

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

October 15, 2026

The President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As Russia prepares to wage a fifth winter campaign against Ukraine, the United States has an opportunity to reinvigorate peace efforts by placing maximum pressure on Vladimir Putin and the governments and networks that finance his war. We write to thank you for signing the *Lindsey O. Graham Sanctioning Russia and Iran Act of 2026* into law, and to urge its full and faithful implementation by the first deadline on October 18. Utilizing the tools for economic pressure in this law will be decisive in forcing Putin to take peace talks seriously.

Timely and complete execution of the first round of mandatory sanctions will deter Russia's increasing attacks on Ukrainian civilians and their livelihoods. Russia has intensified strikes on Ukraine's civilian infrastructure and on cargo ships that carry global supplies of grain,¹ and it is blocking food and medicine from reaching civilians in occupied territories.² Just as Iran's attacks on shipping in the Strait of Hormuz threatened global energy markets,³ Russia's campaign against shipping in the Black Sea threatens global food security and demands an equally firm response. The Kremlin's fearful response to this law underlines its power to finally force Russia to stop the killing.⁴ The Administration's sanctions against the illicit A7 network propping up Russia and Iran's war efforts is a strong opening salvo in this effort.⁵

We therefore urge the Administration to apply the Graham law's sanctions to their fullest extent and without delay. Designations should reach the officials, oligarchs, banks, and state enterprises directing and financing the war, as well as the foreign banks, shadow fleet operators, and intermediaries that help Russia evade restrictions. We are particularly concerned by Treasury's October 9 issuance of General License 135, which authorizes transactions involving Russian-origin diesel, including imports into the United States. We urge the Administration to revoke this

¹ Santora, M. (2026, August 13). Russian Blockade of Major Ukrainian Ports Threatens Global Grain Supplies. The New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/08/13/world/europe/russia-ukraine-ports-odesa-cargo-ship-attacks.html>

² Serguei Doubine. (2026, September 28). Ukraine's city of Oleshky faces starvation as Russia blocks all aid. Euronews; euronews.com. <https://www.euronews.com/2026/09/28/ukraines-city-of-oleshky-faces-starvation-as-russia-blocks-all-aid>

³ The. (2025). The Middle East and Global Energy Markets – Topics - IEA. IEA. <https://www.iea.org/topics/the-middle-east-and-global-energy-markets>

⁴ Raufoglu, A. (2026, September 17). US Congress Passes Sweeping Russia Sanctions Bill, Sends It To Trump. RFE/RL. <https://www.rferl.org/a/us-congress-sweeping-russia-iran-sanctions-bill/33857946.html>

⁵ Krolik, Aaron. (2026, October 1). U.S. Targets Russian Firm, a Significant 'Criminal Organization,' With New Sanctions. The New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/10/01/business/a7-russia-us-sanctions.html>

license and not issue further general licenses that reopen Russian energy transactions and restore revenue to the Kremlin's war chest.

Methodical application of the law's secondary tariffs will cut into the energy revenue that sustains Russia's war and make clear that the countries financing it will share in its cost. Oil and gas sales remain the Kremlin's most important source of income,⁶ and China and India remain its largest purchasers of crude.⁷ The law directs tariffs on the largest importers of Russian energy and the leading facilitators of sanctions evasion, and we call on the Administration to apply them precisely. Country determinations should rest on authoritative trade and maritime data, and the methodology behind them must be shared with Congress. Tariff rates should serve as leverage to secure verifiable commitments to reduce purchases of Russian energy, easing as reductions are demonstrated.

Precise targeting of these tariffs will also preserve the allied unity that has constrained Russia's war economy. European allies have committed to eliminating their imports of Russian oil and gas by the end of 2027, and many have already made substantial reductions.⁸ The law provides exceptions and rate adjustments for countries taking such steps, and we ask the Administration to apply them as Congress intended. Penalizing partners who are already cutting off Moscow and supporting Ukraine would undercut America's greatest leverage over the Kremlin—the powerful international coalition working to isolate Putin while his invasion continues.

Disciplined use of the law's waiver authority and close consultation with Congress will sustain this pressure over time and demonstrate global credibility. We ask that any waiver be narrow, time-limited, and tied to measurable reductions in support for Russia's war, and that no waiver be used to defer the law's core provisions. We further request timely delivery of the required tariff justifications and a briefing for the committees of jurisdiction following the October 18 deadline, as well as regular updates ahead of each 180-day review. In advance of the deadline, we respectfully request answers to the following questions:

1. What actions will the Administration complete by October 18 to demonstrate that the law's mandatory sanctions, secondary tariffs, and prohibitions are being fully implemented, and will any provision be delayed or waived?
2. Which Russian officials, oligarchs, banks, and state enterprises will be designated by October 18, and will these designations extend to the foreign banks, shadow fleet operators, and intermediaries that help Russia evade sanctions?
3. Which countries will be subject to secondary tariffs by October 18? What trade and maritime data was used to identify them, and how will the exceptions and rate adjustments be applied to allies reducing their purchases of Russian energy?
4. What benchmarks will the Administration use to demonstrate to Congress and the American people that these measures are increasing pressure on Putin, such as

⁶ Reuters Staff. (2026, June 3). Russia's oil and gas revenue rises 32% y/y to \$9.26 billion in May, data shows. Reuters. <https://www.reuters.com/business/energy/russias-oil-gas-revenue-rises-32-yy-926-billion-may-data-shows-2026-06-03/>

⁷ IER. (2025, September 12). India and China Are Russia's Largest Oil Importers. IER.

<https://www.instituteforenergyresearch.org/international-issues/india-and-china-are-russias-largest-oil-importers/>

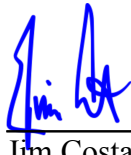
⁸ Cook, L., & McNeil, S. (2025, May 6). The EU seeks to halt Russian gas imports by the end of 2027 and ban new contracts already this year. AP News. <https://apnews.com/article/europe-russia-gas-contracts-2027-hungary-slovakia-64a06c9062832ff92047cb736b896f78>

reductions in Russia's energy revenue and in third-country purchases of Russian oil and gas?

5. How does the Administration reconcile General License 135 with the existing statutory ban on Russian energy imports, and what impact does it expect the license to have on Russia's energy revenues?

Putin has repeatedly shown that he responds to pressure, not goodwill. With the October 18 deadline approaching, we again urge you to implement this law fully and faithfully. This will make clear that American resolve is bipartisan and durable, and that the cost of continuing this war will only grow until Russia comes to the negotiating table. We remain committed to Ukraine's defense and to a just and lasting peace. We stand ready to work with your Administration to ensure this law achieves the purpose for which Congress enacted it.

Sincerely,



Jim Costa
Member of Congress



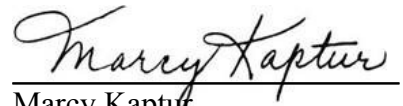
Brian K. Fitzpatrick
Member of Congress



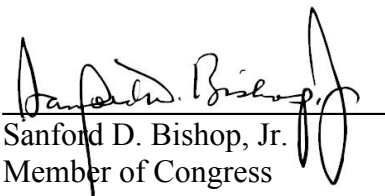
Joe Wilson
Member of Congress



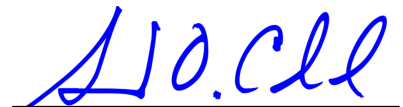
Mike Quigley
Member of Congress



Marcy Kaptur
Member of Congress



Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.
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Salud Carbajal
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Ed Case

Ed Case
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Steve Cohen

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Madeleine Dean

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Jared Golden

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Josh Gottheimer

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John W. Mannion

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Melanie A. Stansbury

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Dina Titus

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Jim Tokuda

Jim Tokuda
Member of Congress

Michael T. McCaul

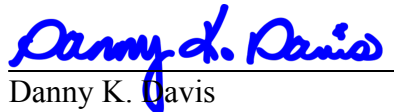
Michael T. McCaul
Member of Congress

Don Bacon

Don Bacon
Member of Congress

Dan Newhouse

Dan Newhouse
Member of Congress



Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress

cc: The Honorable Marco Rubio, Secretary of State; The Honorable Scott Bessent, Secretary of the Treasury.