

of the aisle. The House passed it twice; the administration strongly supports it; and the Syrian people desperately need it. The clock is running out in the other body, with one single Member opposing it.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the Caesar bill and the resolution before us today, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

In closing, I thank my colleagues, the ranking member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Mr. ENGEL; Major BRIAN MAST of Florida; as well as the leadership on both sides of the aisle, for their bipartisan work on this resolution.

The Syrian people deserve a government that respects basic human rights and a government that is free of Iranian-backed militias. As long as the Assad regime remains in power, this will not be the case.

The administration needs to develop a strategy toward a sustainable political transition in Syria and to prevent Iranian entrenchment, recognizing that Russia has not been a reliable partner in either effort.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to back this resolution to once again condemn the Assad regime, Russia, and Iran for their unspeakable crimes against the Syrian people, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1165.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXPRESSING OPPOSITION TO THE COMPLETION OF NORD STREAM II

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1035) expressing opposition to the completion of Nord Stream II, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 1035

Whereas Nord Stream II is an underwater gas pipeline that, if completed, will transport natural gas from the Russian Federation through the Baltic Sea to Germany;

Whereas Russia controls the supply of nearly 40 percent of Europe's gas and 11 European countries rely on Russian gas for 75 percent or more for their annual needs;

Whereas Nord Stream II will increase Russian control over the European energy market;

Whereas Donald Tusk, the President of the European Council, stated that Nord Stream II would "not help diversification, nor would

it reduce [European] dependency" on Russian gas;

Whereas it has been longstanding United States policy to support European energy security through diversification of supplies, such as the Southern Gas Corridor which will deliver Caspian Sea energy resources to Southern and Central Europe;

Whereas the existing Ukrainian gas transit system currently has 55 billion cubic meters of spare capacity which is equal to Nord Stream II's planned capacity;

Whereas Ukraine has been a stable and reliable transit hub for energy flowing to European destinations;

Whereas Russia's geopolitical interest in Nord Stream II is not to increase European energy security, but rather to drive a wedge between countries in Europe and drastically diminish Ukraine's political leverage regarding Russia and the significant income Ukraine derives from transit fees;

Whereas according to Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Energy Diplomacy, Sandra Oudkirk, "because [Nord Stream II] has such a potentially large impact on the national security of some of our largest partners in the world, it has an impact on our national security"; and

Whereas Members of Congress on a bipartisan basis have expressed strong opposition to Nord Stream II through statements and legislation: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) finds that Nord Stream II is a drastic step backwards for European energy security and United States interests;

(2) calls upon European governments to reject the Nord Stream II project;

(3) urges the President to use all available means to support European energy security through a policy of reducing reliance on the Russia Federation; and

(4) supports the imposition of sanctions with respect to Nord Stream II under section 232 of the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (22 U.S.C. 9526).

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material in the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, for many years, Russia has conducted a campaign of armed aggression and intimidation against many neighboring countries, but especially Ukraine and Georgia. That threat now includes massive Russian military exercises along the border of our NATO allies and repeated intrusions into the air and sea space of these and other countries in Europe.

But Vladimir Putin is also employing more subtle weapons of influence. This includes leveraging energy exports, especially oil and natural gas. Many Eu-

ropean countries, including key NATO allies, are dependent on Russian energy and, thus, are vulnerable to Moscow's pressure.

But even as the United States, its NATO allies, and other partners are seeking to impose economic costs on Russia to force it to end its aggression, a massive new pipeline known as Nord Stream II is being built. It will increase the flow of Russian gas directly to Germany and on to other countries in the heart of Europe.

Moscow's strategy is to undermine the energy security of our NATO allies, because the more dependent they are on Russian energy, the greater Moscow's influence over them will be.

Nord Stream II has another purpose, which is to strike at Ukraine. It will end Moscow's reliance on Ukraine's natural gas pipelines, thereby cutting off an important source of revenue and eliminating one of Ukraine's few means of leverage against Russian aggression.

H.R. 3364, the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act, which I introduced and was passed overwhelmingly by Congress, authorizes the President to impose sanctions on persons assisting the construction of this and other pipelines.

This resolution recognizes the danger that Nord Stream II represents to the Atlantic alliance and urges the President to use the authority Congress has given him to prevent this pipeline from being constructed.

If Nord Stream II is completed, it will undermine U.S. interests in Europe by rendering key NATO allies more vulnerable to Russian blackmail and convincing Moscow that its policy of aggression is, in fact, succeeding.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time, and I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) control the balance of my time.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this measure.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. CONAWAY of Texas for authoring this resolution, and, again, I thank Chairman ROYCE.

Mr. Speaker, in Europe's far eastern reaches, construction has begun on a new pipeline to move natural gas, the Nord Stream II. If this project reaches completion, it will represent much more than a way to move fuel from point A to point B. It will, in fact, be a new tool for Russia to interfere in European politics, to pit ally against ally and neighbor against neighbor, to put down deeper roots in the heart of the European Union, and to weaken efforts to confront Russia for a range of aggressive behaviors.

Russia has already shown the way it uses its gas resources as a weapon, choking off supplies to Ukraine and inflating prices. If the Nord Stream II

goes forward, this dangerous practice could increase a hundredfold.

We want to see a Europe that has access to a range of energy sources. The last thing European countries should do is become more dependent on Russian gas. There are plenty of other options, whether from the Caspian basin or from right here in the United States.

This measure calls on European governments to reject this clear threat to stability and security. It is an appeal to our allies not to allow Russia another avenue to undermine European unity and involve itself in European politics.

Mr. Speaker, I am glad to support this measure, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY), the chairman of the Committee on Agriculture and the author of this measure.

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding, and I thank the ranking member for bringing forth this resolution that I cosponsored.

Mr. Speaker, Nord Stream II is an underwater gas pipeline that, if completed, will transport natural gas from the Russian Federation—Russian gas—through the Baltic Sea to Germany.

This project may seem innocent enough, but it does several very dangerous things. One, it circumvents Ukraine, and the impact it has there. Two, it further dominates the European energy supply. Three, it will threaten European security and stability. And, four, it attempts to drive a wedge between NATO allies.

This project is being sold to our European allies and partners as many things. They are being told, and we are being told, that the current routes lack transit capacity to meet the demand in Western Europe. Mr. Speaker, this is false. There is a 55 billion cubic meter surplus in transit lines existing currently through Ukraine that Nord Stream II plans to completely circumvent, which is the capacity of the Nord Stream II.

□ 1545

In other words, Mr. Speaker, Russia is working to strangle Ukraine's existing pipeline. Once Nord Stream II reaches its planned terminus in Germany, it is to move southward away from Western markets and back into existing lines.

Mr. Speaker, the impact that that will have on the Ukraine pipeline is that, if it goes empty, then it will cease to exist and cease to operate. The argument that if Russia tried to use Nord Stream II as some leverage they could revert back to using the gas going through Ukraine lines is simply false and is misleading.

We are also being told that the pipeline will reduce gas prices in Europe. This also is false. Nord Stream II circumvents market competitors and fur-

ther reinforces Russia's dominance in the market, essentially creating zero incentive to lower energy prices.

We are also being told that Nord Stream II is a commercial deal with zero geopolitical impact. Compared to Nord Stream I, which is owned by a variety of stakeholders from Western Europe, Nord Stream II is 100 percent Russian owned and operated through Gazprom, which is controlled by the Russian state, i.e., Vladimir Putin, who is known to pursue political goals and whose chairman, Alexey Miller, is currently sanctioned by the United States.

Mr. Speaker, the handwriting is on the wall. It could not be clearer, and we can no longer kid ourselves what Nord Stream II is and what it is not. It will provide greater latitude for the Russians to continue defiance of global norms, sovereign borders, and international law. The project is simply another tool for Vladimir Putin to wield in Russia's ever-increasing aggressive and subversive activities against the West.

Mr. Speaker, Nord Stream II is a danger to peace as we know it. Our German and NATO colleagues should see clearly what it is. It allows Vladimir Putin to have an additional place to put his boot on the jugular of Europe.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage support for this resolution.

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

Mr. Speaker, Russia is already enough of a problem for our European friends. Putin's efforts to undermine democracy and stoke instability are a constant threat to European peace and unity. In 6 months' time, Russia could have another way to exert even more leverage on Europe, and that is if its development of the Nord Stream II pipeline goes forward. Today we are going on record to say that that is a terrible idea, and we hope our allies and partners in Europe see it the same way.

So I again thank the authors of this measure, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE), chairman of the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Nord Stream II is energy blackmail. If completed, it will make our European allies more dependent on Russian gas to meet their energy needs.

For three decades, Russia has used its abundant energy supplies to coerce European neighbors into doing its bidding. Europe, lacking natural gas reserves of its own, once had little choice in energy providers, allowing the Kremlin to block the flow of gas if Europe was opposing its interests.

In fact, I was in Ukraine in 2009 when the Russians turned off the gas in Ukraine, and it was cold. People died. It is blackmail since they are a monop-

oly on European natural gas. This includes forcing Europe's silence over Russia's illegal aggression in not only Ukraine, but Georgia and Crimea as well.

Today, Europe has other options, however. American natural gas is increasingly available on the global market thanks to the advances in technology. In 2019, the United States' LNG exports are expected to surge by almost 80 percent. In Texas, Mr. Speaker, we have more natural gas than we ever had and more than we need. We should use all we can, and then we should sell the rest to the Europeans.

Across Europe, more LNG terminals are coming online and allowing more American natural gas to reach the European market. Even Germany has pledged to build a new LNG terminal as a result of President Trump's push to renew the transatlantic trade relationship. With the expanding availability of U.S. natural gas, Europe can and should say "no" to Nord Stream II.

Vladimir Putin, the Napoleon of Siberia, cannot be trusted to be a fair trading partner. His recent aggression in Ukraine demonstrates Russia is a threat and not a friend. We must pass this resolution and send a message to our European allies that Nord Stream II is a bad idea.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the chairman of the Agriculture Committee, Mr. CONAWAY, for bringing this resolution, and I also want to thank the ranking member and chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee for their support.

And that is just the way it is.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, Russia's ongoing aggression has taken many forms, from outright invasion and annexation of territory in Ukraine to cyberattacks and other assaults against the U.S. and our NATO allies.

One of the most powerful weapons in its armory is its export of energy, especially oil and gas. The Nord Stream II pipeline from Russia to Germany will hand Moscow another source of influence to wield against our NATO allies and Ukraine. The result will be to undermine Europe's energy security and perhaps the will to resist Russian aggression.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to vote for this resolution and urge the President to use all of the means at his disposal to prevent this pipeline from being constructed. Only then can U.S. interests in Europe, including the integrity of the NATO alliance, be made secure.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1035, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the

rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES WITH RESPECT TO UKRAINE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1162) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives with respect to Ukraine, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 1162

Whereas the United States is committed to supporting international norms and agreements governing the peaceful relations between countries;

Whereas the Russian Federation has repeatedly violated international norms and agreements by its continuing aggression against Ukraine, including directing and arming separatist forces in eastern Ukraine and forcibly occupying and illegally annexing the Ukrainian territory of Crimea;

Whereas the Russian Federation continues to foment conflict in Ukraine in order to undermine the Ukrainian Government and economy;

Whereas these actions have caused tremendous suffering for the Ukrainian people, with thousands of Ukrainians killed both in battle and in their homes, and hundreds of thousands made refugees;

Whereas the Russian Federation continues to deny any responsibility for the destruction of Malaysian Airlines flight 17 over Ukraine, which killed 298 innocent civilians;

Whereas the Russian Federation has continuously failed to meet its commitments under the Minsk II agreement;

Whereas the United States and its allies and partners around the world continue to support the Ukrainian people in their efforts to strengthen their government, economy, and military in order to bring peace and prosperity to their country and to the surrounding region;

Whereas the United States and its allies and partners around the world have imposed punitive sanctions and other measures against the Russian Federation for its continued aggression against Ukraine, including its occupation of Crimea;

Whereas the Russian Federation continues to expand its aggression against Ukraine, including militarization of the Azov Sea and blockading the Kerch Strait in contravention of international norms and agreements;

Whereas, on November 25, 2018, the Russian Federation fired upon and rammed Ukrainian vessels attempting to pass through the Kerch Strait and seized the Ukrainian vessels and their crews: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) condemns the Russian Federation's firing upon, ramming, and seizing Ukrainian vessels and crews attempting to pass through the Kerch Strait on November 25, 2018, as violations of binding international norms and agreements;

(2) calls on the Russian Federation to immediately return the Ukrainian vessels and their crews to Ukraine;

(3) calls on the Russian Federation to cease its violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and its efforts to prevent Ukrainian vessels from transiting the Kerch Strait, as is Ukraine's

right under international norms and agreements;

(4) reaffirms the United States commitment to provide the people of Ukraine with political, economic, and security assistance to enable them to secure their independence, democracy, and prosperity; and

(5) encourages the President and allies and partners of the United States to hold the Russian Federation accountable for its ongoing aggression against Ukraine.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on this measure.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman ROYCE and esteemed Ranking Member ENGEL for their swift action in putting this important and timely resolution together in support of the people of Ukraine.

For far too long, we have witnessed Putin's increased aggression against Ukraine, directing and arming separatist forces on Ukraine soil and forcibly occupying and annexing the Ukrainian territory of Crimea.

More recently, Russian forces were firing upon, ramming, and seizing Ukrainian vessels and crews attempting to pass through the Kerch Strait, in clear violation of international norms and agreements.

The 2014 destruction of Malaysia Airlines flight 17 that killed close to 300 people also demonstrated the threat to civilians in this conflict. Until this day, Putin continues to deny any responsibility for that heinous act. Meanwhile, thousands of Ukrainians continue to be killed fighting for their basic freedoms that we as Americans hold dear, while hundreds of thousands flee looking for a safe haven.

Mr. Speaker, Putin's actions are simply unacceptable, and the United States and our allies must stand strong against Russia. That is why this resolution is so important. We must make it clear that we truly support the people of Ukraine and their aspirations for a free and democratic society.

For that, it is crucial that the United States provides the kind of assistance—politically, militarily, and economically—that will allow Ukraine to fight Russia's increasing coercion. We must also use all of the tools at our disposal, because these are not isolated issues, to ensure that Putin and his regime pay a heavy price for Russia's aggression.

Through this resolution and other measures, we can demonstrate to Putin and the world that we are paying close attention, that we will continue to support the people of Ukraine and do what is necessary to protect Ukraine and other countries threatened by his imperial ambitions, and to ensure that they can live in peace and live in security.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this measure to condemn Putin's despotic rule, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this measure.

Let me start by thanking Chairman ROYCE for bringing this measure forward. He and I introduced this resolution a few weeks ago after the latest flare-up of Russian aggression in Ukraine.

I also want to thank the gentlewoman from Florida, who has always, through the years, time and time again, been standing up with us for what is right and really showing a great moral compass.

I am glad that, as we wrap up this Congress and as Chairman ROYCE wraps up a distinguished career as a Member of the House, we are again working together, working across the aisle with a bipartisan commitment to American leadership and American values. That has been the hallmark of the Foreign Affairs Committee in the 6 years Mr. ROYCE has been chairman and I have been ranking member. I am grateful that we are going out of this Congress on the same, positive, good note.

Mr. Speaker, this measure is another opportunity for the House to go on record condemning the aggressive and destructive behavior of Russia under Vladimir Putin. Russia had shredded international norms and laws with its illegal occupation of Crimea, its violent campaign in eastern Ukraine, the downing of Malaysia Airlines flight 17, and Russia's ceaseless shirking of its obligations under the Minsk II peace agreement, all at a cost of thousands of lives.

Most recently, Russia has blockaded the Kerch Strait and militarized the Sea of Azov. A few weeks ago, Russian forces fired on Ukrainian vessels attempting to pass through the strait, ultimately seizing the vessels and their crews as well.

What is remarkable about this latest action, Mr. Speaker, is just how brazen it is. Typically, Putin has always made sure that there is some veil of deniability over his dirty work so that he can say up is down and cast blame somewhere else.

But this time, Russian forces are operating out in the open. It is almost as though Putin thinks he can turn the international order on its head and there won't be any consequences. I cannot imagine where he got that idea.

My measure that we are now considering says that Russia's latest aggression cannot stand. It calls upon the