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S. 4848

To provide for the designation of the Russian Federation as a state sponsor of terrorism.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

SEPTEMBER 14, 2022

Mr. GRAHAM (for himself and Mr. BLUMENTHAL) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

A BILL

To provide for the designation of the Russian Federation as a state sponsor of terrorism.

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 “Russia is a State Spon-
5 sor of Terrorism Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) United States law authorizes the designa-
9 tion of countries that have repeatedly provided sup-

1 port for acts of international terrorism as state
2 sponsors of terrorism.

3 (2) Cuba, the Democratic People's Republic of
4 Korea, Iran, and Syria have been designated as
5 state sponsors of terrorism.

6 (3) At the direction of President Vladimir
7 Putin, the Government of the Russian Federation
8 has promoted, and continues to promote, acts of
9 international terrorism against political opponents
10 and nation states.

11 (4) Under the orders of President Putin, the
12 Government of the Russian Federation engaged in a
13 campaign of terror that utilized brutal force to tar-
14 get its civilians during the Second Chechen War.

15 (5) Actions by the Government of the Russian
16 Federation against civilian centers, such as Grozny
17 (the capital of Chechnya), left countless innocent
18 men, women, and children dead or wounded.

19 (6) Since 2014, the Government of the Russian
20 Federation—

21 (A) has supported separatists engaging in
22 acts of violence against Ukrainian civilians in
23 the Donbas region; and

24 (B) has detained United States citizens as
25 hostages.

1 (7) The Government of the Russian Federation
2 provides material support to Syria, a nation cur-
3 rently designated as a state sponsor of terrorism.

4 (8) According to the Congressional Research
5 Service, the Russian Federation spreads terror
6 throughout the world through private military net-
7 works of mercenaries, such as the Wagner Group, in
8 an effort to “project power cheaply and deniably”.

9 (9) The Wagner Group collaborates with the
10 Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation to
11 support the foreign policy objectives of the Russian
12 Federation.

13 (10) The Department of the Treasury—

14 (A) has identified the Wagner Group as “a
15 designated Russian Ministry of Defense proxy
16 force”; and

17 (B) has stated that “Wagner’s activities in
18 other countries, including Ukraine, Syria,
19 Sudan, and Libya, have generated insecurity
20 and incited violence against innocent civilians”.

21 (11) In February 2022, more than 400 Russian
22 mercenaries from the Wagner Group were dis-
23 patched to Kyiv with orders from the Kremlin to as-
24 sassinate President Volodymyr Zelensky and mem-
25 bers of the Government of Ukraine.

1 (12) On March 1, 2022, Jason Blazakis, former
2 Director of the Counterterrorism Finance and Des-
3 ignations Office, Bureau of Counterterrorism, De-
4 partment of State, wrote in reference to white su-
5 premacist groups that “Russia provides sanctuary to
6 a U.S.-designated terrorist group, the Russian Impe-
7 rial Movement, which operates with impunity in
8 Russian territory.”.

9 (13) On March 17, 2022, President Volodymyr
10 Zelensky called for the world to acknowledge the
11 Russian Federation as a terrorist state.

12 (14) The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine has ap-
13 pealed to Congress to encourage the Department of
14 State to recognize the Russian Federation as a state
15 sponsor of terrorism, noting that “the Russian Fed-
16 eration has for years supported and financed ter-
17 rorist regimes and terrorist organizations, including
18 being the main supplier of weapons to the Assad re-
19 gime in Syria and supporting terrorists in the Mid-
20 dle East and Latin America, organizing acts of
21 international terrorism, including the poisoning of
22 the Skripal family in the United Kingdom of Great
23 Britain and Northern Ireland, the downing of a civil-
24 ian Malaysian airliner and other acts of terrorism”.

1 (15) On May 24, 2022, Ukrainian prosecutors
2 accused 2 Wagner Group mercenaries of committing
3 war crimes against civilians near Kyiv.

4 (16) On July 18, 2022, the United Kingdom’s
5 Ministry of Defence confirmed that the Wagner
6 Group plays a central role in recent fighting in
7 Ukraine, including Russia’s capture of Popasna and
8 Lysyschansk.

9 (17) The United States has a range of tools
10 available to hold the Russian Federation account-
11 able, reduce its war machine, and isolate it economi-
12 cally and diplomatically, including by designating it
13 as a state sponsor of terrorism and imposing cor-
14 responding sanctions.

15 **SEC. 3. DESIGNATION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AS A**
16 **STATE SPONSOR OF TERRORISM.**

17 (a) IN GENERAL.—Beginning on the date of the en-
18 actment of this Act, the Russian Federation shall be
19 deemed to have repeatedly provided support for acts of
20 international terrorism and shall be designated as a state
21 sponsor of terrorism pursuant to—

22 (1) section 1754(c)(1)(A)(i) of the Export Con-
23 trol Reform Act of 2018 (50 U.S.C.
24 4813(c)(1)(A)(i));

1 (2) section 620A(a) of the Foreign Assistance
2 Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2371(a));

3 (3) section 40(d) of the Arms Export Control
4 Act (22 U.S.C. 2780(d)); and

5 (4) any other relevant provision of law.

6 (b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

7 Section 1605A(h)(6) of title 28, United States Code, is
8 amended—

9 (1) by inserting “Congress or” before “the Sec-
10 retary of State”; and

11 (2) by striking “section 6(j) of the Export Ad-
12 ministration Act of 1979 (50 U.S.C. App.
13 2405(j)),”.

14 **SEC. 4. WAIVER.**

15 The President may remove the designation required
16 under section 3(a) on the date that is 30 days after the
17 date on which the President certifies to the Committee on
18 Foreign Relations of the Senate, the Committee on For-
19 eign Affairs of the House of Representatives, the majority
20 leader and minority leader of the Senate, and the Speaker,
21 majority leader, and minority leader of the House of Rep-
22 resentatives that—

23 (1) the Russian Federation is no longer sup-
24 porting acts of international terrorism; and

- 1 (2) removing such designation is in the national
- 2 security interests of the United States.

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