

Madam Speaker, in closing, I want to thank Chairman ENGEL and the ranking member, Mr. McCaul, for offering up this important resolution which seeks justice for Boris Nemtsov's brutal murder.

At a time when we are seeing the Russian people protesting tighter restrictions on their access to the internet, we should not forget the brave leadership of Mr. Nemtsov, a man who stood up to the oppressors in Russia and advocated bravely for freedom. We should honor his memory by continuing to seek justice for his assassination.

It is also important to note, Madam Speaker, the strong bipartisan showing in this Chamber of, really, any Russian resolution that comes up because we are united, as the prior speaker said, with the Russian people in fighting oppression, as we have for so long and we will continue to do.

I urge all Members to support this legislation.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, in closing, let me say, it is critical that we speak out against strong men and dictators throughout the world. We need to demand justice for those unable to do so themselves.

As we have mentioned, Boris Nemtsov was brutally murdered for bravely standing up to Putin and his corrupt regime. The Kremlin is being complicit in covering up the assassination and failing to conduct a proper investigation.

By passing this measure, we show Putin, his cronies, and dictators throughout the world that the U.S. Congress is watching, and we will not stay silent.

Madam Speaker, I strongly support this resolution. I urge my colleagues to join me, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 156, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

CRIMEA ANNEXATION NON-RECOGNITION ACT

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 596) to prohibit United States Government recognition of Russia's annexation of Crimea, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 596

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Crimea Annexation Non-recognition Act".

SEC. 2. PROHIBITION AGAINST UNITED STATES RECOGNITION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION'S CLAIM OF SOVEREIGNTY OVER CRIMEA.

(a) STATEMENT OF POLICY.—It is the policy of the United States not to recognize the Russian Federation's claim of sovereignty over Crimea, its airspace, or its territorial waters.

(b) PROHIBITION.—In accordance with subsection (a), no Federal department or agency may take any action or extend any assistance that implies recognition of the Russian Federation's claim of sovereignty over Crimea, its airspace, or its territorial waters.

(c) WAIVER.—The President may waive the prohibition in subsection (b) on a case-by-case basis if the President determines that it is vital to the national security interests of the United States to do so.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KINZINGER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 596, the Crimea Annexation Non-recognition Act, as amended, currently under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I thank this bill's author, who is a valuable member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Mr. CONNOLLY from Virginia.

Madam Speaker, I also thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. McCaul), our ranking member, for working with us on this bipartisan legislation.

Madam Speaker, Vladimir Putin has left no doubt about his intentions to expand Russian influence, undermine democracy, and splinter the alliances and agreements that have long kept Russia in check.

We have seen these through Russia's direct attacks on our democratic institutions, including our own—remember the Presidential election of 2016—through a pernicious and widespread misinformation campaign designed to distort reality and foment confusion and, in no clearer way, through its illegal occupation of parts of Ukraine and parts of Georgia.

It is shocking in the 21st century to see a country trample on a neighbor's sovereignty and seize territory by force. It goes against everything we have worked for since World War II to build a Europe that is whole, free, and in peace.

It has been 5 years since Russian forces moved into Crimea and staged a sham election in an attempt to give their occupation a gloss of legitimacy, but there is nothing legitimate about it—absolutely nothing.

The United States must never accept Putin's attempts to seize territory by force, and this legislation would enshrine into our laws a nonrecognition of Russia's annexation of Crimea. This bill would prevent our government from taking any action that even implies American recognition of this blatantly illegal land grab.

This bill also sends a strong message to our Ukrainian friends that we stand shoulder to shoulder with them as they continue to resist Russian efforts to fracture their country. This is especially important in light of recent events in which the Russian Navy intercepted Ukrainian patrol boats in Ukrainian waters, capturing the vessels and their crew by force.

Vladimir Putin is a bully and a thug. His troops may hold Crimea in a stranglehold, but we need to be clear that Crimea will always be part of Ukraine, not part of Russia. This measure will put that rejection permanently into our laws. I am pleased to support it.

Madam Speaker, I ask all Members to do likewise, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KINZINGER. Madam Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise today with the majority, also in strong support of H.R. 596, the Crimea Annexation Non-recognition Act. I am proud to cosponsor this legislation, which clearly states that America will not recognize Russian sovereignty over Crimea.

Ukraine continues to face significant challenges from Russia, from their meddling, and from their aggression. In Congress, we know the true intentions of Vladimir Putin when it comes to Ukraine. Vladimir Putin and his cronies in the Kremlin are tearing Europe apart.

Russian-backed separatists continue their shelling of Ukrainian military positions in Eastern Ukraine, which has killed civilians in many areas.

Additionally, Russia recently violated Ukraine sovereignty and territorial integrity when it fired upon and captured three Ukrainian vessels and 24 sailors. Russia continues to hold these sailors on bogus charges that they violated Russian borders, even though the Kerch Strait is determined to be neutral waters.

□ 1245

While Russia maintains that Ukrainian soldiers were threatening the construction of the Crimean bridge, which is currently under construction between the territory of Russia and Crimea, we know this is fake news from Putin and his thugs.

We need to continue to send a strong message to the Russians that the United States does not and will not

recognize their claim of sovereignty over Crimea, not now and not ever.

I commend Secretary Pompeo for making the Crimea Declaration last July that articulated this policy of the United States, and I believe Congress should have a voice in this as well.

Madam Speaker, the bill is simple. It states that the policy of the United States Government is to never recognize sovereignty over Crimea, and it prohibits all U.S. Government agencies from taking any action with respect to acknowledging that Russia has any claims over the territory.

As Vladimir Putin seeks to impose his iron-fisted will over former Soviet republics, we must continue to stand with our allies to counter that aggression.

I commend the work of my friend from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY) and my friend from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT) for their leadership on this issue. By reaffirming congressional support for Ukraine's territorial integrity and by holding Russia accountable for its continued violation of Ukraine sovereignty, I believe we will continue to stand with Ukraine legislatively and most effectively from here and into the future.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY), the author of this bill and a very valued member of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Madam Speaker, I thank my dear friend from New York (Mr. ENGEL), the distinguished chairman of our committee, for his support. I thank my dear friend from Illinois (Mr. KINZINGER), the Republican manager today, for his support. And I salute my friend from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT) who has steadfastly cosponsored this resolution in previous Congresses to make a powerful bipartisan statement.

I rise today, Madam Speaker, in support of H.R. 596, the Crimea Annexation Non-recognition Act, which we introduced together, as I said, with Mr. CHABOT of Ohio.

This bill states unequivocally that it is the policy of the United States not to recognize the Russian Federation's claim of sovereignty over Crimea, its airspace, or its territorial waters. Furthermore, the bill prohibits the United States Government from taking any action that could possibly apply recognition of Russian sovereignty over Crimea.

Putin's forcible and illegal annexation of Crimea, the first forcible seizure of territory in Europe since World War II, undermines Ukrainian sovereignty and threatens the stability of Europe. Acquiescence on the part of the United States would threaten the security of all sovereign nations. Who is next? Moldova, Georgia, the Baltic States?

It is the longstanding policy of our country not to recognize territorial changes elected by force, as dictated by the Stimson Doctrine established in

1932 by then-Secretary of State Henry Stimson, a Republican under a Republican President, Herbert Hoover.

We upheld that doctrine with the issuance of the Welles Declaration in 1940, which stated emphatically that the United States would not recognize the illegal annexation at that time of the Baltic States by the Soviet Union.

That policy remained in effect for 50 long years. Some thought it quixotic. For more than those 50 years, we stood by those Baltic republics of Estonia, Lithuania, and Latvia, sometimes in the face of ridicule. Today, they are independent nations and members of the NATO alliance.

The collective wisdom of the previous and current administrations, Congress, our European allies, and the American public is that similar principles must be adopted with respect to Crimea.

Crimea was Putin's original violation in Ukraine, and we have limited credibility objecting to Russia's subsequent invasion of the Luhansk and Donetsk areas of that country. If we do not take a stand with respect to Crimea, then we are just quibbling over the price.

What has happened in Ukraine—Russia's forcible and illegal annexation of Crimea, invasion of the eastern part of the country, and continued occupation—has precipitated an international crisis, and the resulting conflict has claimed more than 10,000 lives.

Russia has subjected Crimeans who refuse Russian citizenship to discrimination in accessing education, healthcare, and employment, and Russian authorities have attacked travel rights and the free press. The matter of rejecting the forcible and illegal attack on sovereign territory is so important that we should be satisfied with nothing less than absolute clarity about our position, which is that we support Ukraine's sovereignty over Crimea.

The Obama administration established a nonrecognition policy toward Russian sovereignty over Crimea and levied sanctions against individuals and entities enabling Russia's illegal occupation. Our allies in Europe have stood with us, shoulder to shoulder, in emphasizing and enforcing those sanctions.

Congress codified the Obama Crimea sanctions and has repeatedly used the power of the purse to prohibit the use of government funds for any action that could possibly recognize de jure or de facto illegal annexation of Crimea.

The fiscal year 2016 National Defense Authorization Act included similar language to that contained in our bill today, in order to prohibit the use of defense funds in a manner that could be construed as recognition of Russian sovereignty over Crimea. That language has remained in the NDAA ever since.

In the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act, Congress reiterated its support for the Stimson Doctrine and its application to the illegal invasions by Russia and

occupations of Abkhazia and South Ossetia in Georgia, Crimea and Eastern Ukraine, and the Transnistria region in Moldova.

The United States must lead the way in refusing to recognize or legitimize Russia's illegal acts and its forcible annexation of Crimea. That is why I am so proud to offer this bill, along with Mr. CHABOT, that expresses the will of Congress as loud and as clear as we can, and I urge my colleagues unanimously to support it.

Mr. KINZINGER. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT), a senior member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the primary cosponsor of this bill.

Mr. CHABOT. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 596, the Crimea Annexation Non-recognition Act, and I thank my good friend from Virginia, Representative Gerry Connolly, for his work and his leadership on this legislation and many other pieces of legislation that we have worked on in a bipartisan manner in this House.

They say there is no bipartisanship here, whether it is under Democratic or Republican control, and we found a way to make that happen on the Foreign Affairs Committee over the years.

As a senior member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee and the principal Republican cosponsor of this legislation, let me state clearly and emphatically that the United States—and the world, for that matter—must never recognize Vladimir Putin's reckless Crimean land grab, which is all too reminiscent of Soviet Cold War tactics.

This bill not only definitively sets out U.S. policy that we will not recognize Putin's bogus claims of sovereignty over Crimea, but it will also prohibit our government from taking any actions that might imply our recognition of Russian claims.

Representative CONNOLLY and I first introduced this legislation back in 2014, shortly after Putin seized Crimea. Despite the intervening years, we must never grow accustomed to Russian control over the peninsula. That is one reason that makes this legislation even more vitally necessary, because over time, the world sometimes does grow accustomed to things. We must never let that happen with Putin's grab of Crimea.

Last May, Putin opened a bridge over the Kerch Strait, which separates Russia from Crimea, in an attempt to better link it, to grab it and keep it. The bridge is too low for many large vessels, which has reduced economic activity at Ukrainian ports on the Sea of Azov, thus further harming Ukraine. Even more concerning, in November, Putin's thugs illegally seized three Ukrainian naval vessels and their crews at the entrance to the Kerch Strait.

Plain and simple, Putin's illegal annexation of Crimea, as well as his adventures around the Kerch Strait and in Eastern Ukraine, have no place in a modern, democratic Europe. We must

not abandon Ukraine to Putin's bullying.

That is why I am pleased to cosponsor this legislation along with my friend, Mr. CONNOLLY, which is but a step toward a once-again free Crimea.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill so that we will never recognize Russian domination over the Crimean peninsula.

Mr. KINZINGER. Madam Speaker, I have no more speakers. I am prepared to close. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I include in the RECORD a February 27, 2019, statement by Secretary Pompeo on Crimea and Ukraine.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Office of the Spokesperson

[For Immediate Release—February 27, 2019]

STATEMENT BY SECRETARY POMPEO

CRIMEA IS UKRAINE

Five years ago, Russia's occupation of Ukraine's Crimean peninsula fueled an escalation of Russian aggression. Russia attempted to upend the international order, undermined basic human freedoms, and weakened our common security. The world has not forgotten the cynical lies Russia employed to justify its aggression and mask its attempted annexation of Ukrainian territory. Russia's use of force against a peaceful neighbor must not be tolerated by reputable states. The United States reiterates its unwavering position: Crimea is Ukraine and must be returned to Ukraine's control.

The United States remains gravely concerned by the worsening repression by Russia's occupation regime in Crimea. During the past five years, Russian occupation authorities have engaged in an array of abuses in a campaign to eliminate all opposition to its control over Crimea. As part of this campaign, Russia has arbitrarily detained and wrongfully convicted individuals for peaceful opposition to the occupation, and in some cases has forcibly transferred these individuals from occupied Crimea to Russia. The United States calls on Russia to release all of the Ukrainians, including members of the Crimean Tatar community, it has imprisoned in retaliation for their peaceful dissent. This includes Oleh Sentsov, Oleksandr Kolchenko, Volodymyr Balukh, Ruslan Zeytullayev, and approximately 70 others. We call on Russia to cease all its abuses immediately, to end its occupation of Crimea, and, in the meantime, to comply with its obligations under international law, including the law of occupation.

In the Crimea Declaration of July 25, 2018, the United States reaffirmed its refusal to recognize the Kremlin's claims of sovereignty over Crimea. The United States also condemns Russia's illegal actions in Crimea and its continued aggression against Ukraine. The United States will maintain respective sanctions against Russia until the Russian government returns control of Crimea to Ukraine and fully implements the Minsk agreements. The United States reiterates its unbending support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, within its internationally recognized borders, including its territorial waters.

Mr. KINZINGER. Madam Speaker, the Secretary writes: "In the Crimea Declaration of July 25, 2018, the United States reaffirmed its refusal to recognize the Kremlin's claims of sovereignty over Crimea. The United States also condemns Russia's illegal

actions in Crimea and its continued aggression against Ukraine. The United States will maintain respective sanctions against Russia until the Russian Government returns control of Crimea to Ukraine and fully implements the Minsk agreements. The United States reiterates its unbending support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, within its internationally recognized borders, including its territorial waters."

Madam Speaker, in our history, we have always seen the impact that our Nation has on others. When we stand up, we help them achieve a better tomorrow. We must continue to help Ukraine achieve that better future for its citizens, particularly one that is free from Russian aggression.

Recently, we sent the USS *Donald Cook* to transit through the Kerch Strait as a show of solidarity with Ukraine. Actions like these, and support for this bill, will further send the message to Vladimir Putin that the U.S. will never waver in our support for those who seek to push back against Russian oppression and coerced influence.

This is a great bill that shows the unity between Republicans and Democrats in this House, the legislative body, and the administration. I urge all Members to support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, in closing, let me say that we need to take a strong stand against Vladimir Putin and his aggressive behavior in Eastern Europe. This legislation would reaffirm in American law that Russia's annexation of Crimea is illegal and that the United States will never recognize its legitimacy.

I hope the other body will act on this measure soon after we pass it, and I hope the administration will signal its willingness to sign this legislation. There are too many questions swirling around when it comes to Russia, too many times that we don't seem to be calling Vladimir Putin out for what he has done. I think that it is something that we really need to look at very carefully, and I would hope the White House would do that.

Signing this bill will not put these concerns to rest, but it would help show that the United States won't just roll over and accept Russia's land grabs and egregious violations of international law.

I thank the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY) for his work on this bill, and I thank the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT) for his work on the bill. I am happy to support it, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 596, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

□ 1300

VLADIMIR PUTIN TRANSPARENCY ACT

Mrs. DEMINGS. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1404) to strengthen the United States response to Russian interference by providing transparency on the corruption of Russian President Vladimir Putin, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1404

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Vladimir Putin Transparency Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) According an Intelligence Community Assessment dated January 6, 2017, "Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered an influence campaign in 2016 aimed at the US presidential election. Russia's goals were to undermine public faith in the US democratic process . . . Moscow's influence campaign followed a Russian messaging strategy that blends covert intelligence operations—such as cyber activity—with overt efforts by Russian Government agencies, state-funded media, third-party intermediaries, and paid social media users or 'trolls.'".

(2) According to the Washington Post, official, public reports from the Russian government put Putin's average annual income between 2011 and 2016 at approximately \$12,000. But outside experts nevertheless have alleged that Putin's true net worth is in the billions—suggesting his extensive corruption and connection to money laundering and other activities undertaken order to enrich Putin unjustly and to hide his true financial condition from the public.

SEC. 3. ASSESSMENT EXPOSING THE CORRUPTION OF VLADIMIR PUTIN.

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the United States should do more to expose the corruption of Vladimir Putin, whose ill-gotten wealth is perhaps the most powerful global symbol of his dishonesty and his persistent efforts to undermine the rule of law and democracy in the Russian Federation.

(b) ASSESSMENT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Director of National Intelligence, in co-ordination with the Secretary of Treasury and the Secretary of State, shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees an assessment, based on all sources of intelligence, on the net worth and financial and other assets of Russian President Vladimir Putin and his family members, legitimate as well as illegitimate, including—

(1) the estimated net worth of Vladimir Putin and his family members;

(2) a description of their legitimately and illegitimately obtained assets, including all real, personal and intellectual property,