

115TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 5910

To strengthen the United States response to Russian interference, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 22, 2018

Mrs. DEMINGS (for herself, Mr. TED LIEU of California, and Ms. STEFANIK) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committees on Armed Services, Intelligence (Permanent Select), Oversight and Government Reform, and Financial Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To strengthen the United States response to Russian interference, 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,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Defend Against Rus-
5 sian Disinformation and Aggression Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

1 (1) According an Intelligence Community As-
2 sessment dated January 6, 2017, Russia engages in
3 attacks of disinformation to advance its longstanding
4 desire to undermine the United States-led demo-
5 cratic order, the promotion of which Putin and other
6 senior Russian leaders view as a threat to Russia
7 and to Putin’s administration.

8 (2) According to the indictment issued by the
9 Attorney General on February 16, 2018, Russia
10 interfered in the United States presidential election
11 in 2016 and continues to conduct disinformation ef-
12 forts designed to undermine the United States.

13 (3) In addition to the allegations regarding
14 Russian disinformation efforts in that indictment,
15 according to Robert Blackwill and Phil Gordon of
16 the Council on Foreign Relations, in 2016, Russia
17 used its domestic media outlets, such as RT and
18 Sputnik, extensively to publish and promote false
19 and provocative stories designed to denigrate Hillary
20 Clinton and stoke anger among potential Trump
21 supporters as well as Clinton’s opponents on the left.
22 Disinformation included in such videos was often
23 picked up by Trump-supporting media outlets, such
24 as Breitbart News, Infowars, and Fox News, vastly
25 expanding the reach of the videos.

1 (4) Notwithstanding the enactment of the
2 Countering Adversaries of America through Sanc-
3 tions Act of 2017 (Public Law 115–44), Russia con-
4 tinues to support efforts to sow and exacerbate divi-
5 sions among Americans, including by funding efforts
6 to fuel racial, religious, and cultural resentments
7 throughout American society and pitting Americans
8 against each other and against many of their politi-
9 cians.

10 (5) Russia has also significantly stepped up its
11 efforts to confront the United States and its allies
12 politically and militarily, and to counter American
13 influence worldwide, including by the following:

14 (A) Invading and illegally occupying Cri-
15 mea.

16 (B) Intervening in and occupying parts of
17 eastern Ukraine.

18 (C) Deploying substantial military forces
19 and undertaking a ruthless bombing campaign
20 in Syria to prop up the regime of Bashar al-
21 Assad and defeat the American-supported oppo-
22 sition.

23 (D) Significantly expanding its armed
24 forces and deploying missiles in violation of
25 treaty commitments.

1 (E) Undertaking large military exercises
2 designed to intimidate East European states.

3 (F) Interfering in the political systems of
4 European countries in much the same way as
5 in the United States.

6 (G) Using the threat of cutting off gas
7 supplies as leverage over the most energy-de-
8 pendent European countries.

9 **SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

10 It is the sense of Congress that—

11 (1) while the United States should seek oppor-
12 tunities for cooperation with Russia, particularly in
13 the context of arms control and the conflict in Syria
14 and maintain open dialogue with Russia, the United
15 States should also confront Russia more robustly, in
16 order to deter further Russian efforts to undermine
17 United States society, the United States political
18 system, or the societies or political systems of
19 United States allies; and

20 (2) such robust confrontation should include—

21 (A) responding strongly to ongoing Rus-
22 sian interference in Ukraine;

23 (B) exposing the corruption of Vladimir
24 Putin;

1 (C) strengthening military ties with other
2 countries in the North Atlantic Treaty Organi-
3 zation; and

4 (D) ensuring a coordinated and effective
5 Federal response to Russian aggression.

6 **SEC. 4. OFFICE OF SANCTIONS POLICY.**

7 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Section 1 of the State De-
8 partment Basic Authorities Act (22 U.S.C. 2651a) is
9 amended by adding at the end the following new sub-
10 section:

11 “(h) COORDINATOR OF SANCTIONS POLICY.—

12 “(1) IN GENERAL.—There shall be established
13 within the Department of State a Coordinator for
14 Sanctions Policy, who shall be appointed by the
15 President, by and with the advice and consent of the
16 Senate and shall report directly to the Secretary of
17 State.

18 “(2) DUTIES.—The Coordinator for Sanctions
19 Policy shall be responsible for the following:

20 “(A) Overseeing the diplomatic aspects of
21 the enforcement of United States and United
22 Nations sanctions, including sanctions with re-
23 spect to Russia, Iran, North Korea, and other
24 countries.

1 “(B) Coordinating with allies regarding the
2 enforcement of such sanctions.

3 “(C) Coordinating determinations with re-
4 spect to such sanctions by the heads of other
5 Federal departments and agencies, including
6 the Secretary of the Treasury and the United
7 States intelligence community.

8 “(3) RANK AND STATUS OF AMBASSADOR.—
9 The Coordinator for Sanctions Policy shall have the
10 rank and status of Ambassador at Large.”.

11 (b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Con-
12 gress that the Coordinator for Sanctions Policy estab-
13 lished pursuant to subsection (a) should be provided suffi-
14 cient office space and support staff to ensure its successful
15 establishment.

16 **SEC. 5. CYBER COUNTERMEASURES.**

17 (a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Con-
18 gress that the President should promptly and fully imple-
19 ment Executive Order No. 13800 (82 Fed. Reg. 22391;
20 relating to strengthening the cybersecurity of Federal net-
21 works and critical infrastructure) so that Federal depart-
22 ments and agencies can better detect, monitor, and miti-
23 gate cyber attacks as quickly as possible.

24 (b) REPORT.—Not later than 60 days after the date
25 of the enactment of this Act, the President shall submit

1 to Congress a report describing each step taken to meet
2 the objectives described in subsection (a) relating to cyber
3 attack response.

4 **SEC. 6. REPORT ON KREMLIN-LINKED CORRUPTION.**

5 (a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Con-
6 gress that—

7 (1) the intelligence community should dedicate
8 resources to further expose key networks which the
9 corrupt political class in Russia uses to hide the
10 money it steals; and

11 (2) the President should pursue efforts to stifle
12 Russian use of hidden financial channels, including
13 anonymous shell companies and real estate invest-
14 ments, in a manner similar to the efforts undertaken
15 to tighten banking regulations after the terrorist at-
16 tacks on September 11, 2001.

17 (b) REPORT.—Not later than 60 days after the date
18 of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Treas-
19 ury, in coordination with the Secretary of State, shall sub-
20 mit a report to Congress on assets owned by Vladimir
21 Putin, Russian oligarchs, and senior officials of the Rus-
22 sian Government, including—

23 (1) with respect to bank accounts, real estate
24 holdings, and other financial assets, including those

1 outside of Russia, that are owned by or accessible to
2 Putin—

3 (A) the location of such accounts, holdings,
4 or assets; and

5 (B) the contents of such accounts or the
6 amount held through such holdings or assets;

7 (2) the location, size, and contents of any assets
8 of any oligarch listed pursuant to section 241 of the
9 Countering America’s Adversaries Through Sanc-
10 tions Act (Public Law 115–44; 131 Stat. 922); and

11 (3) any “front” or shell companies, or other
12 intermediaries, used by senior officials of the Rus-
13 sian Government to hide assets from public disclo-
14 sure.

15 (c) FORM.—The report required under subsection (b)
16 shall be submitted in classified form.

17 (d) REASONABLE ATTEMPT TO ISSUE UNCLASSIFIED
18 REPORT.—Not later than 60 days after the date of the
19 submission of the report required under subsection (b), the
20 Secretary of the Treasury shall—

21 (1) publish an unclassified version of such re-
22 port on a publicly available website of the Depart-
23 ment of the Treasury; or

1 (2) submit a notification to Congress describing
2 the reasons for which the Secretary has determined
3 that such release is not possible.

4 **SEC. 7. ENHANCED MILITARY ACTIVITIES.**

5 (a) NATO EXERCISES.—The Secretary of Defense,
6 in consultation with other countries in the North Atlantic
7 Treaty Organization, shall seek opportunities to conduct
8 more NATO naval exercises in the Baltic and Black Seas,
9 as well as in the northern Atlantic Ocean, to defend the
10 seas around Europe and deter Russian aggression in those
11 regions.

12 (b) JOINT RESEARCH PROJECTS.—The Secretary of
13 Defense, in coordination with the Secretary of State, may
14 conduct joint research projects with NATO allies pursuant
15 to the authorities under chapter 138 of title 10, United
16 States Code, including projects through NATO Centers of
17 Excellence, to—

18 (1) improve NATO reconnaissance capabilities
19 to track Russian military exercises;

20 (2) enhance NATO anti-submarine warfare ca-
21 pabilities against Russia;

22 (3) increase the numbers of modern sensors
23 placed on NATO aircraft, submarines, and surface
24 ships; or

- 1 (4) enhance NATO capabilities to detect and
- 2 deter Russian information operations.

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