



UKRAINIAN AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION

Асоціація Українських Правників Америки

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Ukrainian American Bar Association's Appeal to the Members of the US Congress

The Ukrainian American Bar Association (UABA) strongly urges each member of Congress to vote for the new bill introduced by House Foreign Affairs Chairman Ed Royce, R-Calif., and co-sponsored by his ranking member, Eliot L. Engel, D-N.Y., imposing sanctions on Russia and providing economic aid to Ukraine.

An expeditious legislative response to the fast-moving international crisis in Ukraine fueled by Russian President Vladimir Putin's illegal forced annexation of Crimea is of the essence. Putin's attempts to destabilize Ukraine with military intimidation, staged political unrest and economic disruption proceed unabated. Without resistance and a concerted response from the United States and the European Union, Putin will continue to flex Russian muscle and mock Western weakness.

We cannot forget that Ukraine's independence triggered the dissolution of the Soviet Union and allowed the United States to declare that it had won the Cold War. The Kremlin is now unilaterally reversing that as the world wrings its hands. Not only does Ukraine require immediate assistance to maintain its independence, but the US must provide the assistance for the sake of its own global credibility and national security.

Now is not the time for bipartisan debate and standstill. The encouraging words of the bipartisan Committee lead by Senator John McCain which visited Kiev earlier this month and the statements by Secretary of State John Kerry and President Barack Obama must be followed by action. Please, therefore, support the new bill to avoid a Congressional deadlock and provide President Obama with the tools needed to counter Putin's aggression.

As stated by Chairman Royce in introducing the bill:

"Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and intimidation of Ukraine should be a wakeup call. The U.S. and our European friends should be bolstering the sovereignty and independence of Ukraine. That means aiding Ukraine's fledgling democracy, with its May elections looming, and bolstering its economy, including by helping [ease] Putin's energy grip over Eastern Europe. The U.S. should act immediately to increase natural gas exports to Europe, undermining Russia's monopoly, and creating American jobs. Strong sanctions against those Russians responsible for this aggression against Ukraine are critical."

Voicing bipartisan support, Representative Engel concurred:

"The United States must stand with the people of Ukraine in the wake of Russia's attack on and occupation of Crimea. This important legislation supplements the President's efforts to impose sanctions on those responsible for violating Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, looting Ukraine's economy, and violating human rights in Ukraine. It sends a clear message to President Putin and his corrupt cronies that we will not tolerate Russian aggression. The bill also provides assistance to support the people of Ukraine as they work to rebuild their economy and prepare for democratic elections, and reaffirms our commitment to the security of our NATO partners in East and Central Europe."

By swiftly enacting this legislation, President Obama will be placed in a position to not only counter Putin, but to rally international support for Ukraine during meetings with European officials next week in Brussels and The Hague. United States leadership and power in this international crisis must be reinforced through bipartisan legislative action.

Your affirmative vote is therefore respectfully requested.

For further information, please contact

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This appeal was authored by UABA Member Myron Martynetz, J.D.