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Ranking Member Adam Smith and 22 Armed Services Democrats Introduce Bill to Boost Unity and Deterrence Against Russian Aggression (/press-releases?ID=33F7AA1A-B33B-4D5A-9108-502C9F2330C3)

June 22, 2017

Washington, DC – Today, House Armed Services Committee Ranking Member Adam Smith (D-WA) and 22 original co-sponsors from the Armed Services Committee introduced the Fostering Unity Against Russian Aggression Act of 2017. The original co-sponsors are Smith, Rep. Robert Brady (D-PA), Rep. Susan Davis (D-CA), Rep. Jim Langevin (D-RI), Rep. Jim Cooper (D-TN), Rep. Madeleine Bordallo (D-GU), Rep. Joe Courtney (D-CT), Rep. Niki Tsongas (D-MA), Rep. John Garamendi (D-CA), Rep. Jackie Speier (D-CA), Rep. Marc Veasey (D-TX), Rep. Donald Norcross (D-NJ), Rep. Ruben Gallego (D-AZ), Rep. Seth Moulton (D-MA), Rep. Colleen Hanabusa (D-HI), Rep. Carol Shea-Porter (D-NH), Rep. Jacky Rosen (D-NV), Rep. Donald McEachin (D-VA), Rep. Salud Carbajal (D-CA), Rep. Anthony Brown (D-MD), Rep. Stephanie Murphy (D-FL), Rep. Tom

O'Halleran (D-AZ), and Rep. Tom Suozzi (D-NY). A summary of the bill is available here (http://armedservices.house.gov/_cache/files/f/b/fb1f6471-575f-4384-acb1-6abfa19cd2d5/B024B2F94920831136DF8C19D532EFDA.summary-of-smith-russia-bill-final.pdf) and its text can be found here (http://armedservices.house.gov/_cache/files/4/a/4a4c5f08-e6dc-4ef4-9fbd-dfae4a4ddc8c/70C13FF4D39C94FCE406E4EF14E4D818.smitwa-013-xml.pdf).

The original co-sponsors made the following statements about the bill:

"I am pleased to work with my co-sponsors on this bill to forcefully and responsibly counter Russia's aggression, its violation of arms treaties, and its campaign to erode democratic values worldwide," said Smith. "It is time for Congress to lead on this issue, especially given President Trump's unwillingness take the danger seriously. With this legislation, we are laying the foundation for an intelligent and proactive approach that strengthens allied and partner defenses, increases deterrence, and boosts cohesion while taking steps to reduce the risk of miscalculation and accidental nuclear war."

"I am proud to be an original co-sponsor of the bill that refocuses our national security strategy to better account for the very serious threats Russia presents to democracies around the world," said Brady. "As the Ranking Member on the Committee on House Administration that has oversight over our elections, as well as being a very Senior Member on the Armed Services Committee, I have a unique perspective on appreciating the seriousness of Russia's meddling in our elections, as well as the increased global military and nuclear threat it poses."

"This bill is a consequential and important step towards countering Russian threats to our democracy and worldwide peace and security through comprehensive solutions," said Davis. "Complex problems require a strong response, and I thank Ranking Member Smith for his leadership on this issue. Unless we take action, Russia will continue its destabilizing behavior."

"Our country needs an organized, comprehensive response to Russian aggression in order to build resilience and deterrence," said Langevin. "I am particularly pleased that this bill seeks to strengthen cyber cooperation with the NATO Cooperative Cyber Defense Center of Excellence; counter Russian development and modernization of critical

technologies on the battlefield; and combat Russian warfare and propaganda aimed at undermining the United States and its allies. We must continue to keep a focus on Russian aggression, and I commend Ranking Member Smith for his leadership on this issue.”

“Russia is trying to hurt America every way it possibly can. Putin is dangerous, and we need to figure out the best ways for the U.S. and our allies to curb his power,” said Cooper.

“This bill makes clear House Democrats’ commitment to ensuring that the military is well postured to resist Vladimir Putin’s worldwide aggression,” said Courtney. “I am especially pleased that the bill recognizes the importance of our maritime capabilities in deterring Russian expansionism, as well as noting the Navy’s documented need for additional attack submarines to support that strategic objective.”

“Under President Putin, Russia’s aggressive actions on the world stage have destabilized Europe, supported brutal dictators in the Middle East, and threatened the foundations of our democracy here in the United States,” said Garamendi. “President Trump has not taken these threats seriously, so Congress must take action. Ranking Member Smith’s bill instructs the Secretary of Defense to take steps to secure our interests, reassure our allies, and push back against Russia’s provocations. Just as importantly, this bill includes a crucial provision on increasing strategic stability between Russia and the United States and ways to reduce tensions and the potential for conflict. I hope that these efforts are included in the National Defense Authorization Act of 2018 as it moves through the Committee process.”

“Just last week, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs General Dunford told me that Russia maintains an adversarial relationship with the United States. America must be prepared for a range of Russian hostile acts, including military provocation and cyberattacks. That’s why this bill is so critical—we need a comprehensive, organized response to these threats to our democracy,” said Speier.

“I support this bill because it embraces a clear and all-inclusive approach to countering the serious threats that Russia poses to our nation’s democracy. It’s time that America takes a strong stance against their provocations,” said Veasey.

"For the past year, Russia has attempted to influence, alter, and undermine American democracy—and addressing this head-on must be a national security priority. When our democracy is threatened, we must act—and not just with press statements, but with a real plan," said Norcross. "That's why I'm joining with colleagues to prevent a hot war, a cold war, a cyber war, and a nuclear war. This bill offers a comprehensive set of solutions that will help us strengthen our alliances and reduce the risk of another nuclear arms race."

"The threat from Russia is real, clear, and immediate. Russia is an enemy that undermines our elections, degrades our alliance network, and abuses the human and civil rights of its own people and freedom-loving peoples around the world," said Gallego. "While President Trump continues to cozy up to President Putin, his feckless handling of foreign policy is putting our national security at risk. Through the Fostering Unity Against Russian Aggression Act, Democrats in Congress are working to preserve America's formidable leadership of the Western alliance in opposition to Putin."

"Russia has conducted an aggressive campaign to undermine not only our democracy, but democracies in Western Europe. I am proud to support Ranking Member Smith's bill that addresses these attacks with an effective strategy--something the Administration has failed to do. Congress cannot stand idly by while President Trump fails to respond to a grave threat to our democracy," said Moulton.

"Russia's aggressive actions make clear the need for a comprehensive U.S. deterrence strategy. By passing this bill, Congress can forcefully reaffirm America's commitment to the NATO alliance and jumpstart needed improvements to our own and our allies' readiness to counter unconventional modes of aggression, including propaganda and cyberattacks," said Shea-Porter.

"Since the start of the investigation into Russian meddling, an overwhelming number of our nation's intelligence officials have confirmed Russian interference in the 2016 election, with many now warning of similar cyberattacks and hacking during upcoming elections," said Rosen. "I am proud to join my colleagues in support of this bill, which proposes a comprehensive strategy to deter Russian hostility because nothing could be more important to our way of life than the integrity of our democracy."

"By meddling in our elections last year, Russia attacked our democracy. That aggression calls for a strong and sustained response. We must continue to strengthen our partnerships with European allies—and we need to proactively plan for the new and unconventional threats we are already facing. I am pleased to join Ranking Member Smith in supporting a bill that does all this and more," said McEachin.

"Military leaders have continually expressed that Russian aggression poses a grave threat to our national security and we cannot take these concerns lightly," said Carbajal. "It is imperative that Congress pass this common-sense legislation and provide a comprehensive framework to combat methods the Russian government is employing to destabilize our democratic institutions, both in the United States and abroad."

"Russia has repeatedly worked to weaken our democracy and sow disunity among the United States and its allies. In addition to maliciously interfering in our election and those in Germany and France, the Kremlin has deployed missiles in violation of arms control treaties and committed unprovoked acts of aggression in Eastern Europe. This bill calls for a comprehensive strategy to address Russia while working to deescalate conflict that would be catastrophic for all. Ranking Member Smith's legislation is a significant step forward in ensuring we hold Russia accountable for its harmful and destabilizing activities around the world," said Brown.

"Russia uses both military and non-military tools to achieve its geopolitical objectives, and uses those tools globally to diminish the United States. It is critical for the United States to have a strong and comprehensive strategy to counter Russian aggression, and this bill would ensure that the Administration develops and implements such a strategy," said Murphy.

"There can be no mistake, Russia's blatant disregard for international agreements and treaties must be countered with strength on the international stage," said O'Halleran. "I am proud to support legislation that strengthens our commitment to the collective defense of our allies. We must take action to end to this encroaching aggression and prevent future attempts to weaken our democracy, or the democratic process in countries around the world."

“As I’ve been saying since day one, we need to send Putin a strong message that we’re not going to let him undermine democratic governments. Secretary of Defense James Mattis and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joseph Dunford have said that Russia continues to pose a serious threat to democracies. This bill is an effort of Congress to work with the Department of Defense to develop a comprehensive strategy to confront the 21st century hybrid threat posed by Russia,” said Suozzi.

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Related Files

SMITH RUSSIA BILL.pdf (/a=Files.Serve&File_id=9F14340F-7559-4E41-A6B1-3BA20AA96940) (1.3 MBs)

Summary of Smith Russia Bill Final.pdf (/a=Files.Serve&File_id=5F87C34B-F3F1-4EAB-9979-40A6C8A36382) (26.9 KBs)

Permalink: <https://armedservices.house.gov/2017/6/ranking-member-adam-smith-and-22-armed-services-democrats-introduce-bill-to-boost-unity-and-deterrence-against-russian-aggression> (<https://armedservices.house.gov/2017/6/ranking-member-adam-smith-and-22-armed-services-democrats-introduce-bill-to-boost-unity-and-deterrence-against-russian-aggression>)