state.

12 (17) The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine has ap-
13 pealed to Congress to encourage the Department of
14 State to recognize the Russian Federation as a state
15 sponsor of terrorism noting that “the Russian Fed-
16 eration has for years supported and financed ter-
17 rorist regimes and terrorist organizations, including
18 being the main supplier of weapons to the Assad re-
19 gime in Syria and supporting terrorists in the Mid-
20 dle East and Latin America, organizing acts of
21 international terrorism, including the poisoning of
22 the Skripal family in the United Kingdom of Great
23 Britain and Northern Ireland, the downing of a civil-
24 ian Malaysian airliner and other acts of terrorism”.

1 (18) On November 23, 2022, the European
2 Parliament recognized Russia as a state sponsor of
3 terrorism.

4 (19) The United States has a range of tools
5 available to hold the Russian Federation account-
6 able, reduce its war machine, and isolate it economi-
7 cally and diplomatically, including by designating it
8 as a state sponsor of terrorism and imposing cor-
9 responding sanctions.

10 **SEC. 3. DESIGNATION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AS A**
11 **STATE SPONSOR OF TERRORISM.**

12 (a) IN GENERAL.—Effective beginning on the date
13 of the enactment of this Act, the Russian Federation shall
14 be deemed to have been determined to be a country the
15 government of which has repeatedly provided support for
16 acts of international terrorism for purposes of—

17 (1) section 1754(c)(1)(A) of the Export Control
18 Reform Act of 2018 (50 U.S.C. 4813(c)(1)(A));

19 (2) section 620A of the Foreign Assistance Act
20 of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2371);

21 (3) section 40 of the Arms Export Control Act
22 (22 U.S.C. 2780); or

23 (4) any other provision of law.

24 (b) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this Act
25 may be construed as to provide for the imposition of sanc-

1 tions against any person that engages in transactions to
2 export agricultural products from Ukraine or to provide
3 humanitarian assistance in Ukraine.

4 (c) SUNSET.—This section shall terminate on the
5 date that is the earlier of—

- 6 (1) the date on which the Secretary of State de-
7 termines that the Government of the Russian Fed-
8 eration and the Government of Ukraine have entered
9 into negotiations to end the conflict in Ukraine; or
10 (2) 5 years after the date of the enactment of
11 this Act.

12 **SEC. 4. OTHER PROVISIONS.**

13 (a) INAPPLICABILITY OF CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF
14 LAW.—Notwithstanding section 201 of the Terrorism
15 Risk Insurance Act of 2002 (Public Law 107–297; 28
16 U.S.C. 1610 note), or any other provision of law, no
17 blocked or frozen asset of the Russian Federation, or of
18 any agency or instrumentality thereof, shall be subject to
19 attachment, execution, or other judicial process in satis-
20 faction of any judgment against the Russian Federation
21 arising from its designation as a state sponsor of terrorism
22 under section 3.

23 (b) RETENTION OF EXECUTIVE AUTHORITY.—All
24 such assets shall remain subject to the authority of the
25 President, the Secretary of the Treasury, and other appro-

1 priate officials of the executive branch to administer, li-
2 cense, vest, transfer, or otherwise dispose of in furtherance
3 of the foreign policy interests of the United States, includ-
4 ing support for Ukraine and implementation of the Re-
5 building Economic Prosperity and Opportunity for
6 Ukrainians Act (the REPO for Ukrainians Act).

7 (c) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this sec-
8 tion shall be construed to limit the rights of victims of
9 terrorism to seek compensation from other sources avail-
10 able under law.

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