

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 8329

To reauthorize and modify the Belarus Democracy Act of 2004.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 8, 2024

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey (for himself, Mr. KEATING, Mr. KEAN of New Jersey, Ms. KAPTUR, and Mr. WILSON of South Carolina) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committees on Financial Services, and the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To reauthorize and modify the Belarus Democracy Act of 2004.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Belarus Democracy,
5 Human Rights, and Sovereignty Act of 2024”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 Section 2 of the Belarus Democracy Act of 2004
3 (Public Law 108–347; 22 U.S.C. 5811 note) is amended
4 to read as follows:

5 **“SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

6 “Congress finds the following:

7 “(1) The International Covenant on Civil and
8 Political Rights, done in New York December 19,
9 1966, was ratified by Belarus in 1973, guaranteeing
10 Belarusians the freedom of expression and the free-
11 dom of association.

12 “(2) Alyaksandr Lukashenka has ruled Belarus
13 as an undemocratic dictatorship since the first presi-
14 dential election in Belarus in 1994, and subsequent
15 presidential elections have been neither free nor fair,
16 failing to meet minimal international electoral stand-
17 ards.

18 “(3) In response to the repression and violence
19 during the 2006 presidential election, Congress
20 passed the Belarus Democracy Reauthorization Act
21 of 2006 (Public Law 109–480).

22 “(4) In 2006, President George W. Bush issued
23 Executive Order 13405, titled ‘Blocking Property of
24 Certain Persons Undermining Democratic Processes
25 or Institutions in Belarus’, which authorized the im-

1 position of sanctions against persons responsible
2 for—

3 “(A) undermining democratic processes in
4 Belarus; or

5 “(B) participating in human rights abuses
6 related to political repression in Belarus.

7 “(5) In March 2011, the Senate unanimously
8 passed Senate Resolution 105, which—

9 “(A) condemned the December 2010 elec-
10 tion in Belarus as ‘illegitimate, fraudulent, and
11 not representative of the will or the aspirations
12 of the voters in Belarus’; and

13 “(B) called on the Lukashenka regime ‘to
14 immediately and unconditionally release all po-
15 litical prisoners in Belarus who were arrested in
16 association with the December 19, 2010, elec-
17 tion’.

18 “(6) The Government of Belarus continues to
19 engage in a pattern of clear and persistent gross vio-
20 lations of internationally recognized human rights,
21 and basic principles of democratic governance.

22 “(7) The Government of Belarus continues to
23 subject thousands of pro-democracy political activists
24 and peaceful protesters to harassment, beatings, and
25 imprisonment, particularly as a result of their at-

1 tempts to peacefully exercise their right to freedom
2 of assembly and association.

3 “(8) The Government of Belarus continues to
4 suppress independent media and journalists and to
5 restrict access to the internet, including social media
6 and other digital communication platforms, in viola-
7 tion of the right to freedom of speech and expression
8 of those dissenting from the dictatorship of
9 Alyaksandr Lukashenka.

10 “(9) The Government of Belarus continues a
11 systematic campaign of harassment, repression, and
12 closure of nongovernmental organizations, including
13 independent trade unions and entrepreneurs, cre-
14 ating a climate of fear that inhibits the development
15 of civil society and social solidarity.

16 “(10) The Government of Belarus has pursued
17 a policy undermining the country’s sovereignty and
18 independence by making Belarus’ political, economic,
19 cultural, and societal interests subservient to those
20 of Russia.

21 “(11) The Government of Belarus continues to
22 reduce the independence of Belarus through integra-
23 tion into a so-called ‘Union State’ that is under the
24 control of Russia.

1 “(12) In advance of the August 2020 presi-
2 dential elections in Belarus, authorities acting on be-
3 half of President Lukashenka arrested journalists,
4 bloggers, political activists, and the leading political
5 opposition candidates, leading to demonstrations in
6 support of democracy.

7 “(13) On August 9, 2020, the Government of
8 Belarus conducted a presidential election that was
9 held under undemocratic conditions, did not meet
10 international standards, involved government malfea-
11 sance and serious irregularities with ballot counting
12 and the reporting of election results, and included
13 restrictive measures that impeded the work of local
14 independent observers and did not provide sufficient
15 notice to the Organization for Security and Coopera-
16 tion in Europe (OSCE) to allow for the OSCE to
17 monitor the elections, as is customary.

18 “(14) Illegitimate president Alyaksandr
19 Lukashenka declared a landslide victory in the elec-
20 tion and claimed to have received more than 80 per-
21 cent of the votes cast in the election.

22 “(15) The leading opposition candidate,
23 Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, formally disputed the re-
24 ported results and was detained by government au-
25 thorities before being forced into exile in Lithuania.

1 “(16) Later in August, 2020, the United States
2 Deputy Secretary of State, Stephen Biegun, and Eu-
3 ropean Union High Representative for Foreign and
4 Security Policy, Josep Borrell, issued statements de-
5 claring the Belarus elections to be fraudulent and
6 neither free nor fair.

7 “(17) Following the illegitimate election results,
8 tens of thousands of Belarusian protestors took to
9 the streets, led predominately by women, resulting in
10 the largest protest rallies in Belarus’ modern his-
11 tory, with over 1,400 reported as injured by
12 Belarusian police in August and September 2020,
13 over 37,000 detained by May 2021, and several
14 killed for protesting the fraudulent election.

15 “(18) The Government of Belarus has consist-
16 ently restricted the free flow of information to si-
17 lence the opposition and to conceal the regime’s vio-
18 lent crackdown on peaceful protestors, including
19 through the suppression of independent media and
20 journalists, and disruption of free internet access.

21 “(19) After the employees of state media out-
22 lets walked off the job in protest rather than help
23 report misleading government propaganda,
24 Lukashenka confirmed that he ‘asked the Russians’

1 to send teams of Russian journalists to replace local
2 employees.

3 “(20) Following Alyaksandr Lukashenka’s Sep-
4 tember 23, 2020, inauguration, the United States,
5 the European Union, numerous European states, the
6 United Kingdom, and Canada announced that they
7 cannot consider Mr. Lukashenka as the legitimately
8 elected leader of Belarus.

9 “(21) As a result of the Lukashenka regime’s
10 violence against the Belarusian people and depriva-
11 tion of their fundamental rights, the United States
12 Congress passed and the President signed into law
13 the Belarus Democracy, Human Rights, and Sov-
14 ereignty Act of 2020 to demand the rights of the
15 Belarusian people be respected and to hold account-
16 able those who undermine them.

17 “(22) As a result of the Lukashenka regime’s
18 violence against its own people, in December 2020,
19 Members of Congress and transatlantic parliamen-
20 tarians wrote a letter to the International Ice Hock-
21 ey Federation President demanding the Champion-
22 ship be relocated from Belarus.

23 “(23) In response to the Government of
24 Belarus’ repressive actions following the 2020 elec-
25 tion, the United States, along with the European

1 Union, imposed various sanctions packages on indi-
2 viduals and entities involved with the suppression of
3 democracy in Belarus, including—

4 “(A) the Central Election Commission of
5 the Republic of Belarus and officials deter-
6 mined to be responsible for undermining democ-
7 racy in Belarus;

8 “(B) entities and persons determined to be
9 involved in the violent suppression of protestors,
10 such as the Minsk Special Purpose Police Unit,
11 the Main Internal Affairs Directorate of the
12 Minsk City Executive Committee, and KGB
13 Alpha; and

14 “(C) state-owned enterprises that provide
15 revenue to support Lukashenka’s authoritarian
16 regime.

17 “(24) In April 2021, the House of Representa-
18 tives passed House Resolution 124 reaffirming that
19 the August 2020 elections were neither free nor fair
20 and that the House of Representatives does not rec-
21 ognize Alyaksandr Lukashenka as Belarus’ legiti-
22 mate president.

23 “(25) On May 23, 2021, the Government of
24 Belarus forced Ryanair Flight 4978 to land in
25 Belarus as it neared the border of Lithuania after

1 calling in a false bomb report and subsequently ar-
2 rested independent Belarusian opposition blogger
3 and political activist Raman Pratasevich and his
4 girlfriend, threatening the safety of every passenger
5 aboard the civilian flight, and ultimately detaining
6 Pratasevich as a political prisoner.

7 “(26) In May 2021, the European Union
8 pledged a comprehensive plan of economic support
9 worth up to 3 billion euros to assist in the develop-
10 ment of a future, democratic Belarus following a
11 democratic transition.

12 “(27) As of April 2024, the Government of
13 Belarus, led illegally by Alyaksandr Lukashenka, un-
14 lawfully holds nearly 1,400 people as political pris-
15 oners, including dozens of journalists such as Ihar
16 Losik and Andrey Kuznechyk from Radio Free Eu-
17 rope/Radio Liberty.

18 “(28) The Government of Belarus, led illegally
19 by Alyaksandr Lukashenka, has consistently
20 weaponized migrants and asylum seekers by trans-
21 porting them to Belarus’ borders with the NATO
22 and European Union countries of Latvia, Lithuania,
23 and Poland in an attempt to destabilize each country
24 by creating diplomatic border crises, and in violation
25 of the migrant and asylum seekers’ human rights.

1 “(29) The Government of Belarus has been
2 complicit in Russia’s illegal and full-scale invasion of
3 Ukraine.

4 “(30) In advance of Russia’s unprovoked war of
5 aggression against Ukraine, Alyaksandr Lukashenka
6 opened Belarus’ borders to the Russian military,
7 serving as a staging area, providing bases for train-
8 ing and for launching air strikes and invasion forces,
9 and providing logistical support to the Russian inva-
10 sion force which attacked Ukraine in February
11 2022.

12 “(31) In February 2022, just days after Rus-
13 sia’s unprovoked invasion of Ukraine, Alyaksandr
14 Lukashenka held a constitutional referendum de-
15 scribed by the Department of State as ‘not free or
16 fair’ which, among other provisions, would endow
17 Lukashenka with lifetime immunity from prosecu-
18 tion for his crimes, allow Russian nuclear weapons
19 to be stationed on the territory of Belarus, and for-
20 mally revoke Belarus’ status as a neutral nation.

21 “(32) Since the start of Russia’s brutal and
22 unprovoked war of aggression in Ukraine, the Gov-
23 ernment of Belarus has consistently worked to fur-
24 ther the so-called ‘Union State’ with the Russian

1 Federation and deepen joint military and economic
2 ties to support Russia’s war effort.

3 “(33) Throughout Russia’s brutal and
4 unprovoked war of aggression in Ukraine, the Gov-
5 ernment of Belarus has participated in the abduc-
6 tion and illegal deportation of Ukrainian civilians
7 from territory occupied by the Russian Federation,
8 including thousands of children sent to facilities in
9 Belarus for ‘re-education’ as detailed in a November
10 2023 report by the Yale University Humanitarian
11 Research Lab’s Conflict Observatory.

12 “(34) The now-suspended Belarusian branch of
13 the Red Cross has publicly confirmed its involvement
14 in transferring children from Ukraine to the terri-
15 tory of Belarus, and the illegitimate leader of the
16 Government of Belarus, Alyaksandr Lukashenka,
17 has publicly confirmed that he permitted these
18 transfers.

19 “(35) In Spring 2023, the Government of
20 Belarus announced plans for the deployment of nu-
21 clear weapons from the Russian Federation to the
22 territory of Belarus, which reportedly began in the
23 summer of this same year.

24 “(36) The Government of Belarus has harbored
25 the Wagner Group, a private military company the

1 United States has designated as a Transnational
2 Criminal Organization, and provided facilities, re-
3 sources, and a staging ground for the group’s crimi-
4 nal operations.

5 “(37) The Government of Belarus has report-
6 edly provided the Government of the Russian Fed-
7 eration with tens of thousands of tons of ammuni-
8 tion throughout Russia’s unprovoked war of aggres-
9 sion in Ukraine.

10 “(38) As a result of the Government of
11 Belarus’ support to the Russian Federation during
12 its unprovoked war of aggression against Ukraine,
13 the United States, the European Union, and the
14 United Kingdom have repeatedly issued further
15 sanctions packages against the Lukashenka regime
16 to target Belarusian military officers as well as indi-
17 viduals in the military sector, restrictions on entities
18 in Belarus’ defense and industrial sectors, and enti-
19 ties that provide support to Belarus’ military and in-
20 dustrial sectors.

21 “(39) The Government of Belarus is reportedly
22 engaging in the purchase of significant amount of
23 military equipment from the sanctioned Islamic Re-
24 public of Iran.

1 “(40) On August 6, 2023, the Belarusian
2 democratic opposition issued a declaration express-
3 ing their objective of developing democracy in
4 Belarus and pursuing membership in the European
5 Union and, by extension, joining the Trans-Atlantic
6 community.

7 “(41) The democratic opposition of Belarus
8 have called on the Government of Belarus, led ille-
9 gally by Alyaksandr Lukashenka, to end its com-
10 plicity and involvement in the war in Ukraine, and
11 urged against the conscription of men into the
12 Belarusian military.

13 “(42) On February 28, 2022, the Department
14 of State ordered the departure of United States Gov-
15 ernment employees and the suspension of operations
16 of the United States Embassy in Minsk.

17 “(43) On August 21, 2023, the United States
18 Government directed all United States citizens to
19 leave Belarus immediately due to the illegitimate
20 Belarusian authorities’ continued cooperation with
21 the Russian military and facilitation of Russia’s
22 unprovoked war of aggression against Ukraine, and
23 the risk of detention and arbitrary enforcement of
24 local laws against United States citizens.

1 “(44) In September 2023, the Government of
2 Belarus deprived Belarusians living abroad of their
3 ability to renew their passports through Belarusian
4 embassies in an attempt to make life difficult for
5 and to force exiles, critics, and expats to return to
6 Belarus for document renewal and possibly face per-
7 secution.

8 “(45) In December 2023, the United States
9 Government held a Strategic Dialogue with the
10 Belarusian democratic opposition and civil society
11 and subsequently announced a continuation of ef-
12 forts to hold Alyaksandr Lukashenka and his regime
13 accountable for their crimes, a commitment to sup-
14 porting Belarusian culture, sovereignty, and national
15 identity, as well as the need for future working
16 groups with the democratic opposition.”.

17 **SEC. 3. STATEMENT OF POLICY.**

18 Section 3 of the Belarus Democracy Act of 2004
19 (Public Law 108–347; 22 U.S.C. 5811 note) is amended
20 to read as follows:

21 **“SEC. 3. STATEMENT OF POLICY.**

22 “‘It is the policy of the United States—

23 “(1) to condemn—

1 “(A) the conduct of the August 9, 2020,
2 presidential election in Belarus, which was nei-
3 ther free nor fair;

4 “(B) the Belarusian authorities’ unrelent-
5 ing crackdown on, arbitrary arrests of, and vio-
6 lence against opposition candidates, democratic
7 opposition, peaceful protestors, human rights
8 activists, employees from state-owned enter-
9 prises participating in strikes, independent elec-
10 tion observers, and independent journalists and
11 bloggers; and

12 “(C) the unjustified detention and forced
13 or attempted deportation of members of the Co-
14 ordination Council and United Transitional
15 Cabinet in Belarus;

16 “(2) to condemn the illegitimate Belarusian au-
17 thorities’ allowance of Russian nuclear weapons to
18 be deployed to Belarusian territory, their continued
19 political and material support for Russia’s
20 unprovoked war of aggression in Ukraine, and their
21 continued participation in abducting and deporting
22 Ukrainian children from territory occupied by the
23 Russian Federation to the territory of Belarus;

24 “(3) to condemn the presence of Russian forces
25 on Belarusian territory and demand the cessation of

1 the use of Belarusian territory by Russian forces as
2 a staging ground for Russia’s illegal, full-scale war
3 of aggression against Ukraine or for the prevention
4 of a peaceful democratic transition in Belarus;

5 “(4) to demand accountability for the illegal
6 Lukashenka regime’s complicity in the crime of ag-
7 gression against Ukraine through international jus-
8 tice mechanisms;

9 “(5) to condemn the weaponization of migrants
10 wherein the Government of Belarus, led illegally by
11 Alyaksandr Lukashenka, has sent thousands of mi-
12 grants to the borders of Poland and Lithuania in an
13 attempt to destabilize the border region;

14 “(6) to continue demanding the immediate re-
15 lease without preconditions of all political prisoners
16 in Belarus and those arrested for peacefully pro-
17 testing, including all those individuals detained in
18 connection with the August 9, 2020, fraudulent
19 presidential election;

20 “(7) to stand in solidarity with the people of
21 Belarus, including human rights defenders, bloggers,
22 and journalists, who are exercising their right to
23 freedom of assembly, freedom of expression, and rule
24 of law and to continue supporting the aspirations of

1 the people of Belarus for democracy, human rights,
2 and the rule of law;

3 “(8) to continue actively supporting the aspira-
4 tions of the people of the Republic of Belarus to pre-
5 serve the independence and sovereignty of their
6 country;

7 “(9) to continue refusing to recognize
8 Alyaksandr Lukashenka’s illegitimate regime and to
9 continue supporting calls for Belarusian presidential
10 and parliamentary elections to be conducted in a
11 manner that is free and fair according to Organiza-
12 tion for Security and Cooperation in Europe
13 (OSCE) standards and under the supervision of
14 OSCE observers and independent domestic observ-
15 ers, including in the 2025 presidential elections;

16 “(10) to continue calling for the Government of
17 Belarus to fulfill its freely undertaken obligations as
18 an OSCE participating state and as a signatory of
19 the Charter of the United Nations;

20 “(11) to recognize the Coordination Council
21 and the United Transitional Cabinet as legitimate
22 institutions to participate in a dialogue on a peaceful
23 transition of power, and to support these institutions
24 prior to and during such a transition should it take
25 place;

1 “(12) to condemn the deprivation of consular
2 services to Belarusian citizens living abroad, includ-
3 ing representatives of the Belarusian democratic op-
4 position, and urge the United States to raise this to
5 the United Nations High Commissioner for Refu-
6 gees, the International Organization for Migration,
7 the Council of Europe, and the Organization for Se-
8 curity and Cooperation in Europe;

9 “(13) to encourage the United States Govern-
10 ment to continue working closely with the European
11 Union, the United Kingdom, Canada, and other
12 countries and international organizations to continue
13 to impose targeted sanctions against officials in
14 Belarus who are responsible for—

15 “(A) undermining democratic processes in
16 Belarus;

17 “(B) participating in gross violations of
18 internationally recognized human rights related
19 to political repression in Belarus and under-
20 mining rule of law for the people of Belarus; or

21 “(C) enabling or facilitating Russia’s war
22 in Ukraine;

23 “(14) to call on the Government of Belarus to
24 uphold its human rights obligations, including those

1 rights enumerated in the International Covenant on
2 Civil and Political Rights;

3 “(15) to encourage the United States to expedi-
4 tiously appoint a U.S. Special Envoy for Belarus to
5 fill the role vacated in June 2022; and

6 “(16) to support the use of the Strategic Dia-
7 logue between the United States Government as a
8 means of furthering ties between the United States
9 Government and the representatives of the demo-
10 cratic opposition of Belarus in pursuit of objectives,
11 including—

12 “(A) accountability for the Lukashenka re-
13 gime’s gross violations of internationally recog-
14 nized human rights and domestic repressions;

15 “(B) increasing partnerships with the
16 Belarusian people by supporting investments
17 such as the United States Agency for Inter-
18 national Development’s dedicated Belarus
19 Country Representative Office in Vilnius, Lith-
20 uania; and

21 “(C) initiating cultural programming dedi-
22 cated to protecting Belarusian language, cul-
23 ture, and national identity.”.

1 **SEC. 4. ASSISTANCE TO PROMOTE DEMOCRACY, CIVIL SO-**
2 **CIETY, AND SOVEREIGNTY IN BELARUS.**

3 Section 4 of the Belarus Democracy Act of 2004
4 (Public Law 108–347; 22 U.S.C. 5811 note) is amend-
5 ed—

6 (1) in subsection (a)—

7 (A) in paragraph (1), by inserting “, the
8 United Transitional Cabinet, and the Coordina-
9 tion Council” after “the Republic of Belarus”;
10 and

11 (B) by adding at the end the following:

12 “(5) To assist in the cessation of Belarus’ sup-
13 port for the Government of Russia in Russia’s
14 unprovoked war of aggression in Ukraine.”;

15 (2) in subsection (b), by adding at the end be-
16 fore the period the following “, including political
17 party strengthening”;

18 (3) by amending subsection (c) to read as fol-
19 lows:

20 “(c) **ACTIVITIES SUPPORTED.**—Activities that may
21 be supported by assistance under subsection (b) include—

22 “(1) expanding independent radio and television
23 broadcasting to and within Belarus;

24 “(2) facilitating the development of independent
25 broadcast, print, and internet media working within

1 Belarus and from locations outside the country and
2 supported by nonstate-controlled printing facilities;

3 “(3) countering internet censorship and repres-
4 sive surveillance technology that seek to limit free
5 association, control access to information, and pre-
6 vent citizens from exercising their rights to free
7 speech;

8 “(4) raising awareness both within Belarus and
9 globally about Lukashenka’s complicity in Russia’s
10 unprovoked war of aggression in Ukraine, including
11 how the Lukashenka regime is providing support to
12 the Russian military and committing crimes against
13 Ukrainian children;

14 “(5) aiding the development of civil society
15 through assistance to nongovernmental organizations
16 promoting democracy and supporting human rights,
17 including youth groups, entrepreneurs, and inde-
18 pendent trade unions;

19 “(6) supporting programming that contributes
20 to the defense of Belarusian sovereignty and inde-
21 pendence from encroachment by the Russian Fed-
22 eration;

23 “(7) supporting the work of human rights de-
24 fenders;

1 “(8) enhancing the development of democratic
2 political parties;

3 “(9) assisting the promotion of free, fair, and
4 transparent electoral processes;

5 “(10) enhancing international exchanges and
6 advanced professional training programs for leaders
7 and members of the democratic opposition in skill
8 areas central to the development of civil society;

9 “(11) supporting the work of women advocating
10 for freedom, human rights, and human progress in
11 Belarus given the significant and vital role women
12 have played in the Belarus democracy movement;

13 “(12) supporting the development of Belarusian
14 language and cultural education and exchanges to
15 preserve and protect Belarusian national identity;

16 “(13) supporting further iterations of the Stra-
17 tegic Dialogue between the United States and the
18 Belarusian democratic opposition and civil society as
19 a platform to work on issues of mutual concern;

20 “(14) enhancing the development of the private
21 sector, particularly the information technology sec-
22 tor, and its role in the economy of Belarus, including
23 by increasing the capacity of private sector actors,
24 developing business support organizations, offering

1 entrepreneurship training, and expanding access to
2 finance for small and medium enterprises;

3 “(15) supporting political refugees in neigh-
4 boring European countries fleeing the crackdown in
5 Belarus;

6 “(16) supporting the education of Belarusians
7 in exile;

8 “(17) supporting the gathering of evidence on
9 and investigating of gross violations of internation-
10 ally recognized human rights in Belarus; and

11 “(18) other activities consistent with the pur-
12 poses of this Act.”;

13 (4) in subsection (f)—

14 (A) by striking “the Belarus Democracy,
15 Human Rights, and Sovereignty Act of 2020”
16 and inserting “the Belarus Democracy, Human
17 Rights, and Sovereignty Act of 2024”; and

18 (B) by adding at the end before the period
19 the following: “as well as the methodology and
20 benchmarks used to assess the effectiveness of
21 such funds”; and

22 (5) by amending subsection (g) to read as fol-
23 lows:

1 “(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
2 are authorized to be appropriated to the President to carry
3 out this section—

4 “(1) for fiscal year 2025 an amount equal to
5 not less than the amount made available to carry out
6 this section for fiscal year 2024; and

7 “(2) for fiscal year 2026 an amount equal to
8 not less than the amount made available to carry out
9 this section for fiscal year 2025.”.

10 **SEC. 5. INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING, INTERNET FREE-**
11 **DOM, AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION IN**
12 **BELARUS.**

13 Section 5 of the Belarus Democracy Act of 2004
14 (Public Law 109–480; 22 U.S.C. 5811 note) is amend-
15 ed—

16 (1) in subsection (a)—

17 (A) by striking “(a) SENSE OF CON-
18 GRESS.—”;

19 (B) in paragraph (4), by striking “and” at
20 the end;

21 (C) in paragraph (5), by striking the pe-
22 riod at the end and inserting the following:
23 “and advocate for the release of journalists that
24 are detained by political reasons; and”;

25 (D) by adding at the end the following:

1 “(6) the United States should also support
2 independent media outlets and other sources of in-
3 formation in providing accurate and truthful infor-
4 mation about Russia’s unprovoked war of aggression
5 in Ukraine, and the illegitimate Lukashenka re-
6 gime’s complicity in Russia’s crimes of aggression.”;
7 and

8 (2) by striking subsection (b).

9 **SEC. 6. SANCTIONS AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT OF**
10 **BELARUS.**

11 Section 6 of the Belarus Democracy Act of 2004
12 (Public Law 109–480; 22 U.S.C. 5811 note) is amend-
13 ed—

14 (1) in subsection (a)—

15 (A) by striking “The sanctions” and in-
16 sserting the following:

17 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The sanctions”; and

18 (B) by adding at the end the following:

19 “(2) MAINTENANCE OF EXISTING SANC-
20 TIONS.—

21 “(A) IN GENERAL.—Any sanctions im-
22 posed pursuant to the Executive orders de-
23 scribed in subparagraph (B) that were imposed
24 in connection with conduct relating to, con-
25 cerning, or occurring in Belarus should remain

1 in effect until the President determines and cer-
2 tifies to the appropriate congressional commit-
3 tees that the Government of Belarus has made
4 significant progress in meeting the conditions
5 described in subsection (c).

6 “(B) EXECUTIVE ORDERS DESCRIBED.—

7 The Executive orders described in this subpara-
8 graph are the following:

9 “(i) Executive Order 13405 (71 Fed.
10 Reg. 35485; relating to blocking property
11 of certain persons undermining democratic
12 processes or institutions in Belarus).

13 “(ii) Executive Order 14024 (86 Fed.
14 Reg. 20249; relating to blocking property
15 with respect to specified harmful foreign
16 activities of the Government of the Russian
17 Federation).

18 “(iii) Executive Order 14038 (86 Fed.
19 Reg. 43905; relating to blocking property
20 of additional persons contributing to the
21 situation in Belarus).”;

22 (2) in subsection (b)—

23 (A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1),
24 by striking “subsection (a)” and inserting
25 “paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (a)”;

1 (B) by striking paragraph (2);

2 (C) by redesignating paragraphs (3), (4),
3 and (5) as paragraphs (2), (3), and (4), respec-
4 tively; and

5 (D) by adding at the end the following:

6 “(5) The withdrawal of the armed forces of the
7 Russian Federation from the Republic of Belarus
8 and the cessation of Belarusian support for the Rus-
9 sian Federation’s war against Ukraine.

10 “(6) The return of all Ukrainian children ab-
11 ducted and deported to Belarus from the territory of
12 Ukraine illegally occupied by the Russian Federa-
13 tion.”;

14 (3) in subsection (c)—

15 (A) in the subsection heading, by striking
16 “COMPLICIT IN THE CRACKDOWN THAT OC-
17 CURRED AFTER THE AUGUST 9, 2020, ELEC-
18 TION”;

19 (B) in the matter preceding paragraph (1),
20 by striking “may” and inserting “shall”;

21 (C) in paragraph (2), by striking “inad-
22 missible under” and inserting “described in”;

23 (D) in paragraph (4), by adding at the end
24 before the semicolon the following: “, or future

1 elections in Belarus should they be determined
2 to be neither free nor fair”;

3 (E) in paragraph (5), by adding at the end
4 before the semicolon the following: “, or future
5 elections in Belarus should they be determined
6 to be neither free nor fair”;

7 (F) by striking paragraphs (6), (7), (8),
8 and (9) and inserting the following:

9 “(6) is a government official or member of the
10 security or law enforcement services of Belarus and
11 has participated in the persecution or harassment of
12 religious groups, human rights defenders, democratic
13 opposition groups, or independent media or journal-
14 ists;

15 “(7) is an individual determined by the Presi-
16 dent to be interfering in the internal affairs of the
17 Republic of Belarus on behalf of or at the direction
18 of the Government of the Russian Federation;

19 “(8) is an official who provides for, facilitates,
20 or otherwise enables or engages with the abduction
21 and deportation of Ukrainian children from terri-
22 tories illegally occupied by the Russian Federation to
23 the territory of Belarus;

24 “(9) is an official who provides for, facilitates,
25 or otherwise enables the Russian Federation to use

1 the territory of Belarus to further its unprovoked in-
2 vasion of Ukraine;

3 “(10) is an official of the so-called ‘Union
4 State’ between Russia and Belarus (regardless of
5 nationality of the individual) or works toward the
6 furtherance of such Union State; or

7 “(11) is a Russian individual that has signifi-
8 cantly participated in the crackdown on independent
9 press or human rights abuses related to political re-
10 pression in Belarus, including the Russian propa-
11 gandists sent to replace local employees at
12 Belarusian state media outlets.”;

13 (4) by amending subsection (f) to read as fol-
14 lows:

15 “(f) BLOCKING OF ASSETS AND OTHER PROHIBITED
16 ACTIVITIES.—

17 “(1) MANDATORY SANCTION.—The President
18 shall impose the sanction described in paragraph (3)
19 with respect to each foreign person that the Presi-
20 dent determines—

21 “(A) is a member of the Central Election
22 Commission of Belarus or assisted the Commis-
23 sion in manipulating elections in Belarus in-
24 cluding the presidential election of August 9,
25 2020;

1 “(B) is a government official or member of
2 the security or law enforcement services of
3 Belarus and has participated in the persecution
4 or harassment of religious groups, human
5 rights defenders, democratic opposition groups,
6 or independent media or journalists;

7 “(C) is an individual determined by the
8 President to be knowingly interfering in the in-
9 ternal affairs of the Republic of Belarus on be-
10 half of or at the direction of the Government of
11 the Russian Federation;

12 “(D) is an official who knowingly engages
13 in the abduction and deportation of Ukrainian
14 children from territories illegally occupied by
15 the Russian Federation to the territory of
16 Belarus;

17 “(E) is an official who knowingly supports
18 and provides for, the Russian Federation’s use
19 of the territory of Belarus to further its
20 unprovoked invasion of Ukraine; or

21 “(F) is an official in the so-called ‘Union
22 State’ between Russia and Belarus (regardless
23 of nationality of the individual) or works toward
24 the furtherance of such ‘Union State’.

1 “(2) DISCRETIONARY SANCTION.—The Presi-
2 dent may impose the sanction described in para-
3 graph (3) with respect to each foreign person that
4 the President determines—

5 “(A) holds a position in the senior leader-
6 ship of the Government of Belarus;

7 “(B) is an immediate family member of a
8 person described in subparagraph (A); or

9 “(C) through his or her business dealings
10 with a person described in subparagraph (A)
11 derives significant financial benefit from policies
12 or actions, including electoral fraud, gross viola-
13 tions of internationally recognized human
14 rights, or corruption, that undermine or injure
15 democratic institutions or impede the transition
16 to democracy in Belarus.

17 “(3) SANCTION DESCRIBED.—The President
18 shall exercise all of the powers granted to the Presi-
19 dent under the International Emergency Economic
20 Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) to the extent
21 necessary to block and prohibit all transactions in
22 property and interests in property of the foreign per-
23 son if such property and interests in property are in
24 the United States, come within the United States, or

1 are or come within the possession or control of a
2 United States person.

3 “(4) EXCEPTIONS.—

4 “(A) EXCEPTION RELATING TO THE PRO-
5 VISION OF HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE.—The
6 sanction described in paragraph (3) may not be
7 imposed with respect to transactions or the fa-
8 cilitation of transactions for—

9 “(i) the sale of agricultural commod-
10 ities, food, medicine, or medical devices;

11 “(ii) the provision of humanitarian as-
12 sistance;

13 “(iii) financial transactions relating to
14 humanitarian assistance; or

15 “(iv) transporting goods or services
16 that are necessary to carry out operations
17 relating to humanitarian assistance.

18 “(B) EXCEPTION FOR INTELLIGENCE, LAW
19 ENFORCEMENT, AND NATIONAL SECURITY AC-
20 TIVITIES.—The sanction described in paragraph
21 (3) shall not apply to any authorized intel-
22 ligence, law enforcement, or national security
23 activities of the United States.

24 “(5) WAIVER.—The President may, on a case-
25 by-case basis and for periods not to exceed 180 days

1 each, waive the application of the sanction described
2 in paragraph (3) imposed with respect to a foreign
3 person under this subsection if the President cer-
4 tifies to the appropriate congressional committees
5 not later than 15 days before such waiver is to take
6 effect that the waiver is important to the national
7 security interests of the United States.

8 “(6) PENALTIES.—Any person who violates, at-
9 tempts to violate, or causes a violation of this sub-
10 section or any regulation, license, or order issued to
11 carry out this subsection shall be subject to the pen-
12 alties under section 206 of the International Emer-
13 gency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1705) to the
14 same extent as a person that commits an unlawful
15 act under that Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.).

16 “(7) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection—

17 “(A) the term ‘air carrier’ has the meaning
18 given that term in section 40102 of title 49,
19 United States Code;

20 “(B) the term ‘foreign person’ means a
21 person that is not a United States person; and

22 “(C) the term ‘United States person’
23 means—

1 “(i) any United States citizen or alien
2 admitted for permanent residence to the
3 United States;

4 “(ii) any entity organized under the
5 laws of the United States; and

6 “(iii) any person in the United
7 States.”.

8 **SEC. 7. MULTILATERAL COOPERATION.**

9 Section 7 of the Belarus Democracy Act of 2004
10 (Public Law 109-480; 22 U.S.C. 5811 note) is amended—

11 (1) in paragraph (1), by striking “and” at the
12 end;

13 (2) in paragraph (2), by striking the period at
14 the end and inserting “; and”; and

15 (3) by adding at the end the following:

16 “(3) to halt the Government of Belarus, led ille-
17 gally by Alyaksandr Lukashenka, from supporting
18 and assisting the Russian Federation’s unprovoked
19 war of aggression against Ukraine including the ab-
20 duction and deportation of Ukrainian children.”.

21 **SEC. 8. REPORTS.**

22 Section 8 of the Belarus Democracy Act of 2004
23 (Public Law 109–480; 22 U.S.C. 5811 note) is amend-
24 ed—

25 (1) by striking subsection (a);

1 (2) by redesignating subsection (b) as sub-
2 section (a);

3 (3) in subsection (a) (as so redesignated)—

4 (A) in paragraph (1)—

5 (i) in the matter preceding subpara-
6 graph (A), by striking “the Belarus De-
7 mocracy, Human Rights, and Sovereignty
8 Act of 2020” and inserting “the Belarus
9 Democracy, Human Rights, and Sov-
10 ereignty Act of 2024”; and

11 (ii) in subparagraph (B), by adding at
12 the end before the period the following: “,
13 and whether the United States has im-
14 posed sanctions with respect to such senior
15 foreign political figures”;

16 (B) by striking paragraph (2); and

17 (C) by redesignating paragraph (3) as
18 paragraph (2); and

19 (4) by adding at the end the following:

20 “(b) REPORT ON CRIMES AND OTHER ACTIONS COM-
21 MITTED BY BELARUS IN SUPPORT OF RUSSIA’S
22 UNPROVOKED WAR OF AGGRESSION IN UKRAINE.—

23 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days
24 after the date of the enactment of the Belarus De-
25 mocracy, Human Rights, and Sovereignty Act of

1 2024, the Director of National Intelligence, in con-
2 sultation with the Secretary of the Treasury and the
3 Secretary of State, shall submit to the appropriate
4 congressional committees a report on the following:

5 “(A) An assessment of the Russian mili-
6 tary presence in Belarus, including the presence
7 of Russian nuclear forces, and the impact this
8 presence has on North Atlantic Treaty Organi-
9 zation (NATO) security.

10 “(B) The degree to which the Government
11 of Belarus, led illegally by Alyaksandr
12 Lukashenka, continues to provide support to
13 and harbor the forces of the Wagner Group or
14 other Russian paramilitary groups and enables
15 their destabilizing actions on the borders of
16 NATO allies, such as Latvia, Lithuania, and
17 Poland.

18 “(C) Which actors in the Government of
19 Belarus, led illegally by Alyaksandr
20 Lukashenka, are most responsible for the illegal
21 abduction and deportation of Ukrainian chil-
22 dren from Ukrainian territory occupied by the
23 Russian Federation to the territory of Belarus,
24 as well as to what extent organizations such as
25 the now-suspended Belarus branch of the Red

1 Cross are involved in these transfers, and pro-
2 vide a strategy for holding those involved in
3 these crimes accountable including through the
4 use of sanctions.

5 “(D) The degree to which the Government
6 of Belarus, led illegally by Alyaksandr
7 Lukashenka has purchased weapons from the
8 governments of the Russian Federation and the
9 Islamic Republic of Iran, and whether any pur-
10 chases of such weapons violate the provisions of
11 section 107 or 231 of the Countering America’s
12 Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (22 U.S.C.
13 9406 or 9525).

14 “(E) The extent to which the Government
15 of Belarus, led illegally by Alyaksandr
16 Lukashenka, is aiding the Russian Federation
17 is circumventing export controls and evading
18 sanctions, including with an accounting and es-
19 timated value of dual-use goods and an identi-
20 fication of the officials or other persons involved
21 in facilitating this sanctions evasion.

22 “(F) The impact of the Government of
23 Belarus’ use of illegal migrants to destabilize
24 the borders of NATO countries, such as Latvia,
25 Lithuania, and Poland, on NATO security.

1 “(2) FORM.—The report required under this
2 subsection shall be transmitted in unclassified form,
3 but may contain a classified annex.”.

4 **SEC. 9. DEFINITIONS.**

5 Section 9 of the Belarus Democracy Act of 2004
6 (Public Law 109–480; 22 U.S.C. 5811 note) is amend-
7 ed—

8 (1) in paragraph (3)(A), by adding at the end
9 before the semicolon the following: “, led illegally by
10 Alyaksandr Lukashenka”; and

11 (2) by adding at the end the following:

12 “(4) UNION STATE.—The term ‘Union State’
13 means the supranational union of the Republic of
14 Belarus and the Russian Federation as outlined in
15 the December 1999 Treaty on the establishment of
16 the Union State between the governments of the Re-
17 public of Belarus and the Russian Federation.”.

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