

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. RES. 1087

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that any attempt by the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin to remain in office beyond May 7, 2024, shall warrant nonrecognition on the part of the United States.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 19, 2024

Mr. COHEN (for himself and Mr. WILSON of South Carolina) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that any attempt by the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin to remain in office beyond May 7, 2024, shall warrant nonrecognition on the part of the United States.

Whereas the Russian Federation, as a member of the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, is bound by international commitments with regard to human rights and the rule of law;

Whereas Article 81(3) of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, as enacted on December 25, 1993, holds that “one and the same person cannot occupy the office of President of the Russian Federation for more than two consecutive terms”;

Whereas Vladimir Putin has been President of the Russian Federation for two sets of consecutive terms on two occasions, the first lasting from May 7, 2000, to May 7, 2008, and the second, current, and final consecutive terms beginning May 7, 2012, and expiring on May 7, 2024;

Whereas, on July 3, 2020, following votes in both chambers of the Federal Assembly and in regional legislatures and a nationwide popular vote, President Vladimir Putin signed Presidential Decree No. 445 enacting 206 amendments to the Constitution of the Russian Federation, including an amendment waiving the term limit for him personally and for Dmitry Medvedev, allowing him to seek 2 more 6-year Presidential terms after May 7, 2024;

Whereas the enactment of constitutional amendments had been conditioned on approval of such amendments in a nationwide vote, referred to as “all-Russia voting”, that was held between June 25 and July 1, 2020, under the unprecedented conditions of the COVID–19 pandemic;

Whereas the 2020 all-Russia voting was invented specifically for voting on Vladimir Putin’s constitutional amendments and was an ad hoc type of voting previously unknown in Russia;

Whereas this voting was marked by widespread reports of organized voter coercion, multiple voting, ballot-stuffing, and violation of the secrecy of the ballot, and by one-sided media coverage in favor of the amendments, while opponents of the amendments were not given airtime in the media and had their campaign rallies prohibited and their websites blocked;

Whereas voting was held over 7 days and was conducted not only in regular polling places but also in makeshift locations, including park benches, car trunks, and shopping carts, with ballots stored overnight by the electoral commissions with no independent oversight;

Whereas in violation of the laws of the Russian Federation and the commitments of the Russian Federation under the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe and the Council of Europe, of which Russia was a member at the time, Russian authorities did not invite international observers to monitor the vote and limited domestic observers to those appointed by state-controlled Public Chambers;

Whereas the Central Electoral Commission of the Russian Federation began announcing the results of the vote before voting had concluded;

Whereas in a statement following the voting, the leaders of the United States delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Senator Roger Wicker and the late Representative Alcee Hastings, said that “the outcome of this vote was decided long before the ballots were tallied” and that “State-sponsored fraud, coercion, and obfuscation make it impossible to know the true will of the Russian people”;

Whereas Senator James Risch, then-Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate, has stated that the “sham vote, masquerading as a referendum, has swept away all remnants of Putin’s legitimacy”;

Whereas the Department of State has held that “[a]round the world, as a matter of principle, the United States op-

poses constitutional amendments that favor incumbents or extend their terms in office, particularly in contexts where necessary conditions for free and fair democratic processes are lacking”;

Whereas Vladimir Putin has violated every international norm and obligation freely undertaken by the Russian Federation with his unprovoked and brutal full-scale invasion of Ukraine;

Whereas Vladimir Putin has openly denied the existence of the Ukrainian people and authorized genocidal action to erase Ukrainian identity;

Whereas Vladimir Putin has made clear his intention to push militarily beyond Ukraine if given the opportunity into NATO member countries and beyond in his expressed effort to reconstruct a Russian imperial entity;

Whereas Vladimir Putin incarcerated Alexei Navalny, one of his strongest remaining opposition figures, who exposed the terrible extent of corruption present in his lawless regime and was nearly killed by a nerve agent attack carried out by Russian security services in 2020; and

Whereas Alexei Navalny was imprisoned in inhumane conditions, often times in solitary confinement with very little food and little to no exercise in the most oppressive prison in Siberia, IK-3 penal colony, where he died under unknown but highly suspicious circumstances on February 16, 2024: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That it is the sense of the House of Rep-
2 resentatives that—

3 (1) the 2020 amendments to the Constitution
4 of the Russian Federation were enacted in violation

1 of the laws and international commitments of the
2 Russian Federation and many of the amendments
3 are in breach of the so-called “unchangeable parts”
4 of the Constitution: Chapter 1 “Fundamentals of
5 the Constitutional System” and Chapter 2 “Human
6 and Civil Rights and Freedoms”;

7 (2) the waiver of the Presidential term limit re-
8 sulting from those amendments is illegitimate; and

9 (3) any attempt by President of the Russian
10 Federation Vladimir Putin to remain in office be-
11 yond the end of his current and final term on May
12 7, 2024, shall warrant nonrecognition on the part of
13 the United States.

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