

Both men said that having a permanent, Senate-confirmed Attorney General was important. I cannot overstate Mr. Walls' and Mr. Courcelle's support for Mr. Blanche.

When former Attorney General Bill Barr endorsed Mr. Blanche, he said Mr. Blanche "will run the department as effectively as anyone could under President Trump." Some called that faint praise. I don't think that it is; I think it is a reality.

Barr specifically addressed the allegation that Mr. Blanche would be a yes-man for the President. He said that any attorney, to represent the client well, has to have tough conversations and confront a client with difficult truths; that because of his previous attorney-client relationship with President Trump, Mr. Blanche would be precisely the person to push back on President Trump but that ultimately—and here Barr echoed what I have heard from Blanche—decisions are made by the President.

Mr. Blanche is not perfect, and he will tell you this. But the choice is not between perfection and Mr. Blanche; it is between Mr. Blanche and another Acting Attorney General who may not run the Department effectively under President Trump and who, indeed, may not be as good as Mr. Blanche. This puts at risk the progress made fighting violent crime, human and drug trafficking, and fraud, and this does not serve the American people well.

This is not a referendum on President Trump; it is a decision regarding Mr. Blanche in very specific circumstances. All considered, I will vote for Mr. Blanche. I will be criticized for this vote—what is new?—but the people of Louisiana can be assured that I worked hard to understand the issue and to make the right decision.

With that, I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Oregon.

RUSSIA SANCTIONS

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I fully support taking tougher action against Russia. They have waged a deadly, years long war on Ukraine, and the United States must do more to tighten the screws on the Putin war machine.

So I am fully in favor of strong sanctions, but this bill, despite its title, is not just a sanctions bill; it gives Donald Trump massive new tariff authority that he will use to threaten our trading partners and raise prices on the American people. I believe Senators will come to deeply regret voting to give Donald Trump this tariff authority. This bill gives Trump so much discretion that he can ultimately decide what countries to tariff or what countries to exempt. He can modify tariffs at his will.

Over the last year and a half, Americans have seen what Donald Trump will do with unchecked tariff authority. They have seen his tariffs raise prices for Americans and their families on everything from food, to housing, to health care. Americans have seen small

businesses and family farms shut down because they cannot afford massive new taxes on machinery and merchandise.

The Trump tariffs go on again and off again, disrupting supply chains and making it difficult for businesses to plan, invest, and hire. Our allies, including Canada and the EU, openly question the reliability of our nation and are looking to other countries for more stable trade relationships.

As Trump turns the tariff dial up and down to punish or reward countries as he likes, the process ends up being a corrupt taxing of the American people to settle Trump's personal political scores.

If Congress passes this bill with these tariffs, Members will be condoning the tariff chaos of the last year and a half and inviting more. This bill gives Trump clear authority to put tariffs up to 100 percent on the goods Americans buy from major trading partners around the globe. That includes 100 percent tariffs on things like food, medicine, machinery, and electronics.

Congress would even be letting Trump put tariffs on allies like Hungary, Slovakia, France, Belgium, and Japan. Donald Trump can pick and choose even more countries to tariff every 180 days. That is because there is no mechanism in this bill—none whatsoever—for Congress to roll back the Trump tariffs. Trump can increase or decrease tariffs just by notifying the Congress of his decision. He is not going to be constrained by any kind of paperwork or rules.

Colleagues, this body has been fighting tooth and nail to stop Trump from abusing the laws already on the books. Trump has shown us repeatedly he won't be limited by the spirit of the law. He will use any loophole to slap tariffs on our allies and make life more expensive for Americans. The Trump tariffs are now raising prices, hurting our alliances, and opening the door to corruption. This bill will further increase the cost of living for American families when they are struggling.

To all of my colleagues who have said "Look, we want to hold down the cost of living; we want to make life more affordable": this is not going to do that. This is going to increase the cost of living for Americans as we go into the next few months. It would be a nightmare for the Americans who want to see their government tackle the affordability crisis. It would be a dangerous mistake to sign our names on a blank check that gives Trump even more power to indiscriminately use these tariffs.

So I urge my colleagues this morning to support the Paul-Wyden amendment, which would strike this new tariff authority. It would make sure that we are not giving Trump power to tax our constituents for the things they buy from trading partners around the world. There is no need to include this new tariff in the bill, and the fact that the White House won't support the bill

without new tariff powers should scare every Senator in this room.

Trump has shown over the last year and a half that he can't be trusted with unilateral power on tariffs. Everything he has done suggests that he is going to abuse this power, and I urge my colleagues this morning to vote yes on the Paul-Wyden amendment to prevent this body from handing Donald Trump a new tool for inflation and corruption.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, increasing taxes on Americans will not end Putin's war in Ukraine. The drafters of this legislation, understandably, wish to punish Vladimir Putin and send Russian invaders back to where they came from, but this bill was written such that the drafters fail to see that it will not bring peace to Ukraine but rather will deliberately make American families poorer by increasing tariffs, which are nothing but a tax on imported goods.

To save Americans from what very well could be the largest tax increase imposed by a Republican Congress, I offer an amendment that strikes the authority to impose tariffs of up to 100 percent on an ever-changing list of countries. Mark my words, this will be the largest tax increase by a Republican Congress.

Why would Republicans, who promise you they want to lower your taxes, be voting to raise your taxes \$500 billion?

In addition, Congress should not delegate its constitutional duties to the executive branch.

Now, my amendment does not touch the broad sanctions that are provided by the bill, nor does it touch the specific tariffs on Russia because I see the strong desire among Members of the Senate to use economic warfare against Putin. But I object to economic warfare against the American consumer.

Once upon a time, Republicans were distinguished from Democrats by their persistent chant that the U.S. deficit was the result of a spending problem, not a revenue problem. Yet today, many Republicans have become the cheerleaders for more revenue.

The bill before us grants the executive branch the power to raise nearly \$500 billion in revenue—in taxes. I hope I am not the only Republican left in Congress who is horrified by a bill that proposes to raise taxes a half a trillion dollars.

In addition, there is the constitutional question: Can Congress delegate its article I, section 8 authority to lay taxes and levies—can they just give it away to the executive branch?

For 100 years or more, the Supreme Court has said we can't give away our power. And in what world would we want to give away our power? The power to tax and spend was given to Congress. Why would they give that to the President? What sort of feckless Congress gives away their constitutional power?

The power was divided for a reason. Montesquieu said if you bring the legislative powers together with the executive, you will have no liberty. The powers were divided between the legislature and the executive so we could fight for liberty, so it would make it hard to raise taxes.

The answer to “Can Congress give away its power?” is an unequivocal “no.” Embedded within our Constitution is something called the nondelegation principle, which states that Congress cannot delegate its core legislative powers to another branch of government or to private entities. The Supreme Court used to enforce this nondelegation doctrine, most notably in the *Schechter Poultry* case, but that case was decided in 1935; and for much of the intervening years, the Supreme Court has been a reliable ally to lazy legislators.

Up until recently, the Supreme Court effectively relieved Congress from the hard work of legislating, but the tide is turning, frankly, with the help of several of President Trump’s nominees. Justice Gorsuch forcefully made the case for reviving the nondelegation principle by arguing that if Congress “could pass off its legislative power to the executive branch . . . legislation would risk becoming nothing more than the will of the current President.”

The problem with this legislation is that it disobeys the clear command of the Constitution: Taxes and levies must be determined by Congress. Moreover, taxation bills must originate in the House of Representatives.

Do not let sympathy for Ukraine blind you to the reality of tariffs. Tariffs are taxes on imports that are paid by Americans. They are paid by parents trying to provide for their families. They are paid by students saving up to buy their first car. Tariffs are paid by anyone who seeks to spend money on any conceivable product.

There will be those who will try to pull the wool over your eyes and tell you that despite this persistent sticker shock, despite the feeling that life just keeps getting more and more expensive, that tariffs are always paid by somebody else, by some foreign country. The Members who vote for this tax will tell you: Not to worry—these taxes will only be levied on foreign countries.

This absurd claim is provably false. Figuring out who pays tariffs is easy. All you have to do is look at those who are getting refunds. When the Supreme Court struck down the tariffs, a whole bunch of people lined up for refunds. Who is not on the list? The Chinese Government is not on the list. Canada is not on the list. Mexico is not on the list. American companies are getting the refunds because Americans pay tariffs.

And do you think the company pays the tariffs? No. They pass it along to the consumer. You are all paying higher prices. Every time you get something through retail, you are paying higher prices.

The entities that lined up for the rebates after the Supreme Court struck down the emergency tariffs were primarily American retailers such as Walmart, Target, Costco, and Nike.

Let me repeat: China is not on the refund list because China doesn’t pay the tariffs. American importers and retailers pay the tariffs, and they pass the cost of the tariffs on to the consumer.

You don’t have to take my word for it. A letter was sent to the Senate Republican and Democrat leaders by two dozen industry associations, including the Chamber of Commerce, the Consumer Technology Association, and the National Retail Association, warning about the cost of tariffs imposed by this bill.

Here are some quotes from industry concerned about these new taxes:

[T]he potential of new, broad, 100% tariffs on imports from secondary countries risks raising costs for American businesses, workers, and consumers.

That approach would effectively tax U.S. importers and consumers for foreign governments’ energy decisions—conduct that is outside the control of American companies.

They further say:

Tariffs of this scale would increase costs for everyday consumer goods, manufacturing inputs and other products while creating significant uncertainty for companies making sourcing, pricing and inventory decisions months in advance.

It could also lead to retaliatory tariffs against U.S. exports.

So it doesn’t necessarily help exports to tax imports because the other countries then will tax our exports.

They say:

Tariffs . . . are a blunt tool that can penalize law-abiding U.S. companies importing legitimate goods, invite retaliation, complicate trade negotiations and shift costs onto American families without ensuring that pressure reaches the intended actors.

These two dozen associations end their letter by saying:

We urge Congress to remove the tariff authority from the bill and instead focus on targeted sanctions, stronger enforcement against sanctions evasion and coordinated diplomacy with countries purchasing Russian energy.

Anybody concerned with the economic well-being of American families would come to the same conclusion, but it is not easy to find such common sense in Congress.

Imposing a 100-percent tariff on all goods imported from countries like China and India is the economic equivalent of shooting ourselves in the foot.

Middle- and low-income Americans enjoy a higher quality of life when they have more purchasing power for everyday necessities. Recent tariffs are estimated to have already cost the average American family \$1,700, so the average American family is already paying \$1,700 more because of these taxes that are placed on the things they buy.

Now this Republican Congress, after it just gave the American people tax cuts, is going to do the opposite. Which is it? Are we the party of lower taxes or higher taxes? This will be the largest

tax increase in recent history, perhaps the largest tax increase that a Republican Congress has put onto the people.

What are we going to say to the parents buying their kids new shoes for the school year, the minimum-wage worker who needs to buy a new part to fix their car to get to work, or the single mother buying diapers when they notice their prices have doubled?

The cost of the tariffs is not strictly monetary; these tariffs threaten to undermine America’s strategic position in the world. Some naively think that the tariffs will get China to distance itself from Russia, but it might be the opposite. Recent history suggests that they will instead push Russia and China together. China is not going to get these 100-percent tariffs and say: Oh, we are sorry. We are no longer going to cooperate with Russia. We have kind of forced Russia to give us this great deal on oil and gas that we pipe into our country, but we are sorry now, and we are going to give up on that.

No. It is going to push them closer together. The people we are worried about are going to become more allied.

Slapping a 100-percent tariff on China may inadvertently solidify the geopolitical alignment with Russia, as Beijing would become more, not less, reliant on Moscow for economic and diplomatic support.

Ryan Young is a senior economist with the Competitive Enterprise Institute. He points out that Russia is the junior partner in the alliance with China. Young reminds us that China agreed to a second natural gas pipeline between the two countries on the condition that Russia sell China its gas at a lower than market rate. Do you think China is going to give up on that? No. China will continue to buy oil and gas from Russia after this, and they, in all likelihood, will respond to our tariffs with tariffs of their own.

This is what is going to happen. It is not going to solve the situation; it is going to raise American taxes, drive Russia and China together, and then China will actually add tariffs on our goods as well. It is a huge mistake.

Imposing tariffs on China will reignite the trade war. Beijing will certainly retaliate with their own tariffs and export controls.

Maia Nikoladze, the deputy director of the Economic Statecraft Initiative at the Atlantic Council, reminded us that on “Liberation Day,” the tariffs placed on China in April of 2025 didn’t change Beijing’s behavior. Instead, those tariffs prompted China to restrict exports of critical rare earth elements. We already tried this once. They responded by restricting their exports of things we need to make batteries for cars, and then we eventually ended up negotiating lower tariffs. Do we want to go through the same world of that again?

Likewise, imposing a 100-percent tariff on India at a time when we are actively trying to court them to help us

in our competition with China is completely self-defeating. Ryan Young with the Competitive Enterprise Institute worries that imposing tariffs on India will alienate one of the most important strategic partners in Asia and a potential counterweight to China. So as we try to get India to be more aligned with us instead of with China or Russia—admiral goals—we put tariffs on India, and what does that do? It pushes them more toward China and more toward Russia.

It is also unclear whether tariffs could even be imposed on individual members of the European Union, like Slovakia and Hungary, given Europe's common trade policy.

In 2025, U.S.-EU bilateral trade was over \$1 trillion. That is making both parties rich. We have become extraordinarily rich as a country as international trade has expanded. In fact, prosperity of the individual and prosperity of the country are directly proportional to the amount of trade. Think about that. Trying to tariff individual EU countries directly undermines President Trump's recent U.S.-EU trade agreement. Should the EU retaliate against the United States, the result would be disastrous for both American businesses and consumers.

I encourage my colleagues to support my amendment that strips the counterproductive tariffs from the legislation. If not adopted, Congress should reject this strategic blunder of a bill that would do nothing to bring peace to Ukraine but, rather, raise American prices for American consumers, further weaken the dollar, destroy U.S. relations around the globe, and drive our adversaries closer together.

Mr. President, I recommend a “yes” vote on the Paul-Wyden amendment.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, very briefly. My colleague has hit a number of key points. To close, I just want to make a couple of points.

The American people who are following this debate I am sure think that stuff can be corrected, stuff can be changed. And the reality is under this particular bill, Congress has no authority to modify this deeply flawed piece of legislation. So the reality is in the next few months when we have got folks who are walking an economic tightrope here in America, balancing the food bill against the fuel bill and the fuel bill against the rent bill and the like, they are going to come to their elected officials and say: I am getting pounded by these new tariffs. I am just getting hit by an economic wrecking ball. Do something about it.

Under this legislation, Congress cannot, you know, modify this bill's tariffs. It is just not possible. So what we are going to have to do is make sure that the American people get some additional attention in other areas of the economy because under this legislation and under these tariffs, they are going to get hit by an economic wrecking

ball. It is an unforced error that doesn't have to happen.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, shortly, we will vote on the Russia sanctions bill as we have come to call it. I want to begin by thanking my colleagues for their overwhelming support for this measure, and in particular to thank Senators SHAHEEN, BRITT, WICKER, RISCH, COONS, WHITEHOUSE, Durbin, and, of course, Senators SCHUMER and THUNE. Their help has been invaluable as we reach this important moment.

Last week, with President Zelenskyy watching from the Gallery, this body sent a powerful message to Vladimir Putin and all who are supporting him with funding for his vicious, bloodthirsty, illegal war against the brave, free people of Ukraine.

Today, President Zelenskyy is watching from Ukraine, and Putin is watching from Moscow. I would like to think that Lindsey Graham is watching too. And I know how proud he would be of his sister today who has taken his place on the floor and has been such a profoundly strong and effective advocate for this bill.

Today, we say to the people of Ukraine: You are not alone. And we say to Vladimir Putin: You will not conquer Ukraine. You will not defeat these free, brave people who are turning tides against your bloodthirsty aggression.

Nearly 2 years ago, Lindsey Graham and I began working on this bill, but really the journey began with our first trip to Ukraine together some 4 years ago.

Robert Frost once said when he was asked how he began his poems, he said:

A poem begins with a lump in the throat . . .

Our journey toward this bill began with a lump in our throats and tears in our eyes when we visited Bucha, not long after the Russians were pushed out of that small town just kilometers away from President Zelenskyy's bunker, which we also visited on that trip just weeks after Ukraine succeeded in pushing them out.

We saw the mass grave where Putin's military shot innocent women and children in the back of their heads. We talked to Ukrainian troops who lost limbs, loved ones who lost sons and daughters, fathers and mothers. We talked to children who were kidnapped by Putin, literally abducted and placed in education camps.

And on one of those long train rides—we took six or seven trips into Ukraine together—we began thinking about this bill to impose scorching, sledgehammer sanctions and tariffs on Russia to stop the flow of money fueling Putin's war machine, money that was essential to his slaughterous aggression against Ukraine.

And like one of those trains, the journey to this bill was filled with a lot of bumps, a lot of stops and starts, and

through it all what sustained us, as much as anything, was Senator Graham's overwhelming sense of optimism, his sense of humor, his belief in freedom and democracy, his belief in America.

And so this bill is a tribute to him. We disagreed about many issues, he and I, and I could be on the receiving end of his anger, as well as his praise. But the partnership that we forged, I think is a lesson without exaggerating it to perhaps the people of America that, yes, we can work together and accomplish good things for the world.

One of Senator Graham's final acts as a Member of this body was to reach an accord with the White House on our behalf and secure the President's support. He died literally the next day.

I spoke to him shortly before his death, and I know as well as anyone that this Chamber—this body—will not be the same without him. We miss him, and this bill named in his honor carries on the work that he believed was so important.

It will impose scorching sanctions on the Russia war machine and the shadow fleet that sustains it. It will prevent critical resources from flowing to the Kremlin's coffers.

It will authorize the President to impose duties and penalties on the largest purchases of Russian crude oil and natural gas—punishing the profiteers for buying discounted energy products and pushing them to decrease purchases. It is a powerful deterrent against complicity in Putin's illegal war.

And it provides a powerful pressure point in stopping buyers of Russian oil and gas from continuing to provide the essential fuel for that war machine.

It will give the administration the tools it needs to punish anyone who aids Russia as they continue to evade United States sanctions and promote stronger, stricter enforcement of those sanctions.

For years, countries have been allowed to permit bad actors to broker deals and support the shadow fleet's movement all around the world. They have become fabulously rich, while preaching the need for peace. These countries will be exposed as facilitating evasion of sanctions, and it will help us end the war.

The goal is peace. We have the power to help end this war, and we cannot stand idly as a young, democratic nation desperately fights for its survival against a murderous dictator.

We know from history, appeasement is a failed hope, and hope is not a strategy. We cannot appease Putin in the hope that he will abandon his imperialist ambitions because history shows that he will not.

And his ambition doesn't end in Donbas or Luhansk. It reaches deep into Europe, and it threatens our national security and our allies' security. Yes, we need our allies, and they have stepped up to aid Ukraine in this war.

Appeasing Putin is a disservice to the brave men and women of our military

who are defending our freedom all around the globe because it puts them in greater risk if Putin thinks he can move against our NATO allies, and then we will be required to put our sons and daughters in harm's way.

For 4 years, Ukraine has refused to bow to Putin's will. They have beaten back wave after wave after wave of Russian attacks. Our military gave them maybe a few weeks, in 2022, to survive Putin's onslaught.

They pushed the Russians back in those weeks after the first wave of assault, and they have continued a brilliant campaign of using new technology that has amazed and awed the world, including our own military, which is learning from Ukraine about the use of drones and other unmanned weapons platforms.

Their ingenuity and determination are awe inspiring, even as their stockpiles of interceptors and other air defense run dry. And we must provide the kind of military defense aid—the interceptors, the PAC-3s—or the Patriot system—or the THAAD platforms that are essential to defend the Ukrainian people who are enduring—night after night after night—missiles and drones killing civilians, aimed at schools, hospitals, malls, civilian targets.

Putin not only abducts children, he kills them in their beds as they sleep with missiles and drones that are aimed purposely at civilian targets to terrorize and intimidate the people of Ukraine, but they will not yield.

And today, they continue to stand as a beacon of hope and liberty, shining against the darkness. Today, we cannot provide all that military aid that they need, but we can take this step—a step to stand with the people of Ukraine and show that their fight is our fight.

I would like to close with some brilliant, rhetorical flourish, but I would rather just recall some of Senator Graham's last words to me.

He said: This is a big effing deal. We all did good.

Decorum prevents me on the Senate floor from saying what he actually said, but I would like to say—looking across the Chamber where he sat—that he is with us today and that he will be proud of what we are doing.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. JUSTICE). The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I am so pleased to come to the floor this morning to join Senator BLUMENTHAL, one of the sponsors of this legislation, to remember Senator Lindsey Graham and to thank everyone who has worked so hard on this legislation: the Lindsey O. Graham Sanctioning Russia and Iran Act. And I so appreciate DARLINE GRAHAM's being here and her support for this.

So I am here to support the underlying bill, but I also am here to oppose the Paul-Wyden amendment. Now, I understand the concern of some of my colleagues on tariffs. I share those.

I co-led an amicus brief, challenging the President's illegal use of IEEPA to impose tariffs, and appreciated Senator WYDEN's partnership on that. That argument prevailed at the Supreme Court.

I also oppose any abuse of the tariff authorities that are currently on the books. But the authority in this bill to impose tariffs is very narrowly scoped, and it contains clear guardrails. It explicitly says that the only countries that can be subject to tariffs are the top five purchasers of oil or gas—the top five—and the top five sanctions evaders for Russian oil.

So if we are going to be successful at putting pressure on that we need to put pressure on to get Vladimir Putin to the table, we have got to shut down the money that he is getting from oil and gas, and that is what this bill would do.

These tariffs have one purpose: to make it more costly for countries to keep buying the Russian energy that funds Putin's war.

This amendment does not restore Congress' constitutional authority over trade, which listening to the authors, you might question. And if this amendment is adopted, President Trump's existing tariff authorities remain exactly where they are today. The only thing that would change would be our ability to put pressure on countries that are still buying Russian energy. So I oppose this amendment. I urge my colleagues to oppose it as well.

And I think one of the critical issues here is the urgency of where we are in this war right now. The momentum is on Ukraine's side. This is Russia's worst summer of the war yet, but we know the situation can change quickly against Ukraine.

China is supporting Russia's efforts to regain battlefield advantage by helping the Russians develop their own version of Starlink, one of the things President Zelenskyy raised a concern about the last time Senator Graham and I had a chance to meet with him in Ankara at the NATO summit.

According to President Zelenskyy, that technology that China is working on can be available as early as November. That would advance Russia's drone technology to catch up with Ukraine. The battlefield could look significantly different in the next 6 to 12 months, and that could roll back Ukraine's advantages.

Now is the time to put more pressure on Putin. This legislation, if it is advanced before the August recess, will be ahead of Russia's upcoming elections. They hold their legislative elections in mid-September. After that, Putin is likely to be required to change conscription in response to the severe shortage of recruits because they are losing 35,000 Russians a month.

Advancing the legislation ahead of Russia's upcoming elections will increase pressure on Putin to seriously revisit prospects for a peace deal.

And make no mistake: Russia is watching what we do. We have the his-

tory of this war to show that every time the United States backs away from putting pressure on Russia, from helping Ukraine, from funding the war, Russia ramps up its attacks in Ukraine. It kills more civilians.

And that is where we are. If we can't shut down the funding for the war machine that Russia is using against Ukraine, then they are going to keep at it. We have to show the determination that the United States feels to support this emerging democracy that Senator BLUMENTHAL was so eloquent to talk about.

So that is why there is real urgency for what we are doing today, not just to pass this underlying sanctions bill but to make sure that the tariffs that are funding Russia's war machine can shut down the oil and gas that is keeping that war machine going.

So I hope all of my colleagues will oppose this amendment and support the underlying bill.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, I want to join my colleague, the distinguished ranking member of the Foreign Relations Committee. We are in the same spot on this bill and on the amendment.

Just last week, I stood in this Chamber and asked my colleagues to join me in moving this bill forward, and many of them—from both sides of the aisle—did so. That vote was successful with a margin of 86 to 12. That is a rare vote at this time in the Senate.

That same night that we voted in tremendous support of Ukraine, a number of us welcomed Ukraine's President back to the Capitol, where he gave us a fulsome update on Ukraine's battlefield successes.

He expressed how Ukraine sorely needed this sanctions legislation to magnify the impact of Russia's battlefield losses by imposing crippling economic costs on Russia's economy. This could finally bring Russia to the negotiating table and end this conflict, which we all want to see happen.

But to be clear, while this legislation would help Ukraine counter Russian aggression, it also protects Idahoans—all Americans—but Idahoans, who I focus on here, as all of us focus on our own constituents, and that is always each of our priority.

Peace and stability in Europe are in America's interests. In the interconnected world we live in, prosperity in Europe only helps us here at home.

Like everyone here, I always view what we are doing here through the lens of: How will this affect my constituents at home? How will it help them? And bringing an end to this conflict will allow us to return to issues that Idahoans care about: lowering prices, unleashing domestic energy, protecting public lands, and building a better future for the next generation.

This legislation brings us much closer to that end and an end to this conflict. It will make a decisive impact

that goes beyond what can be achieved on the battlefield. It will cut off the flow of cash that powers Putin's war machine.

I have worked with my colleagues on this bill for more than a year, including my friend from New Hampshire; with Senator BLUMENTHAL; and, of course, with Senator Lindsey Graham, who was very focused on this bill; and with the President.

I have worked particularly to include sanctions in this bill against Russia's illicit shadow fleet that it uses to evade these sanctions and prop up its energy sector.

These ships and the oil sales they facilitate directly fuel Russia's war machine and threaten American and European security. They enrich Russia, China, and Iran. This bill will go a long way to stopping that shadow fleet.

I have also worked to include provisions taking aim at Russia's defense supply chains and a number of key energy projects, causing real pain to Putin and those who keep him in power. They will do that.

These tools will give the United States and our allies the leverage we need to force Russia back to the negotiating table and end this conflict.

I would be remiss if I didn't note that this bill was a culmination of many, many hours of work from my staff, Senator SHAHEEN's staff, Senator BLUMENTHAL's staff, Senator Lindsey Graham's staff, all of them and other staffs worked on this. And we usually don't thank them here on the floor, but they really need thanks on this because this went on so long and was so technical.

Finally, I would be remiss if I didn't note that this bill was a passion project for our friend Lindsey Graham, and it is fitting that we will see it move through the Senate today.

I hope to, once again, see a strong majority of my colleagues join us in this bill—in passing this bill right here and right now.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

SUPPORTING EARLY-CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS' DEDUCTIONS ACT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume legislative session and resume consideration of H.R. 5334, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 5334) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow early childhood educators to take the educator expense deduction, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 6711

(Purpose: To impose sanctions and other measures with respect to the Russian Federation.)

Ms. GRAHAM. I call up amendment No. 6711 and ask that it be reported by number.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment by number.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from South Carolina [Ms. GRAHAM], for herself and Mr. BLUMENTHAL, proposes an amendment numbered 6711.

(The amendment is printed in the RECORD of July 29, 2026, under "Text of Amendments.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kentucky.

AMENDMENT NO. 6715 TO AMENDMENT NO. 6711

(Purpose: To strike the provision relating to duties on countries that purchase Russian-origin crude oil or natural gas or facilitate sanctions evasion.)

Mr. PAUL. I call up amendment No. 6715 and ask that it be reported by number.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Kentucky [Mr. PAUL], for himself and others, proposes an amendment numbered 6715 to amendment No. 6711.

(The amendment is printed in the RECORD of July 29, 2026, under "Text of Amendments.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, the bill before us contains the largest tax increase ever passed by a Republican Congress. Worse yet, the bill transfers the taxing authority from the legislature to the executive branch, an unconstitutional delegation of power.

The Constitution clearly states that "Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, duties . . . and Excises."

Madison believed the Republic would survive only if the Constitution divided the power and pitted the executive ambition against legislative ambition. Madison would be horrified by the clamor of so many in Congress to cede the taxing authority.

My amendment strips the transfer of the taxing authority from the bill. My amendment—if it passes—will demonstrate that Congress still has a spine, still has ambition, and still supports the separation and limitation of power.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time in opposition?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mrs. BRITT. Mr. President, I ask for 2 minutes to be equally divided between myself and the Senator from Connecticut.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. BRITT. Mr. President, the Senate has a spine. That is exactly what we are doing here today is standing with a steel spine. We are standing against Putin's aggression.

You saw, this week, him actually attack innocent Ukrainians. Ballistic drones go, hit breweries. They hit innocent civilians working in warehouses. This is enough. Today, we stand together to say: We are going to cut off the flow of money to Putin.

Senator Lindsey Graham said that this part, the part that our colleague from Kentucky wants to rip out, was

actually the heart of this bill; that this was the way to hit Putin where it hurt most.

Section 113 was carefully negotiated, and these authorities expire and are not permanent.

Today, we send a message to Vladimir Putin, and we give President Trump the tools he needs to end this war.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I appreciate my colleague from Alabama's strong support of this bill. She has been instrumental in our reaching this point, and I thank her and Senator GRAHAM of South Carolina.

To state it really bluntly, Mr. President, this amendment kills the bill. It decimates the purpose of the bill, which has been the result of painstaking—sometimes painful—negotiations over months with the White House, with our colleagues here, with the U.S. Trade Representative, whom I also thank for his cooperation and assistance.

It would eliminate tariff provisions that have been narrowly constrained to the five largest purchasers of Russian oil and gas. It is not a broad, blunderbuss provision. It is narrowly targeted. And no secret, the two largest purchasers? Ninety percent, China and Russia.

So let's be real here. This narrowly targeted tariff provision is essential to the bill. The choice isn't between this bill with tariffs and a bill without tariffs. The choice is between this bill or no bill.

I oppose this amendment and urge my colleagues to vote no.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 6715

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question now occurs on adoption of the amendment.

Mr. BARRASSO. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN), the Senator from Wyoming (Ms. LUMMIS), and the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. MCCONNELL).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KELLY) is necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 32, nays 64, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 223 Leg.]

YEAS—32

Alsobrooks	Hirono	Paul
Bennet	Kaine	Peters
Blunt Rochester	Kim	Reed
Booker	Klobuchar	Sanders
Cantwell	Lujan	Schiff
Cassidy	Markey	Schumer
Gallego	Murray	Slotkin
Hassan	Ossoff	Smith
Hickenlooper	Padilla	