

119TH CONGRESS
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S. 4379

To require the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense to jointly submit a report on efforts by the Government of the Russian Federation to violate the religious freedoms of the people of Ukraine, to require the President to impose all applicable sanctions with respect to foreign persons determined to have engaged in such efforts, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 22, 2026

Mr. KENNEDY (for himself and Mr. WHITEHOUSE) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

A BILL

To require the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense to jointly submit a report on efforts by the Government of the Russian Federation to violate the religious freedoms of the people of Ukraine, to require the President to impose all applicable sanctions with respect to foreign persons determined to have engaged in such efforts, and for other purposes.

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

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Russia’s War on Faith
3 Act”.

4 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

5 Congress makes the following findings:

6 (1) In territories of Ukraine temporarily occu-
7 pied by the Russian Federation, Russian occupation
8 authorities have imposed policies that restrict, sup-
9 press, and eliminate freedom of religion and belief,
10 in violation of international law and civilian protec-
11 tions under the law of armed conflict.

12 (2) The United States Commission on Inter-
13 national Religious Freedom has documented that
14 Russian authorities in occupied Ukrainian territories
15 have engaged in severe violations of religious free-
16 dom, including the detention, torture, disappearance,
17 and unlawful imprisonment of clergy and believers,
18 as well as the closure and confiscation of houses of
19 worship.

20 (3) According to Ukrainian authorities and
21 independent monitoring groups, Russian forces have
22 damaged or destroyed more than 600 churches, syn-
23 agogues, mosques, and other religious sites since the
24 start of the Russian Federation’s full-scale invasion.

25 (4) The Russian Federation has killed more
26 than 50 Ukrainian priests, pastors, and other reli-

1 religious leaders during the Russian Federation’s inva-
 2 sion, and many others have been abducted, detained,
 3 tortured, or forcibly disappeared in occupied terri-
 4 tories.

5 (5) Protestant, Catholic, Muslim, members of
 6 the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints,
 7 Crimean Tatar, and Orthodox Christian commu-
 8 nities not aligned with the Russian Orthodox Church
 9 have been subjected to raids, forced re-registration
 10 under Russian law, intimidation, and criminal pros-
 11 ecution, with many congregations driven under-
 12 ground or permanently shuttered.

13 (6) Religious buildings in occupied areas have
 14 been seized and repurposed for military or adminis-
 15 trative use, religious literature has been confiscated,
 16 and charitable ministries dismantled, eroding both
 17 the spiritual and humanitarian foundations of local
 18 communities.

19 (7) The Russian Orthodox Church, led by Pa-
 20 triarch Kirill of Moscow, has publicly framed the in-
 21 vasion in theological terms, describing the war as a
 22 “holy war” having “metaphysical significance” and
 23 stating in a September 2022 sermon that if a soldier
 24 dies in the performance of military duty, “this sac-
 25 rifice washes away all the sins that a person has

1 committed”. According to the Committee on Inter-
 2 national Religious Freedom, “Russian de facto au-
 3 thorities often commit religious freedom violations to
 4 facilitate the dominance of the Russian Orthodox
 5 Church of the Moscow Patriarchate in these terri-
 6 tories”.

7 (8) The Russian Federation’s actions dem-
 8 onstrate a systematic campaign of religious persecu-
 9 tion in occupied Ukrainian territory, violating the
 10 fundamental right to freedom of thought, conscience,
 11 religion, and belief as protected under the Universal
 12 Declaration of Human Rights and the International
 13 Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

14 **SEC. 3. REPORT ON THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION’S PERSECU-**
 15 **TION OF RELIGIOUS GROUPS IN OCCUPIED**
 16 **TERRITORIES OF UKRAINE; IMPOSITION OF**
 17 **SANCTIONS.**

18 (a) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 120 days
 19 after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually
 20 thereafter for 3 years, the Secretary of State and Sec-
 21 retary of Defense, in coordination with the Director of Na-
 22 tional Intelligence, shall jointly submit to the appropriate
 23 congressional committees a report that includes—

24 (1) a detailed description of the Government of
 25 the Russian Federation and its state-affiliated,

1 quasi-state, or occupation-era activities that involve
2 the persecution or suppression of, or discrimination
3 against, or otherwise directly or indirectly involve en-
4 gaging in or facilitating serious human rights abuse
5 against, Christians, Jews, and Muslims (including
6 Crimean Tatars), and other religious minorities not
7 affiliated with the Russian Orthodox Church, and
8 their respective religious organizations in Russian-
9 occupied territories of Ukraine;

10 (2) an identification of churches, synagogues,
11 mosques, other religious facilities, including Chris-
12 tian, Jewish, Muslim, and other minority religious
13 institutions, that have been destroyed, damaged,
14 seized, repurposed, or otherwise appropriated di-
15 rectly or indirectly by persons operating for or on
16 behalf of the Government of the Russian Federation
17 in occupied territories of Ukraine;

18 (3) an assessment of—

19 (A) the number of Christians, Jews, Mus-
20 lims (including Crimean Tatars), and other reli-
21 gious minorities who are not affiliated with the
22 Russian Orthodox Church, who have been sub-
23 jected to persecution, imprisonment, or forced
24 displacement in occupied territories of Ukraine;

1 (B) restrictions imposed on Christian, Jew-
2 ish, Muslim, and other religions not affiliated
3 with the Russian Orthodox Church's religious
4 practices, worship services, or religious edu-
5 cation in occupied territories;

6 (C) efforts to compel Christian organiza-
7 tions to affiliate with Moscow-based religious
8 institutions or to suppress Christian activity not
9 affiliated with Moscow-based religions;

10 (D) efforts by the Government of the Rus-
11 sian Federation, by authorities exercising de
12 facto governmental control in occupied terri-
13 tory, or by entities or individuals otherwise af-
14 filiated with the Russian Federation, to compel
15 Christian organizations in Ukraine and in occu-
16 pied territories—

17 (i) to affiliate with Moscow-based reli-
18 gious institutions; or

19 (ii) to suppress Christian, Jewish,
20 Muslim, or any other denominations not
21 aligned with Russian state interests; and

22 (E) the overall impact of the Russian Fed-
23 eration's invasion of Ukraine, and its occupa-
24 tion of Ukrainian territory, on religious freedom

1 in occupied territories of Ukraine, including
2 Crimea and Sevastopol; and

3 (4) a list of individuals and entities affiliated
4 with the Government of the Russian Federation, or
5 exercising de facto authority in occupied territory,
6 that—

7 (A) are responsible for persecution or sup-
8 pression of, or discrimination against, Chris-
9 tians, Jews, or Muslims in Ukraine and in the
10 occupied territories of Ukraine; or

11 (B) have otherwise engaged in or at-
12 tempted to engage in any of the conduct de-
13 scribed in this subsection.

14 (b) CERTIFICATION REQUIRED.—Not later than 30
15 days after the submission of each report required by sub-
16 section (a), the President shall certify to the appropriate
17 congressional committees whether there may be reasonable
18 grounds to determine that any of the individuals and enti-
19 ties included in the list described in subsection (a)(4) have
20 engaged the any of the conduct described in paragraph
21 (2) or (3) of subsection (a).

22 (c) EFFECT OF POSITIVE CERTIFICATION.—If the
23 President makes an affirmative certification under sub-
24 section (b) with respect to a foreign person, the President
25 shall impose applicable sanctions with respect to that per-

1 son pursuant to the authorities and procedures set forth
2 in the applicable regulations under—

3 (1) part 583 of title 31, Code of Federal Regu-
4 lations (relating to sanctions authorized under the
5 Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act
6 (22 U.S.C. 10101 et seq.));

7 (2) part 589 of title 31, Code of Federal Regu-
8 lations (relating to Ukraine-/Russia-related sanc-
9 tions);

10 (3) part 587 of title 31, Code of Federal Regu-
11 lations (relating to Russian harmful foreign activi-
12 ties sanctions); or

13 (4) any other regulation under chapter V of
14 title 31, Code of Federal Regulations, providing for
15 the imposition of sanctions (including the blocking of
16 property or interests in property) with respect to the
17 conduct for which such person received an affirma-
18 tive certification.

19 (d) EFFECT OF SUBSEQUENT NEGATIVE DETER-
20 MINATION.—To the extent that the President determines,
21 based on a subsequent report required by subsection (a),
22 that an individual or entity previously listed in such a re-
23 port no longer engages in any of the conduct described
24 in subsection (b) or otherwise no longer meets the require-
25 ments with respect to the applicable sanctions imposed

1 with respect to such person under subsection (c), the
2 President may waive or terminate the application of such
3 sanctions with respect to that person.

4 (e) FORM.—The report required by subsection (a)
5 shall be submitted in an unclassified form, but may in-
6 clude a classified annex.

7 (f) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DE-
8 FINED.—In this section, the term “appropriate congres-
9 sional committees” means—

10 (1) the Committee on Armed Services, the
11 Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Af-
12 fairs, the Committee on Foreign Relations, and the
13 Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate; and

14 (2) the Committee on Armed Services, the
15 Committee on Financial Services, the Committee on
16 Foreign Affairs, and the Permanent Select Com-
17 mittee on Intelligence of the House of Representa-
18 tives.

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