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Markup: H.R. 920, Venezuela Arms Restriction Act; H.R. 854, Humanitarian Assistance to the Venezuelan People Act of 2019; H.R. 1477, Russian-Venezuelan Threat Mitigation Act, H.R. 1616, European Energy Security and Diversification Act of 2019

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED SIXTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

March 14, 2019

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MARKUP OF: H.R. 920, VENEZUELA ARMS RESTRICTION ACT; H.R. 854, HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO THE VENEZUELAN PEOPLE ACT OF 2019; H.R. 1477, RUSSIAN-VENEZUELAN THREAT MITIGATION ACT; AND H.R. 1616, EUROPEAN ENERGY SECURITY AND DIVERSIFICATION ACT OF 2019

THURSDAY, MARCH 14, 2019

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:45 a.m., in Room 2172 Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Eliot Engel (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Chairman ENGEL. So if we could get started. I do not think this will last very long. I know that we are going to have a vote on the House floor sometime this morning.

So I would ask if we could keep our statements brief and we can finish and then go to the floor for a vote, and I understand that there will be no votes in the afternoon. So I think that is a good thing for the schedule.

So let me call the committee to order and pursuant to notice, we meet today to markup four bipartisan measures. Without objection, all members may have 5 days to submit statements or extraneous materials on today's business.

As members were notified yesterday, we intend to consider today's measures en bloc. The measures are H.R. 920, the Venezuela Arms Restriction Act, with the Engel Amendment in the nature of a substitute; H.R. 854, the Humanitarian Assistance to the Venezuelan People Act of 2019 with the Engel Amendment in the nature of a substitute and with the Levin Amendment; H.R. 1477, the Russian-Venezuelan Threat Mitigation Act with the Engel Amendment in the nature of a substitute; and H.R. 1616, the European Energy Security and Diversification Act of 2019 with the Keating Amendment in the nature of a substitute.

[The Bills and Amendments offered en bloc follows:]

I

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 920

To restrict the transfer of defense articles, defense services, and crime control articles to any element of the security forces of Venezuela that is under the authority of a government of Venezuela that is not recognized as the legitimate government of Venezuela by the Government of the United States, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 30, 2019

Ms. SHALALA (for herself, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN of Puerto Rico, Mr. SOTO, Mrs. MURPHY, Ms. MUCARSEL-POWELL, and Mr. SIRES) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

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A BILL

To restrict the transfer of defense articles, defense services, and crime control articles to any element of the security forces of Venezuela that is under the authority of a government of Venezuela that is not recognized as the legitimate government of Venezuela by the Government of the United States, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Venezuela Arms Restriction Act".

SEC. 2. RESTRICTION ON EXPORT OF COVERED ARTICLES AND SERVICES TO CERTAIN SECURITY FORCES OF VENEZUELA.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, covered articles or services may not be exported from the United States to any element of the security forces of Venezuela that is under the authority of a government of Venezuela that is not recognized as the legitimate government of Venezuela by the Government of the United States.

SEC. 3. REPORT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State, in consultation with the Secretary of Commerce as appropriate, shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on the transfer by foreign persons of covered articles or services to elements of the security forces of Venezuela that are under the authority of a government of Venezuela that is not recognized as the legitimate government of Venezuela by the Government of the United States.

(b) MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED.—The report required by subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) A list of all significant transfers by foreign persons of covered articles or services to such elements of the security forces of Venezuela since July 2017.

(2) A list of all foreign persons who maintain an existing defense relationship with such elements of the security forces of Venezuela.

(3) Any known use of covered articles or services by such elements of the security forces of Venezuela or associated forces, including paramilitary groups, that have coordinated with such security forces to assault, intimidate, or murder political activists, protesters, dissidents, and other civil society leaders.

SEC. 4. TERMINATION.

This Act shall expire on the earlier of—

(1) the date that is 3 years after the date of the enactment of this Act; or

(2) the date on which the President certifies to the appropriate congressional committees that the Government of Venezuela has returned to a democratic form of government with respect for the essential elements of representative democracy as set forth in Article 3 of the Inter-American Democratic Charter.

SEC. 5. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term "appropriate congressional committees" means—

(A) the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives; and

(B) the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate.

(2) COVERED ARTICLE OR SERVICE.—The term "covered article or service"—

(A) for purposes of section 2, means—

(i) a defense article or defense service, as such terms are defined in section 47 of the Arms Export Control Act (22 U.S.C. 2794); and

(ii) any article included on the Commerce Control List set forth in Supplement No. 1 to part 774 of the Export Administration Regulations under subchapter C of chapter VII of title 15, Code of Federal Regulations, and controlled for crime control purposes, if it is determined that the end-user is likely to use the article to vio-

late the human rights of the citizens of Venezuela; and

(B) for purposes of section 3, means—

(i) any defense article or defense service of the type described in section 47 of the Arms Export Control Act; and

(ii) any article of the type included on the Commerce Control List set forth in Supplement No. 1 to part 774 of the Export Administration Regulations and controlled for crime control purposes.

(3) FOREIGN PERSON.—The term "foreign person" means a person that is not a United States person.

(4) PERSON.—The term "person" means an individual or entity.

(5) SECURITY FORCES OF VENEZUELA.—The term "security forces of Venezuela" includes—

(A) the Bolivarian National Armed Forces, including the Bolivarian National Guard;

(B) the Bolivarian National Intelligence Service;

(C) the Bolivarian National Police; and

(D) the Bureau for Scientific, Criminal and Forensic Investigations of the Ministry of Interior, Justice, and Peace.

(6) UNITED STATES PERSON.—The term "United States person" means—

(A) a United States citizen or an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence to the United States; or

(B) an entity organized under the laws of the United States or of any jurisdiction within the United States, including a foreign branch of such an entity.

○

AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE

TO H.R. 920

OFFERED BY MR. ENGEL OF NEW YORK

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Venezuela Arms Restriction Act".

SEC. 2. RESTRICTION ON EXPORT OF COVERED ARTICLES AND SERVICES TO CERTAIN SECURITY FORCES OF VENEZUELA.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, covered articles or services may not be exported from the United States to any element of the security forces of Venezuela that is under the authority of a government of Venezuela that is not recognized as the legitimate government of Venezuela by the Government of the United States.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State, in consultation with the Secretary of Commerce and the heads of other departments and agencies as appropriate, shall—

(1) determine, using such information that is available to the Secretary of State, whether any covered article or service has been transferred since July 2017 to the security forces of Venezuela without a license or other authorization as required by law; and

(2) submit such determination in writing to the appropriate congressional committees.

SEC. 3. REPORT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State, in consultation with the Secretary of Commerce as appropriate, shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on the transfer by foreign persons of covered articles or services to elements of the security forces of Venezuela that are under the authority of a government of Venezuela that is not recognized as the legitimate government of Venezuela by the Government of the United States.

(b) MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED.—The report required by subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) A list of all significant transfers by foreign persons of covered articles or services to such elements of the security forces of Venezuela since July 2017.

(2) A list of all foreign persons who maintain an existing defense relationship with such elements of the security forces of Venezuela.

(3) Any known use of covered articles or services by such elements of the security forces of Venezuela or associated forces, including paramilitary groups, that have coordinated with such security forces to assault, intimidate, or murder political activists, protesters, dissidents, and other civil society leaders, including Juan Guaido.

SEC. 4. TERMINATION.

This Act shall expire on the earlier of—

(1) the date that is 3 years after the date of the enactment of this Act; or

(2) the date on which the President certifies to the appropriate congressional committees that the Government of Venezuela has returned to a democratic form of government with respect for the essential elements of representative democracy as set forth in Article 3 of the Inter-American Democratic Charter.

SEC. 5. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term "appropriate congressional committees" means—

(A) the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives; and

(B) the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate.

(2) COVERED ARTICLE OR SERVICE.—The term "covered article or service"—

(A) for purposes of section 2, means—

(i) a defense article or defense service, as such terms are defined in section 47 of the Arms Export Control Act (22 U.S.C. 2794); and

(ii) any article included on the Commerce Control List set forth in Supplement No. 1 to part 774 of the Export Administration Regulations under subchapter C of chapter VII of title 15, Code of Federal Regulations, and controlled for crime control purposes, if it is determined that the end-user is likely to use the article to vio-

late the human rights of the citizens of Venezuela; and

(B) for purposes of section 3, means—

(i) any defense article or defense service of the type described in section 47 of the Arms Export Control Act; and

(ii) any article of the type included on the Commerce Control List set forth in Supplement No. 1 to part 774 of the Export Administration Regulations and controlled for crime control purposes.

(3) FOREIGN PERSON.—The term "foreign person" means a person that is not a United States person.

(4) PERSON.—The term "person" means an individual or entity.

(5) SECURITY FORCES OF VENEZUELA.—The term "security forces of Venezuela" includes—

(A) the Bolivarian National Armed Forces, including the Bolivarian National Guard;

(B) the Bolivarian National Intelligence Service;

(C) the Bolivarian National Police; and

(D) the Bureau for Scientific, Criminal and Forensic Investigations of the Ministry of Interior, Justice, and Peace.

(6) UNITED STATES PERSON.—The term "United States person" means—

(A) a United States citizen or an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence to the United States; or

(B) an entity organized under the laws of the United States or of any jurisdiction within the United States, including a foreign branch of such an entity.

☒

I

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 854

To provide humanitarian assistance to the Venezuelan people, including Venezuelan migrants and refugees in the Americas and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 29, 2019

Ms. MUCARSEL-POWELL (for herself, Ms. SHALALA, Ms. GARCIA of Texas, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. SOTO, Mr. RASKIN, Mr. ESPAILLAT, and Ms. FRANKEL) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

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A BILL

To provide humanitarian assistance to the Venezuelan people, including Venezuelan migrants and refugees in the Americas and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Humanitarian Assistance to the Venezuelan People Act of 2019".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Venezuela is in the grips of unprecedented political and economic turmoil marked by hyper-

inflation, soaring crime rates, and an authoritarian President.

(2) President Nicolás Maduro and his predecessor have, through authoritarianism, graft, and incompetence, precipitated a massive humanitarian crisis both inside Venezuela and throughout the Western Hemisphere.

(3) The Venezuelan gross domestic product is expected to contract for the sixth year in a row in 2019, with the Government defaulting on its external debt and inflation projected to exceed 1 million percent this year.

(4) Health outcomes in Venezuela have approached critical levels as food, medicine, and services become increasingly inaccessible, with 11.4 percent of children in Venezuela under 5 years old suffering from moderate or acute malnutrition.

(5) Nearly 10 percent of Venezuela's population of 31 million have fled overseas, with nearly 90 percent of those remaining living in poverty.

(6) Venezuelans have lost an average of 19 pounds of weight due to nationwide food shortages since the beginning of the country's economic crisis.

(7) Venezuela is suffering from an 88 percent medicine shortage, with more than 22,000 doctors leaving Venezuela in the past 4 years.

(8) The Maduro Government has repeatedly rejected offers of humanitarian assistance, despite the return of once-vanquished diseases like diphtheria and measles, rampant cases of malaria, and the sharp rise in infant and maternal mortality.

(9) Venezuela's rates of homicide and other crimes have risen dramatically over the course of the crisis, with chronic underreporting contributing to an insufficient understanding of the scope of the crisis.

SEC. 3. REQUIREMENT FOR STRATEGY TO PROVIDE HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO THE PEOPLE OF VENEZUELA.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State, in coordination with the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, shall submit to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate a long-term strategy to provide humanitarian assistance to the people of Venezuela

both in Venezuela and throughout the Western Hemisphere through credible and independent nongovernmental organizations operating in Venezuela or in neighboring countries to alleviate the suffering of the Venezuelan people.

(b) MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED.—The strategy required under subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) A description of how and to what extent the following assistance will be provided:

(A) Public health commodities for Venezuelan health facilities and services, including medicines on the World Health Organization's List of Essential Medicines and basic medical supplies and equipment.

(B) Basic food commodities and nutritional supplements needed to address growing malnutrition and improve food security for the people of Venezuela, with a specific emphasis on the most vulnerable populations.

(C) Technical assistance to ensure health and food commodities are appropriately selected, procured, and distributed, predominantly through local nongovernmental organizations.

(2) An identification of United States Agency for International Development best practices in de-

livering humanitarian assistance, particularly with regard to food assistance and how such best practices are being utilized in providing humanitarian assistance to Venezuela.

(3) A description of obstacles put in place by the Maduro Government to prohibit the entry of humanitarian assistance into the country.

(4) A description of efforts to enhance support for countries in the Western Hemisphere in supporting the humanitarian needs of Venezuelan migrants.

(5) A description of efforts to ensure that humanitarian assistance for Venezuelans is coordinated with other United States bilateral assistance in the Western Hemisphere and does not result in eliminating other bilateral assistance.

(6) A description of how humanitarian assistance is being monitored and evaluated and what additional staff are managing the assistance.

SEC. 4. COMPTROLLER GENERAL REPORT ON UNITED STATES EFFORTS TO PROVIDE HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO THE PEOPLE OF VENEZUELA.

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United

States shall submit to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate a report assessing the impact of United States humanitarian assistance to the people of Venezuela both in Venezuela and throughout the Western Hemisphere.

SEC. 5. SUPPORT FOR EFFORTS AT THE UNITED NATIONS ON THE HUMANITARIAN AND POLITICAL CRISIS IN VENEZUELA.

(a) INITIAL EFFORTS.—The President shall instruct the Permanent Representative of the United States to the United Nations to use the voice, vote, and influence of the United States to secure the necessary votes to—

(1) place the humanitarian and political crisis in Venezuela on the agenda at the United Nations; and

(2) secure a Presidential Statement from the United Nations urging the Government of Venezuela to allow the delivery of humanitarian relief.

(b) ADDITIONAL EFFORTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Beginning not later than 30 days after the conclusion of efforts by the United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations under subsection (a), the President shall in-

struct the Permanent Representative to use the voice, vote, and influence of the United States to secure the adoption of a United Nations resolution described in paragraph (2).

(2) RESOLUTION DESCRIBED.—The United Nations resolution referred to in paragraph (1) is a resolution encouraging—

(A) the Government of Venezuela to promptly allow safe and unhindered access for humanitarian agencies and their implementing partners, including possible support from neighboring countries; and

(B) the Government of Venezuela to allow the delivery of food and medicine.

SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS FOR HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO THE PEOPLE OF VENEZUELA.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The President is authorized to provide humanitarian assistance to support the people of Venezuela both in Venezuela and throughout the Western Hemisphere.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the President

$150,000,000 each year for fiscal years 2020 and 2021 to carry out this section.

○

AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE

TO H.R. 854

OFFERED BY MR. ENGEL OF NEW YORK

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Humanitarian Assistance to the Venezuelan People Act of 2019".

SEC. 2. REPORT ON THE COORDINATION AND DISTRIBUTION OF HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO THE PEOPLE OF VENEZUELA INCLUDING STRATEGY ON FUTURE EFFORTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State, in coordination with the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report outlining the coordination of humanitarian assistance to the people of Venezuela, both in Venezuela and throughout the Western Hemisphere, with nongovernmental organizations and international organizations operating in Venezuela or countries in the region to alleviate the suffering of the Venezuelan people.

(b) MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED.—The report required under subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) A description of how and under what circumstances the following humanitarian assistance has been provided:

(A) Public health commodities for Venezuelan health facilities and services, including medicines on the World Health Organization's List of Essential Medicines, and basic medical supplies and equipment.

(B) Basic food commodities and nutritional supplements needed to address growing malnutrition and improve food security for the people of Venezuela, with a specific emphasis on the most vulnerable populations.

(C) Technical assistance to ensure health and food commodities are appropriately selected, procured, and distributed, predominantly through local nongovernmental organizations.

(2) An identification of United States Agency for International Development and Department of State best practices in delivering humanitarian assistance, particularly with regard to food assistance, and how such best practices are being utilized in

providing humanitarian assistance to Venezuela and countries in the region.

(3) A description of current and anticipated challenges to distributing humanitarian assistance in Venezuela and countries hosting Venezuelan migrants.

(4) A description of efforts to ensure that humanitarian and development assistance for Venezuelans is coordinated with other United States bilateral assistance in the Western Hemisphere and does not result in duplication or omission of such other bilateral assistance.

(5) A description of how the pre-positioning and distribution of humanitarian assistance is being monitored and evaluated, the number of beneficiaries reached, an assessment of how humanitarian and development assistance is benefitting Venezuelan migrants inside and outside of the country, and what additional staff may be necessary to manage such assistance.

(6) A strategy for future efforts to provide humanitarian assistance to the people of Venezuela that includes a description of future efforts regarding the matters described in paragraphs (1) through (5).

SEC. 3. STATEMENT OF CONGRESS.

Congress strongly condemns all violent actions by the Maduro regime and Venezuela's security forces to block and divert humanitarian assistance from entering Venezuela.

SEC. 4. COMPTROLLER GENERAL REPORT ON UNITED STATES EFFORTS TO PROVIDE HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO THE PEOPLE OF VENEZUELA.

Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to appropriate congressional committees a report assessing the impact of United States humanitarian assistance on the people of Venezuela, both in Venezuela and throughout the Western Hemisphere, including the total number of beneficiaries reached.

SEC. 5. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS FOR HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO THE PEOPLE OF VENEZUELA.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The President is authorized to provide humanitarian assistance to support the people of Venezuela, both in Venezuela and throughout the Western Hemisphere.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that not less than $150,000,000 is necessary for

each of fiscal years 2020 and 2021 to carry out this section.

(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the President such sums as may be necessary for each of fiscal years 2020 and 2021 to carry out this section.

SEC. 6. DEFINITION.

In this Act:

(1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term "appropriate congressional committees" means the following:

(A) The Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives.

(B) The Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives.

(C) The Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate.

(D) The Committee on Appropriations of the Senate.

(2) VENEZUELAN SECURITY FORCES.—The term "Venezuelan security forces" includes the following:

(A) The Bolivarian National Armed Forces, including the Bolivarian National Guard.

(B) The Bolivarian National Intelligence Service.

(C) The Bolivarian National Police.

(D) The Bureau for Scientific, Criminal and Forensic Investigations of the Ministry of Interior, Justice, and Peace.

☒

AMENDMENT TO THE AMENDMENT IN NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE TO H.R. 854

OFFERED BY MR. LEVIN OF MICHIGAN

In section 5(a), insert before the period at the end the following: ", in accordance with established international humanitarian principles".

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I

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1477

To require a threat assessment and strategy to counter Russian influence in Venezuela, an assessment of foreign acquisition of CITGO assets in the United States, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 28, 2019

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ (for herself, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mr. SOTO, Ms. MUCARSEL-POWELL, and Ms. SHALALA) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on 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 require a threat assessment and strategy to counter Russian influence in Venezuela, an assessment of foreign acquisition of CITGO assets in the United States, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Russian-Venezuelan Threat Mitigation Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) The Russian Federation's increased presence in the western hemisphere is of concern to the United States and our allies in the region.

(2) In December 2018, the Russian Federation sent two Tu–160 nuclear-capable bombers to Venezuela for joint exercises with the Venezuelan military. The Tu–160 can carry conventional or nuclear-tipped cruise missiles with an estimated maximum range of around 3,000 miles.

(3) Russian and Venezuelan forces took part in a joint 10-hour exercise across the Caribbean in December 2018 with the Tu–160 nuclear-capable bombers.

(4) The Maduro regime has turned to the Russian Federation, one of its strongest political allies, for financial support during its current economic crisis.

(5) Nicolas Maduro secured loans from the Russian Federation to be repaid through future oil exports, but fell behind on those payments in 2017. News reports in December 2018 suggest that Russian State oil company Rosneft has lent Venezuelan state oil company Petroleos de Venezuela (PdVSA) $6.5 billion partly as prepayment for crude oil, $3.1

billion of which remained outstanding as of the end of September 2018.

(6) In 2016, PdVSA secured a $1.5 billion loan from Rosneft, and PdVSA used 49.9 percent of its shares in United States-based and Venezuelan-owned company CITGO as collateral. A Venezuelan default could lead to potential Russian ownership of United States energy infrastructure.

(7) At the conclusion of a 3-day visit to Moscow in December 2018, Maduro announced $6 billion worth of Russian investment pledges focused on the oil and mining sectors as well as the export of 600,000 tons of Russian wheat to Venezuela to cover its 2019 needs.

SEC. 3. THREAT ASSESSMENT AND STRATEGY TO COUNTER RUSSIAN INFLUENCE IN VENEZUELA.

(a) THREAT ASSESSMENT.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees an assessment on Russian-Venezuelan security cooperation and the potential threat such cooperation poses to the United States and countries in the Western Hemisphere.

(b) STRATEGY.—Not later than 30 days after the submission of the threat assessment required under sub-

section (a), the Secretary of State shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a strategy to address Russian-Venezuelan cooperation.

(c) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term "appropriate congressional committees" means the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate.

SEC. 4. ASSESSMENT OF FOREIGN ACQUISITION OF CITGO ASSETS IN THE UNITED STATES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall transmit to the appropriate congressional committees an assessment of the security risks posed by potential Russian acquisition of CITGO's United States energy infrastructure holdings.

(b) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term "appropriate congressional committees" means the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate.

SEC. 5. ALIENS INELIGIBLE FOR VISAS, ADMISSION, OR PAROLE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—An alien who the Secretary of State or the Secretary of Homeland Security (or a des-

ignee of one of such Secretaries) knows, or has reason to believe, is an alien who is acting or has acted on behalf of the Russian Government in direct support of the Venezuelan security forces is—

(1) inadmissible to the United States;

(2) ineligible to receive a visa or other documentation to enter the United States; and

(3) otherwise ineligible to be admitted or paroled into the United States or to receive any other benefit under the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101 et seq.).

(b) CURRENT VISAS REVOKED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The issuing consular officer, the Secretary of State, or the Secretary of Homeland Security (or a designee of one of such Secretaries) shall, in accordance with section 221(i) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1201(i)), revoke any visa or other entry documentation issued to an alien described in subsection (a) regardless of when the visa or other entry documentation is issued.

(2) EFFECT OF REVOCATION.—A revocation under paragraph (1) shall—

(A) take effect immediately; and

(B) automatically cancel any other valid visa or entry documentation that is in the alien's possession.

(c) EXCEPTION TO COMPLY WITH UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS AGREEMENT OR FOR NATIONAL SECURITY REASONS.—

(1) INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS.—This section shall not apply to an alien if admitting the alien into the United States is necessary to permit the United States to comply with—

(A) the Agreement regarding the Headquarters of the United Nations, signed at Lake Success June 26, 1947, and entered into force November 21, 1947, between the United Nations and the United States; or

(B) other applicable international obligations of the United States.

(2) NATIONAL SECURITY.—The President may waive the application of this section to an alien if the President—

(A) determines that such a waiver is in the national interest of the United States; and

(B) transmits to the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives

and the Committee on Foreign Relations a notice of and justification for such waiver.

(d) TERMINATION.—This section shall terminate on the earlier of—

(1) the date that is three years after the date of the enactment of this Act; or

(2) the date on which the President certifies to the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate that the Government of Venezuela has returned to a democratic form of government with respect for the essential elements of representative democracy as set forth in Article 3 of the Inter-American Democratic Charter.

(e) DEFINITION.—In this subsection, the term "Venezuelan security forces" includes the following:

(1) The Bolivarian National Armed Forces, including the Bolivarian National Guard.

(2) The Bolivarian National Intelligence Service.

(3) The Bolivarian National Police.

(4) The Bureau for Scientific, Criminal and Forensic Investigations of the Ministry of Interior, Justice, and Peace.

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AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE

TO H.R. 1477

OFFERED BY MR. ENGEL OF NEW YORK

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Russian-Venezuelan Threat Mitigation Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) The Russian Federation's increased presence in the Western Hemisphere is of concern to the United States and our allies in the region.

(2) In December 2018, the Russian Federation sent two Tu–160 nuclear-capable bombers to Venezuela for joint exercises with the Venezuelan military. The Tu–160 can carry conventional or nuclear-tipped cruise missiles with an estimated maximum range of around 3,000 miles.

(3) Russian and Venezuelan forces took part in a joint 10-hour exercise across the Caribbean in December 2018 with the Tu–160 nuclear-capable bombers.

(4) Nicolas Maduro and his regime have turned to the Russian Federation, one of its strongest political allies, for financial support during its current economic crisis and to counter international support for Juan Guaido.

(5) In January 2018, Russia sent contractors linked to the Wagner Group to provide security for Nicolas Maduro.

(6) Nicolas Maduro secured loans from the Russian Federation to be repaid through future oil exports, but fell behind on those payments in 2017. News reports in December 2018 suggest that Russian State oil company Rosneft has lent Venezuelan state oil company Petroleos de Venezuela (PdVSA) $6.5 billion partly as prepayment for crude oil, $3.1 billion of which remained outstanding as of the end of September 2018.

(6) In 2016, PdVSA secured a $1.5 billion loan from Rosneft, and PdVSA used 49.9 percent of its shares in United States-based and Venezuelan-owned company CITGO as collateral. A Venezuelan default could lead to potential Russian ownership of United States energy infrastructure.

(7) At the conclusion of a 3-day visit to Moscow in December 2018, Maduro announced $6 billion

worth of Russian investment pledges focused on the oil and mining sectors as well as the export of 600,000 tons of Russian wheat to Venezuela to cover its 2019 needs.

SEC. 3. THREAT ASSESSMENT AND STRATEGY TO COUNTER RUSSIAN INFLUENCE IN VENEZUELA.

(a) THREAT ASSESSMENT.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees an assessment on Russian-Venezuelan security cooperation and the potential threat such cooperation poses to the United States and countries in the Western Hemisphere.

(b) STRATEGY.—Not later than 30 days after the submission of the threat assessment required under subsection (a), the Secretary of State shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a strategy to counter threats identified in such assessment from Russian-Venezuelan cooperation.

(c) FORM.—The threat assessment required under subsection (a) shall be submitted in unclassified form but may include a classified annex.

(d) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term "appropriate congressional committees" means the Committee on

Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate.

SEC. 4. ASSESSMENT OF FOREIGN ACQUISITION OF CITGO ASSETS IN THE UNITED STATES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall transmit to the appropriate congressional committees an assessment of the national security risks posed by potential Russian acquisition of CITGO's United States energy infrastructure holdings.

(b) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term "appropriate congressional committees" means the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee on Appropriations, and the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign Relations, the Committee on Appropriations, and the Committee on Banking of the Senate and the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Banking of the Senate.

SEC. 5. ALIENS INELIGIBLE FOR VISAS, ADMISSION, OR PAROLE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—An alien who the Secretary of State or the Secretary of Homeland Security (or a designee of one of such Secretaries) knows, or has reason to believe, is an alien who is acting or has acted on behalf

of the Russian Government in direct support of the Venezuelan security forces is—

(1) inadmissible to the United States;

(2) ineligible to receive a visa or other documentation to enter the United States; and

(3) otherwise ineligible to be admitted or paroled into the United States or to receive any other benefit under the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101 et seq.).

(b) CURRENT VISAS REVOKED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The issuing consular officer, the Secretary of State, or the Secretary of Homeland Security (or a designee of one of such Secretaries) shall, in accordance with section 221(i) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1201(i)), revoke any visa or other entry documentation issued to an alien described in subsection (a) regardless of when the visa or other entry documentation is issued.

(2) EFFECT OF REVOCATION.—A revocation under paragraph (1) shall—

(A) take effect immediately; and

(B) automatically cancel any other valid visa or entry documentation that is in the alien's possession.

(c) EXCEPTION TO COMPLY WITH UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS AGREEMENT OR FOR NATIONAL SECURITY REASONS.—

(1) INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS.—This section shall not apply to an alien if admitting the alien into the United States is necessary to permit the United States to comply with—

(A) the Agreement regarding the Headquarters of the United Nations, signed at Lake Success June 26, 1947, and entered into force November 21, 1947, between the United Nations and the United States; or

(B) other applicable international obligations of the United States.

(2) NATIONAL SECURITY.—The President may waive the application of this section to an alien if the President—

(A) determines that such a waiver is in the national interest of the United States; and

(B) transmits to the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign Relations a notice of and justification for such waiver.

(d) TERMINATION.—This section shall terminate on the earlier of—

(1) the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act; or

(2) the date on which the President certifies to the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate that the Government of Venezuela has returned to a democratic form of government with respect for the essential elements of representative democracy as set forth in Article 3 of the Inter-American Democratic Charter.

(e) DEFINITION.—In this subsection, the term "Venezuelan security forces" includes the following:

(1) The Bolivarian National Armed Forces, including the Bolivarian National Guard.

(2) The Bolivarian National Intelligence Service.

(3) The Bolivarian National Police.

(4) The Bureau for Scientific, Criminal and Forensic Investigations of the Ministry of Interior, Justice, and Peace.

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116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1616

To prioritize the efforts of and enhance coordination among United States agencies to encourage countries in Central and Eastern Europe to diversify their energy sources and supply routes, increase Europe's energy security, and help the United States reach its global energy security goals, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 7, 2019

Mr. KINZINGER (for himself, Mr. KEATING, Mr. FITZPATRICK, and Mr. GONZALEZ of Texas) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

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A BILL

To prioritize the efforts of and enhance coordination among United States agencies to encourage countries in Central and Eastern Europe to diversify their energy sources and supply routes, increase Europe's energy security, and help the United States reach its global energy security goals, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "European Energy Security and Diversification Act of 2019".

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) CENTRAL OR EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRY.—The term "Central or Eastern European country" includes—

(A) Albania;

(B) Bosnia and Herzegovina;

(C) Bulgaria;

(D) Croatia;

(E) Cyprus;

(F) the Czech Republic;

(G) Estonia;

(H) Greece;

(I) Hungary;

(J) Kosovo;

(K) Latvia;

(L) Lithuania;

(M) Macedonia;

(N) Moldova;

(O) Montenegro;

(P) Poland;

(Q) Romania;

(R) Serbia;

(S) Slovakia;

(T) Slovenia; and

(U) Ukraine.

(2) EARLY-STAGE PROJECT SUPPORT.—The term "early-stage project support" includes—

(A) feasibility studies;

(B) resource evaluations;

(C) project appraisal and costing;

(D) pilot projects;

(E) commercial support, such as trade missions, reverse trade missions, technical workshops, international buyer programs, and international partner searchers to link suppliers to projects;

(F) technical assistance and other guidance to improve the local regulatory environment and market frameworks to encourage transparent competition and enhance energy security; and

(G) long-term energy sector planning.

(3) LATE-STAGE PROJECT SUPPORT.—The term "late-stage project support" includes debt financing, insurance, and transaction advisory services.

SEC. 3. STATEMENT OF POLICY.

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the United States has economic and national security interests in assisting Central and Eastern Euro-

pean countries achieve energy security through diversification of their energy sources and supply routes.

(b) STATEMENT OF POLICY.—It is the policy of the United States—

(1) to advance United States foreign policy and development goals by assisting Central and Eastern European countries to reduce their dependence on energy resources from countries that use energy dependence for undue political influence, such as the Russian Federation, which has used natural gas to coerce, intimidate, and influence other countries;

(2) to promote the energy security of allies and partners of the United States by encouraging the development of accessible, transparent, and competitive energy markets that provide diversified sources, types, and routes of energy;

(3) to encourage United States public and private sector investment in European energy infrastructure projects to bridge the gap between energy security requirements and commercial demand in a way that is consistent with the region's absorptive capacity; and

(4) to help facilitate the export of United States energy resources, technology, and expertise to global markets in a way that benefits the energy security

of allies and partners of the United States, including in Central and Eastern Europe.

SEC. 4. PRIORITIZATION OF EFFORTS AND ASSISTANCE FOR ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In pursuing the policy described in section 3, the Secretary of State, in coordination with the heads of United States agencies that operate under the policy guidance of the Secretary, shall, as appropriate, prioritize and expedite the efforts of the Department of State and those agencies in supporting the efforts of the European Commission and the governments of Central and Eastern European countries to increase their energy security, including through—

(1) providing diplomatic and political support to the European Commission and those governments, as necessary—

(A) to facilitate international negotiations concerning cross-border infrastructure;

(B) to enhance Europe's regulatory environment with respect to energy; and

(C) to develop accessible, transparent, and competitive energy markets supplied by diverse sources, types, and routes of energy; and

(2) providing support to improve European energy markets, including early-stage project support and late-stage project support for the construction or improvement of energy infrastructure, as necessary—

(A) to diversify the energy sources and supply routes of Central and Eastern European countries;

(B) to enhance energy market integration across the region; and

(C) to increase competition within energy markets.

(b) PROJECT SELECTION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The agencies described in subsection (a) shall identify energy infrastructure projects that would be appropriate for United States assistance under this section.

(2) PROJECT ELIGIBILITY.—A project is eligible for United States assistance under this section if the project is—

(A) related to—

(i) natural gas infrastructure, such as interconnectors, storage facilities, liquefied natural gas import facilities, or reverse flow capacity;

(ii) electricity transmission infrastructure, electricity storage projects, or smart grid projects;

(iii) renewable energy projects in wind, solar, tidal, or other forms; or

(iv) the improvement, rehabilitation, or construction of natural gas, coal, or other electricity generation facilities to increase the efficiency and reliability of electricity production; and

(B) located in a Central or Eastern European country.

(3) PREFERENCE.—In selecting among projects that are eligible under paragraph (2), the agencies described in subsection (a) shall give preference to projects that—

(A) link the energy systems of two or more Central and Eastern European countries;

(B) have already been identified by the European Commission as being integral for the energy security of Central and Eastern European countries;

(C) are expected to enhance energy market integration;

(D) can attract funding from the private sector, an international financial institution, the government of the country in which the project will be carried out, or the European Commission; or

(E) have the potential to use United States goods and services during project implementation.

(c) TYPES OF ASSISTANCE.—

(1) DIPLOMATIC AND POLITICAL SUPPORT.—The Secretary of State shall provide diplomatic and political support to the European Commission and the governments of Central and Eastern European countries, as necessary, including by using the diplomatic and political influence and expertise of the Department of State to build the capacity of those countries to resolve any impediments to the development of projects selected under subsection (b).

(2) EARLY-STAGE PROJECT SUPPORT.—The Director of the Trade and Development Agency shall provide early-stage project support with respect to projects selected under subsection (b), as necessary.

(3) LATE-STAGE PROJECT SUPPORT.—Agencies described in subsection (a) that provide late-stage

project support shall do so with respect to projects selected under subsection (b), as necessary.

(d) FUNDING.—

(1) PRIVATE SECTOR INVESTMENT.—The agencies described in subsection (a)—

(A) are authorized to provide financing of not more than $1,000,000,000 to support private sector investment in projects that diversify the energy sources and energy transport capabilities of Central and Eastern European countries and to improve energy market integration in those countries; and

(B) shall ensure that amounts from such investments are available for fiscal years 2020 through 2024 for debt financing and insurance for projects under this section.

(2) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS FOR TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Director of the Trade and Development Agency for each of fiscal years 2020 through 2024—

(A) $5,000,000 to provide assistance under this section; and

(B) such sums as may be necessary for the Agency to employ additional personnel to provide such assistance.

(3) COUNTERING RUSSIAN INFLUENCE FUND.—Section 254(b) of the Countering Russian Influence in Europe and Eurasia Act of 2017 (22 U.S.C. 9543(b)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(7) To assist United States agencies in providing assistance under section 4 of the European Energy Security and Diversification Act of 2019.".

SEC. 5. PROGRESS REPORTS.

Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the President shall submit to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on progress made in providing assistance for projects under section 4 that includes—

(1) a description of the energy infrastructure projects the United States has identified for such assistance; and

(2) for each such project—

(A) a description of the role of the United States in the project, including in early-stage project support and late-stage project support;

(B) the amount and form of any debt financing and insurance provided by the United States Government for the project;

(C) the amount and form of any early-stage project support; and

(D) an update on the progress made on the project as of the date of the report.

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AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE

TO H.R. 1616

OFFERED BY MR. KEATING OF MASSACHUSETTS

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SEC. 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "European Energy Security and Diversification Act of 2019".

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) EARLY-STAGE PROJECT SUPPORT.—The term "early-stage project support" includes the following:

(A) Feasibility studies.

(B) Resource evaluations.

(C) Project appraisal and costing.

(D) Pilot projects.

(E) Commercial support, such as trade missions, reverse trade missions, technical workshops, international buyer programs, and international partner searchers to link suppliers to projects.

(F) Technical assistance and other guidance to improve the local regulatory environment and market frameworks to encourage transparent competition and enhance energy security.

(G) Long-term energy sector planning.

(2) LATE-STAGE PROJECT SUPPORT.—The term "late-stage project support" includes support described in section 1421 of the Better Utilization of Investments Leading to Development Act of 2018 (also referred to as the "BUILD Act of 2018"; enacted as division F of the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018 (Public Law 115–254)).

(3) INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTION.—The term "international financial institution" has the meaning given such term in section 1701(c) of the International Financial Institutions Act (22 U.S.C. 262r(c)).

SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS; STATEMENT OF POLICY.

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the United States has economic and national security interests in assisting European and Eurasian countries achieve energy security through diversification of their energy sources and supply routes.

(b) STATEMENT OF POLICY.—It is the policy of the United States to—

(1) advance United States foreign policy and development goals by assisting European and Eurasian countries to reduce their dependence on energy resources from countries that use energy dependence for undue political influence, such as the Russian Federation, which has used natural gas to coerce, intimidate, and influence other countries;

(2) promote the energy security of European and Eurasian allies and partners of the United States by encouraging the development of accessible, transparent, and competitive energy markets that provide diversified sources, types, and routes of energy;

(3) encourage United States public and private sector investment in European and Eurasian energy infrastructure projects to bridge the gap between energy security requirements and commercial demand in a way that is consistent with the region's absorptive capacity;

(4) help facilitate a well-functioning market for energy resources in a way that benefits the energy security of the United States and European and

Eurasian allies and partners of the United States; and

(5) help facilitate the export of United States energy technology and expertise to global markets.

SEC. 4. PRIORITIZATION OF EFFORTS AND ASSISTANCE FOR ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS IN EUROPE AND EURASIA.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In pursuing the policy described in section 3(b), the Secretary of State, in coordination with the heads of United States agencies that operate under the foreign policy guidance of the Secretary, shall, as appropriate, prioritize and expedite the efforts of the Department of State and such agencies in supporting the efforts of the European Commission and European and Eurasian countries to increase the energy security of such countries, including through—

(1) providing diplomatic and political support to the European Commission and such countries, as necessary to—

(A) facilitate international negotiations concerning cross-border infrastructure;

(B) enhance Europe's and Eurasia's regulatory environment with respect to energy; and

(C) develop accessible, transparent, and competitive energy markets supplied by diverse sources, types, and routes of energy; and

(2) providing support to improve European and Eurasian energy markets, including early-stage project support and late-stage project support for the construction or improvement of energy infrastructure, as necessary, to—

(A) diversify the energy sources and supply routes of such countries;

(B) enhance energy market integration across the region; and

(C) increase competition within energy markets.

(b) PROJECT SELECTION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State, in consultation with the heads of agencies described in subsection (a), shall identify and, in accordance with paragraph (3), select energy infrastructure projects that would be appropriate for United States assistance under this section.

(2) PROJECT ELIGIBILITY.—A project is eligible for United States assistance under this section if such project is—

(A) related to—

(i) natural gas infrastructure, such as interconnectors, storage facilities, liquefied natural gas import facilities, or reverse flow capacity;

(ii) electricity transmission infrastructure, electricity storage projects, or smart grid projects;

(iii) renewable energy projects in wind, solar, tidal, or other forms; or

(iv) the improvement, rehabilitation, or construction of electricity generation facilities to increase the efficiency and reliability of electricity production; and

(B) located in a European or Eurasian country.

(3) PREFERENCE.—In selecting among projects that are eligible under paragraph (2), the Secretary of State and the heads of agencies described in subsection (a) shall give preference to projects that—

(A) improve the capacity of energy systems to efficiently transfer gas and electricity within and between European or Eurasian countries;

(B) have already been identified by the European Commission as being integral for the

energy security of European or Eurasian countries;

(C) are expected to enhance energy market integration and transparency;

(D) can attract funding from the private sector, an international financial institution, the government of the country in which the project will be carried out, or the European Commission; or

(E) have the potential to use United States goods and services.

(c) TYPES OF ASSISTANCE.—

(1) DIPLOMATIC AND POLITICAL SUPPORT.—The Secretary of State, in coordination with the heads of agencies described in subsection (a), as appropriate, shall provide diplomatic and political support to the European Commission and European or Eurasian countries, as necessary, including by using the diplomatic and political influence and expertise of the Department of State to build the capacity of such countries to resolve any impediments to the development of projects selected under subsection (b).

(2) EARLY-STAGE PROJECT SUPPORT.—The Secretary of State, in coordination, as appropriate, with the heads of agencies described in subsection

(a), including the Director of the Trade and Development Agency, shall provide early-stage project support to projects selected under subsection (b), as necessary and in accordance with section 661 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2421).

(3) LATE-STAGE PROJECT SUPPORT.—The Secretary of State, in coordination, as appropriate, with the heads of agencies described in subsection (a), shall provide late-stage project support shall do so with respect to projects selected under subsection (b), as necessary and in accordance with section 1412 of the Better Utilization of Investments Leading to Development Act (relating to the establishment of the United States International Development Finance Corporation).

(d) FUNDING.—

(1) TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY.—Subparagraph (A) of section 661(f)(1) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2421(f)(1)) is amended by striking "$48,000,000 for fiscal year 2000" and inserting "$79,500,000 for fiscal year 2020".

(2) COUNTERING RUSSIAN INFLUENCE FUND.—Section 254 of the Countering Russian Influence in Europe and Eurasia Act of 2017 (enacted as title II

of the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act; Public Law 115–44; 22 U.S.C. 9543) is amended—

(A) in subsection (a), by striking "fiscal years 2018 and 2019" and adding "fiscal years 2020 and 2021"; and

(B) in subsection (b), by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

"(7) To assist United States agencies that operate under the foreign policy guidance of the Secretary of State in providing assistance under section 4 of the European Energy Security and Diversification Act of 2019.".

(c) EXCEPTION.—No United States assistance under this section may be provided to a European or Eurasian country that engages in a significant transaction described in subsection (a) of section 231 of the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (22 U.S.C. 9525).

SEC. 5. PROGRESS REPORTS.

Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act and annually thereafter for seven years, the President shall transmit to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on

progress made in providing assistance for projects under section 4 that includes the following:

(1) A description of the energy infrastructure projects the United States has identified for such assistance.

(2) For each such project, the following:

(A) A description of the role of the United States in the project, including in early-stage project support and late-stage project support.

(B) The amount and form of any debt financing and insurance provided by the United States Government for the project.

(C) The amount and form of any early-stage project support.

(D) An update on the progress made on the project as of the date of the report.

Amend the title so as to read: "A bill to prioritize the efforts of and enhance coordination among United States agencies to encourage countries in Europe and Eurasia to diversify their energy sources and supply routes, increase energy security in the region, and help the United States reach its global energy security goals, and for other purposes.".

Chairman ENGEL. At this time, I recognize myself to speak on today's business and I will be brief.

Today, our committee has an important opportunity to support the Venezuelan people by advancing three bills at holding Nicolas Maduro accountable while responding to Venezuela's humanitarian needs.

First, Congresswoman Shalala's Venezuela Arms Restriction Act, makes it crystal clear that no U.S. citizen or business will be able to profit from the repression of the Venezuelan people.

This legislation codifies existing restrictions on arms exports to Venezuela and adds new restrictions on articles that are used for crime control, like tear gas and riot gear.

Congress must do everything in its power to keep these dangerous items out of the hands of Nicolas Maduro and his cronies.

We are also considering the Humanitarian Assistance to the Venezuelan People Act, which is authored by Congresswoman Mucarsel-Powell. Venezuela was once the crown jewel of South America, the wealthiest country on the continent with vast natural resources and, sadly, that is no longer the case.

Ninety percent of Venezuelans now live in poverty and the country's citizens are leaving the country at an alarming rate.

The U.N. High Commissioner on Refugees estimates that by the end of this year, there will be more than 5 million Venezuelans living outside of the country.

This mass exodus has had a major impact not only on Venezuelans themselves but also on the generous host countries including Colombia, Peru, Brazil, and Ecuador, which have opened their hearts and homes to refugees and migrants.

Ms. Mucarsel-Powell's legislation would address the humanitarian crisis head on by authorizing new funding and mandating a strategy from USAID and the State Department.

And Congresswoman Wasserman Schultz's Russian-Venezuelan Threat Mitigation Act would respond to the increasing security relationship between Venezuela and the Kremlin.

This is another place where Vladimir Putin is trying to advance his aggressive agenda, and this bill would require an assessment from the Administration of what Russia is up to and what danger it poses.

The other measure we are considering today is the European Energy Security and Diversification Act of 2019. In addition to its military aggression, Russia has repeatedly used energy as a weapon to blackmail countries dependent on Russian energy sources.

The European Union and many of our allies and partners in Europe recognize this threat and have begun to take steps to reduce their vulnerability to Russian pressure.

This bill would ramp up American support for efforts to increase Europe's energy security and reduce dependence on Russia, including financial support for projects that better connect European energy networks and improve energy efficiency.

These are all good measures that I am pleased to support. I thank our members for their hard work and I will now recognize our ranking member, Mr. McCaul of Texas, for any remarks he might have.

Mr. MCCAUL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I know everyone in this committee is deeply disturbed by the deteriorating situation in Venezuela and the continued threats by Maduro and his regime against interim President Guaido.

I am proud to stand with him in his struggle for a peaceful transition to democracy. That is why I strongly support the three Venezuela bills we are marking up today.

I think in the interest of time, with votes imminent, I will place my full remarks on these three bills that I support into the record, without objection.

And we will also markup the European Energy Security and Diversification Act sponsored by Mr. Kinzinger and Mr. Keating. This bill will provide political, diplomatic, technical, financial support to energy projects in European and Eurasian countries to reduce their reliance on Russia.

It will also reauthorize the Countering Russian Influence Fund to protect critical infrastructure and electoral mechanisms from Russian cyber attacks, combat corruption, and support countries under direct assault by Russia like Georgia and Ukraine.

It is a strong statment of our willingness to do more to help Europe achieve its energy diversification and security goals, and I am fully supportive.

I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides to pass these bills through the House and to the president's desk.

And with that, I yield back.

Chairman ENGEL. Mr. McCaul yields back. Thank you, Mr. McCaul.

Does anyone else seek recognition?

Mr. Sires.

Mr. SIRES. Yes. I just want to thank Congresswoman Wasserman Schultz, Congresswoman Shalala, and Congresswoman Mucarsel—Powell for introducing three important bills in support of the Venezuelan people and I would like to put the rest of my comments in for the record, if you do not have any objection.

Chairman ENGEL. Thank you, Mr. Sires.

Anyone else seeking recognition?

Mr. Kinzinger.

Mr. KINZINGER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Just quickly, I want to just talk about the bill that Mr. Keating and I introduced, the European Energy Security and Diversity Act. It is important for both our European and Eurasian partners and our industry.

We know that Russia has long used energy as a weapon to coerce, manipulate, and create conflict in Europe and Eurasia and I do not believe any member in this room would deny the fact that the Russian Federation, led by Vladimir Putin, is a destabilizing factor in the world.

This would help our partners defend themselves from the malign activities of Russia by developing and diversifying their own energy sources. Europe and Eurasia, for far too long, have relied on Russian gas and oil without looking at options to produce their own.

By providing diplomatic and political support, American energy innovators could help diversify energy sources, enhance market integration across the region, and increase competition within the European energy market.

Our partners have a long history of working with our defense industrial base, but this legislation now offers them an avenue to work with our great energy sector.

Through this bill, we have an opportunity to support our allies, support our energy industry, and end Russia's use of energy as a weapon.

I urge my colleagues to join me in support, and I yield back.

Chairman ENGEL. Thank you.

Mr. Keating.

Mr. KEATING. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I thank the ranking member, and I thank the ranking member of our subcommittee.

This is truly a bicameral and bipartisan effort that began in the last Congress and I want to thank the chairman and the ranking member and, hopefully, ask the committee members to move this forward now at such an early stage.

I want to thank Senator Murphy for his leadership on the Senate side. I want to thank Congressman Kinzinger for working with us here so early in the session on a very important effort.

It is a great example in our subcommittee of an issue and a piece of legislation that hits, really, on all aspects of what our committee is trying to do this Congress.

At a time when Putin is aggressively asserting Russian influence around the world, this bill is an important way to push back from a position of strength. The U.S. is now an exporter of energy.

Through election interference, disinformation, or the issue at hand—energy—Russia consistently tries to undermine the sovereignty of our friends and allies, particularly those on the other side of the Atlantic.

Ukraine is a good example of all these issues. Russia has repeatedly used its natural gas pipelines that transit Ukraine and Europe to exert pressure on Ukraine, even, at times, during the cold winter months.

Nord Stream 2 has gained a lot of attention recently because of increased natural gas flows from Russia into Europe and how that could potentially leave Europe more isolated and, specifically, countries like Ukraine affected by this, making them even more vulnerable to Russian manipulation.

We need to push back on these Russian efforts to undermine, to exert leverage, and, I would even agree, weaponize energy in their efforts.

This is a proactive way to do this together with our European allies from a position of strength. This bill authorizes financing for private sector investments in energy security projects so that the U.S. can support the development of alternative sources of energy in Europe, including renewable energy.

This bill promotes energy diversification and security in Europe by increasing their energy independence from Russian sources but also it strengthens U.S.-European cooperation and economic ties. This is one effort of what I hope will be more efforts to do this.

We need to be working more closely with our European friends and allies if we are going to be successful in minimizing Putin's destabilizing efforts here in the U.S. and throughout the world.

Russia and China are both making investments in Europe, whether it is in energy or port infrastructure or technology compa-

nies, and it is time that the U.S. steps up and makes these strategic investments not only with our European partners who share our values and close business ties with American companies but also with other countries around the world.

This is not only good for our economy but it is good for our security. It is also good for our allies and global security as well.

So I would like to thank the chairman for holding this hearing and this markup, and advancing this piece of legislation along with those very other important pieces of legislation dealing with the horrific humanitarian crisis unfolding in Venezuela.

I urge my colleagues to support these measures and I yield back.

Chairman ENGEL. The gentleman yields back.

Any other members seeking recognition?

Mr. Chabot.

Mr. CHABOT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I will be very brief. I just want to thank my colleagues and voice my support for the three Venezuela measures here which, in essence, increases humanitarian assistance, the arms restrictions, as well as discouraging Russian influence in the area.

Venezuela continues to be an absolute total and utter mess—phony elections, a president who is not legitimate, 3 million or so Venezuelans who have already fled the country with a couple of million probably ready to do the same thing; manmade extreme food and medical shortages, once-eradicated diseases reemerging from malaria to measles to diphtheria.

It is absolutely a disgrace, and I applaud this committee and I applaud the Trump Administration in their strong stance in recognizing Guaido rather than Maduro, who is a complete fraud and ought to be removed from office as quickly as possible.

So I want to thank the committee for working in a bipartisan manner, and yield back.

Chairman ENGEL. The gentleman yields back. Thank you, Mr. Chabot.

Mr. Levin.

Mr. LEVIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I want to express my appreciation for our bipartisan work on this incredibly important set of issues.

And I want to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for accepting my amendment to H.R. 854 to ensure that humanitarian aid for the people of Venezuela is delivered in accordance with established international humanitarian principles.

Everyone in this room understands the magnitude of the humanitarian crisis the Venezuela people are grappling with under Maduro. Venezuelans cannot afford food.

Hospitals do not have basic drugs or supplies. Rates of maternal and child deaths and diseases that had been under control like malaria are spiking.

And today marks a week since much of Venezuela, including Caracas, was plunged into a blackout. Without power, it has only gotten harder for the country's decimated health system to care for those in need.

It is clear that we need to do all we can to address this crisis. But we have to do it right. This is a simple amendment to make

sure that humanitarian assistance that is so needed in Venezuela is delivered in accordance with widely accepted principles.

We need to be absolutely clear that any aid is there to ease the Venezuelan people's suffering, not to make them pawns in political ploys.

Again, Mr. Chairman, I am grateful to you and your staff for working with me on this.

Finally, H.R. 1477 would assess and mitigate threats posed by Russian-Venezuelan security cooperation. My reading of this bill is that it is not in any way an expression of congressional support for the use of military force and it would not provide any statutory authorization for an introduction of U.S. forces into hostilities.

I would like to yield to the chairman to ask whether this is his understanding as well.

Chairman ENGEL. Yes, it is my understanding. The gentleman is correct. H.R. 1477 is not an expression of support for the use of force as it in no way provides statutory authorization under the War Powers Resolution or any other provision of law.

As Section 8(a) of the War Powers Resolution specifies, and I quote, "Authority to introduce United States armed forces into hostilities or into situations where an involvement in hostilities is clearly indicated by the circumstances shall not be inferred from any provision of law unless such provisions specifically authorizes the introduction of United States armed forces."

This legislation cannot properly be construed as providing any such authorization and I am not aware of any claims to the contrary.

Mr. LEVIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate your support and your understanding of this bill, and with that clarification, I support the bill, and I yield back.

Chairman ENGEL. The gentleman yields back.

Are there any other requests for recognition?

Then without objection, the committee will proceed to consider the noticed items en bloc. A reporting quorum is present.

Without objection, the question occurs on the measures en bloc as amended.

All those in favor, say aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

Chairman ENGEL. All those opposed, no.

In the opinion of the chair, the ayes have it.

The measures considered en bloc are agreed to and without objection each measure in the en bloc is ordered favorably reported as amended and each amendment to each bill shall be reported as a single amendment in the nature of a substitute.

Without objection, staff is authorized to make any technical and conforming changes and the chair is authorized to seek House consideration under suspension of the rules.

This concludes our business today. I want to thank Ranking Member McCaul and all of the committee members for their contributions and assistance with today's markup.

There is a bill now on the House floor being voted on. I think that is the only bill.

The committee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 10:05 a.m., the committee was adjourned.]

APPENDIX

FULL COMMITTEE MARKUP NOTICE
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6128

Eliot L. Engel (D-NY), Chairman

March 14, 2019

TO: MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

You are respectfully requested to attend an OPEN markup of the Committee on Foreign Affairs to be held in Room 2172 of the Rayburn House Office Building (and available live on the Committee website at https://foreignaffairs.house.gov/):

DATE: Thursday, March 14, 2019

TIME: 9:45 a.m.

MARKUP OF: H.R. 920, Venezuela Arms Restriction Act

H.R. 854, Humanitarian Assistance to the Venezuelan People Act of 2019

H.R. 1477, Russian-Venezuelan Threat Mitigation Act

H.R. 1616, European Energy Security and Diversification Act of 2019

By Direction of the Chairman

The Committee on Foreign Affairs seeks to make its facilities accessible to persons with disabilities. If you are in need of special accommodations, please call 202/225-5021 at least four business days in advance of the event, whenever practicable. Questions with regard to special accommodations in general (including availability of Committee materials in alternative formats and assistive listening devices) may be directed to the Committee.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
MINUTES OF FULL COMMITTEE MARKUP

Day *Thursday* **Date** *03/14/19* **Room** *2172 RHOB*

Starting Time *9:45 a.m.* **Ending Time** *10:05 a.m.*

Recesses *0* (____to____) (____to____) (____to____) (____to____) (____to____) (____to____)

Presiding Member(s)
Chairman Eliot L. Engel

Check all of the following that apply:

Open Session ☑
Executive (closed) Session ☐
Televised ☑
Electronically Recorded (taped) ☑
Stenographic Record ☑

BILLS FOR MARKUP: *(Include bill number(s) and title(s) of legislation.)*
H.R. 920, Venezuela Arms Restriction Act
H.R. 854, Humanitarian Assistance to the Venezuelan People Act of 2019
H.R. 1477, Russian-Venezuelan Threat Mitigation Act
H.R. 1616, European Energy Security and Diversification Act of 2019

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:
See attached.

NON-COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:
N/A

STATEMENTS FOR THE RECORD: *(List any statements submitted for the record.)*
SFR_Sires, SFR_McCaul, SFR_Castro, SFR_Wilson

ACTIONS TAKEN DURING THE MARKUP: *(Attach copies of legislation and amendments.)*
The measures considered en bloc were agreed to by voice vote.

RECORDED VOTES TAKEN (FOR MARKUP): *(Attach final vote tally sheet listing each member.)*

Subject	Yeas	Nays	Present	Not Voting
N/A	*N/A*	*N/A*	*N/A*	*N/A*

TIME SCHEDULED TO RECONVENE _____
or
TIME ADJOURNED *10:05 a.m.*

Evan Burberry
Full Committee Hearing Coordinator

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

FULL COMMITTEE MARKUP

PRESENT	*MEMBER*
X	Eliot L. Engel, NY
X	Brad Sherman, CA
	Gregory W. Meeks, NY
X	Albio Sires, NJ
	Gerald E. Connolly, VA
X	Theodore E. Deutch, FL
	Karen Bass, CA
X	William Keating, MA
X	David Cicilline, RI
	Ami Bera, CA
X	Joaquin Castro, TX
	Dina Titus, NV
X	Adriano Espaillat, NY
X	Ted Lieu, CA
X	Susan Wild, PA
X	Dean Phillips, MN
	Ilhan Omar, MN
X	Colin Allred, TX
X	Andy Levin, MI
X	Abigail Spanberger, VA
X	Chrissy Houlahan, PA
X	Tom Malinowski, NJ
X	David Trone, MD
X	Jim Costa, CA
X	Juan Vargas, CA
X	Vicente Gonzalez, TX

PRESENT	*MEMBER*
X	Michael T. McCaul, TX
X	Christopher H. Smith, NJ
X	Steve Chabot, OH
X	Joe Wilson, SC
X	Scott Perry, PA
X	Ted Yoho, FL
X	Adam Kinzinger, IL
X	Lee Zeldin, NY
	James Sensenbrenner, Jr., WI
	Ann Wagner, MO
	Brian J. Mast, FL
X	Francis Rooney, FL
	Brian K. Fitzpatrick, PA
X	John Curtis, UT
X	Ken Buck, CO
X	Ron Wright, TX
X	Guy Reschenthaler, PA
X	Tim Burchett, TN
X	Greg Pence, IN
X	Steve Watkins, KS
	Michael Guest, MS

STATEMENTS FOR THE RECORD

03/14/2019 House Foreign Affairs Committee Markup Summary

By unanimous consent, the Chair called up the following measures and amendments, previously provided to Members, to be considered *en bloc:*

(1) H.R. 920, Venezuela Arms Restriction Act (Shalala)
- Engel, an amendment in the nature of a substitute to H.R. 920

(2) H.R. 854, Humanitarian Assistance to the Venezuelan People Act of 2019 (Mucarsel-Powell)
- Engel, an amendment in the nature of a substitute to H.R. 854
- Levin amendment #20

(3) H.R. 1477, Russian-Venezuelan Threat Mitigation Act (Wasserman Schultz)
- Engel, an amendment in the nature of a substitute to H.R. 1477

(4) H.R. 1616, European Energy Security and Diversification Act of 2019 (Kinzinger)
- Keating, an amendment in the nature of a substitute to H.R. 1616

The measures considered *en bloc* were agreed to by voice vote.

By unanimous consent, the measures were ordered favorably reported, as amended, to the House, and the Chairman was authorized to seek House consideration under suspension of the rules.

The Committee adjourned.

Statement for the Record from Representative Albio Sires
Markup of H.R. 920, H.R. 854, H.R. 1477, H.R. 1616
March 14, 2019

Thank you very much Mr. Chairman. I'm grateful you have called this markup and we are able to advance these bipartisan measures today.

I want to thank Congresswoman Wasserman Schultz, Congresswoman Shalala, and Congresswoman Mucarsel-Powell for introducing three important bills in support of the Venezuelan people.

We have seen that Nicolás Maduro is an authoritarian whose leadership has plunged the country into one of the worst humanitarian crises in our hemisphere's history. Yet he is clearly determined to hold onto power at any cost.

These three bills show that we must continue to apply maximum diplomatic and economic pressure on Maduro. We need to restrict his access to financial, political, and military support from rogue regimes like Russia. At the same time, we must do all we can to support civilian-led efforts by the Venezuelan people to restore their democracy and reclaim their fundamental rights. I believe the U.S. should work closely with allies in Latin America and Europe to provide much-needed humanitarian assistance. And we should be consistent in calling for an immediate, peaceful transition that swiftly leads to free and fair elections, in which every political party is allowed to participate, and fully competitive conditions are guaranteed by international observers.

Again, I thank Chairman Engel for his efforts to have this mark up and I thank all our members and their staff for their hard work. I urge my colleagues to support these bills and yield back the balance of my time.

Statement for the Record from Representative Mike McCaul
Markup of H.R. 920, H.R. 854, H.R. 1477, H.R. 1616
March 14, 2019

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I am deeply disturbed by the deteriorating situation in Venezuela and the continued threats by the criminal Maduro regime against Interim President Juan Guaido. I am proud to stand with him and his struggle for a peaceful transition to democracy.

That is why I strongly support the three Venezuela bills we are marking up today.

The Humanitarian Assistance to the Venezuelan People Act, sponsored by Ms. Mucarsel-Powell, ensures that U.S.-led humanitarian assistance to address the Venezuela crisis meets the needs of its beneficiaries. This bill strongly condemns all violent actions by the Maduro regime to block humanitarian aid and authorizes funding for future humanitarian assistance.

The Venezuela Arms Restriction Act, sponsored by Ms. Shalala, will identify any U.S. entities providing defense articles and restrict all U.S. sales of defense articles to the illegitimate government of Nicolas Maduro and his security forces. Defending the safety and rights of the Venezuelan people is a top priority and this bill provides accountability for individuals or entities supporting the Maduro regime.

The Russian-Venezuelan Threat Mitigation Act, sponsored by Ms. Wasserman Schultz, reflects my deep concern about Venezuela's relationship with Russia as a risk to U.S. national security. This bill requests strategy to counter the threat posed by the relationship, with a specific review of Russia's potential acquisition of US-based oil infrastructure.
This legislation also authorizes visa restrictions and revocations against individuals acting on behalf of the Russian government to support Venezuelan security forces.

I thank my colleagues for introducing these important bills that represent this Congress' commitment to supporting the Venezuelan people. I hope this bipartisan approach on Venezuela can be maintained.

We will also markup the European Energy Security and Diversification Act, sponsored by Mr. Kinzinger and Mr. Keating. This bill will provide political, diplomatic, technical, and financial support to energy projects in European and Eurasian countries to reduce their reliance on Russia.

This bill will also reauthorize the Countering Russian Influence Fund to protect critical infrastructure and electoral mechanisms from Russian cyberattacks, combat corruption, and support countries under direct assault by Russia – like Georgia and Ukraine.

This legislation is a strong statement of America's willingness to do more to help Europe achieve its energy diversification and security goals, but countries on the continent must also be willing to do their part.

I look forward to working with my colleagues in both parties to pass these bills through the House and eventually over to the President's desk.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Statement for the Record from Representative Joaquin Castro
Markup of H.R. 920, H.R. 854, H.R. 1477, H.R. 1616
March 14, 2019

Thank you, Chairman Engel and Ranking Member McCaul, for your leadership on this Committee, and for bringing under consideration today four substantive bills.

These measures address pressing issues our country faces around the world today. Each will enhance our national security and ensure the United States upholds our foreign policy principles. I am proud to support all of them, and will give some context on just a few.

We've seen the Venezuelan people suffer immensely under Nicolas Maduro's regime. Experiencing political repression and economic stagnation, many citizens are unable to satisfy their basic needs. In the past week, massive blackouts have made a dire situation even worse. Yet when humanitarian aid arrived at the Colombia-Venezuela border, Maduro and his henchmen blocked its entry, exacerbating the plight of his people. The legislation introduced by Rep. Debbie Mucarsel-Powell would help alleviate this urgent crisis by directing the State Department to develop a strategy for assistance and empowering USAID to meet shortages. As we continue to apply pressure on Maduro for free and fair elections, multilateral diplomatic and humanitarian efforts are critical. I support this legislation and the opportunity it provides to improve conditions in Venezuela.

Since Maduro illegitimately assumed another term in office, numerous countries have recognized Interim President Guaido, but Russia remains behind Maduro and on the opposite side of democracy. Through various activities—disinformation campaigns, poison attacks, supporting far-right leaders—Russia is undermining democratic values worldwide and presenting a threat to the United States and our interests. Cut from the same cloth, Maduro and Putin have formed an unholy relationship. Responding to concerning trends, this legislation will help us better understand Russia-Venezuela security cooperation and prevent some of those perpetrating abuses from acquiring visas. This bill will contribute to our safety, and I am proud to support it.

As we know, Putin's aggression is not confined to just one area of the world. In Europe, he continues to interfere in elections and attempts to drive wedges in continental unity. To that end, the Kremlin has used European countries' reliance on Russian energy to exert unwelcome and harmful influence. Still, some nations remain vulnerable to coercion and dependence. We must be clear-eyed about Russia's transgressions and uphold transatlantic security. I welcome and support this bill from my colleagues on the Committee, which will instruct the State Department to promote European energy diversification. Cooperation with our partners in Europe is indispensable as we seek to reverse Russia's advance.

As has been well-documented, Maduro is a serial human rights abuser with no respect for the rule of law. To execute his crackdown, Maduro relies on cronies in the security forces. Under his iron fist, civil liberties have been violated. With Maduro doubling down on his reign of oppression, U.S. citizens and businesses should not reap rewards as a result. This bill, which restricts the sale of defense articles to Maduro's forces, reaffirms that U.S. leadership is based

upon values. We should not be party to extrajudicial mistreatment, and I'm proud to support a measure that makes this clear.

These pieces of legislation do valuable work and I'm glad to support all of these bills. Again, thank you, Mr. Chairman and to my colleagues, for your part in these important measures.

Statement for the Record from Representative Joe Wilson
Markup of H.R. 920, H.R. 854, H.R. 1477, H.R. 1616
March 14, 2019

I appreciate Chairman Eliot Engel and Ranking Member Michael McCaul for bringing these important measures to markup. It is critical that Congress do everything in its power to support the democratic aspirations of the people of Venezuela. This means not just sending important messages of political support, but also moving actionable bills like these to the floor. I commend the committee for taking action today, as well as the sponsors of these crucial measures.

A major obstacle that stands between the people of Venezuela and the realization of their goal of ousting Nicolas Maduro has been the country's military. Maduro has ensured officers' loyalty by offering promotions and allowing them to enrich themselves through state businesses and criminal activities. Meanwhile, nearly 90 percent of Venezuelans currently live in poverty. The Trump Administration – and indeed the rest of the international community – faces a real challenge of persuading the military to cease supporting Maduro so that Venezuela's democratic process can succeed.

I am grateful for Representative Donna Shalala's introduction of the H.R. 920, the Venezuela Arms Restriction Act. This important bill will send a strong targeted message to Maduro and his supporters in the military that the U.S. stands with the people of Venezuela. It will codify and add new restrictions on exporting U.S. defense articles to Venezuela, helping to ensure that American businesses do not profit from selling these items to Maduro's regime.

But the Maduro regime is not only supported by the military. Venezuela's dictator has garnered the support of some of the worst human rights violators on earth. While 54 countries including the U.S. currently support interim president Juan Guaido, countries like Iran, Syria, Russia, Cuba and China have come out on Maduro's side.

Russia has spent years nurturing the Maduro regime, with financial, military, and political support. When the crisis in Venezuela began, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov pledged that his country will do "everything" to support the Maduro regime. I am grateful for Representative Wasserman Schultz for introducing H.R. 1466 the Russian-Venezuelan Threat Mitigation Act. This legislation will require a threat assessment of exactly what Russia is up to in Venezuela and it places sanctions of those working for Russia to support this repressive regime.

Lastly, I'm grateful to cosponsor Congressman Kinzinger's H.R. 1616, the European Energy Security and Diversification Act of 2019. For too long, Russia has been in the business of energy blackmail. It has used its role as a major energy supplier to manipulate and bully our European allies. This bill will provide comprehensive support for energy projects in Europe and Eurasia with the potential to reduce reliance on Russia. The need for Europe to diversify its energy sources is critical and has real life geopolitical consequences. I thank Congressman Kinzinger for his leadership on this issue and urge all my colleagues to support this important measure. With that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

