



(Original Signature of Member)

119TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. R.

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To require the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense to jointly submit a report on efforts by the Government of the Russian Federation to persecute, suppress, discriminate, or otherwise violate the religious freedoms of Ukraine and temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine, to require the President to impose all applicable sanctions with respect to foreign persons certified to have engaged in such efforts, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on \_\_\_\_\_

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# A BILL

To require the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense to jointly submit a report on efforts by the Government of the Russian Federation to persecute, suppress, discriminate, or otherwise violate the religious freedoms of Ukraine and temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine, to require the President to impose all applicable sanctions with respect to foreign persons certified to have engaged in such efforts, and for other purposes.

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

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Countering Russia’s  
3 War on Faith Act”.

4 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

5 Congress finds the following:

6 (1) In territories of Ukraine temporarily occu-  
7 pied by the Russian Federation, Russian occupation  
8 authorities have imposed policies that restrict, sup-  
9 press, and eliminate freedom of religion and belief,  
10 in violation of international law and civilian protec-  
11 tions under the law of armed conflict.

12 (2) The United States Commission on Inter-  
13 national Religious Freedom has documented that  
14 Russian authorities in occupied Ukrainian territories  
15 have engaged in severe violations of religious free-  
16 dom, including the detention, torture, disappearance,  
17 and unlawful imprisonment of clergy and believers,  
18 as well as the closure and confiscation of houses of  
19 worship.

20 (3) According to Ukrainian authorities and  
21 independent monitoring groups, Russian forces have  
22 damaged or destroyed more than 600 churches, syn-  
23 agogues, mosques, and other religious sites since the  
24 start of Russia’s full-scale invasion.

25 (4) Russia has killed more than 50 Ukrainian  
26 priests, pastors, and other religious leaders during

1 Russia's invasion, and many others have been ab-  
2 ducted, detained, tortured, or forcibly disappeared in  
3 occupied territories.

4 (5) Protestant, Catholic, Muslim, members of  
5 the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,  
6 Crimean Tatar, and Orthodox Christian commu-  
7 nities not aligned with the Russian Orthodox Church  
8 have been subjected to raids, forced re-registration  
9 under Russian law, intimidation, and criminal pros-  
10 ecution, with many congregations driven under-  
11 ground or permanently shuttered.

12 (6) Religious buildings in occupied areas have  
13 been seized and repurposed for military or adminis-  
14 trative use, religious literature has been confiscated,  
15 and charitable ministries dismantled, eroding both  
16 the spiritual and humanitarian foundations of local  
17 communities.

18 (7) The Russian Orthodox Church, led by Pa-  
19 triarch Kirill of Moscow, has publicly framed the in-  
20 vasion in theological terms, describing the war as a  
21 "holy war" having "metaphysical significance" and  
22 stating in a September 2022 sermon that if a soldier  
23 dies in the performance of military duty, "this sac-  
24 rifice washes away all the sins that a person has  
25 committed". According to the Committee on Inter-

1 national Religious Freedom, “Russian de facto au-  
2 thorities often commit religious freedom violations to  
3 facilitate the dominance of the Russian Orthodox  
4 Church of the Moscow Patriarchate in these terri-  
5 tories”.

6 (8) Russia’s actions demonstrate a systematic  
7 campaign of religious persecution in occupied  
8 Ukrainian territory, violating the fundamental right  
9 to freedom of thought, conscience, religion, and be-  
10 lief as protected under the Universal Declaration of  
11 Human Rights and the International Covenant on  
12 Civil and Political Rights.

13 **SEC. 3. REPORT ON RUSSIA’S PERSECUTION OF RELIGIOUS**  
14 **GROUPS IN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES OF**  
15 **UKRAINE.**

16 (a) REPORT.—Not later than 120 days after the date  
17 of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter for  
18 3 years, the Secretary of State and Secretary of Defense,  
19 in coordination with the Director of National Intelligence,  
20 shall jointly submit to the appropriate congressional com-  
21 mittees a report that includes—

22 (1) a detailed description of the Government of  
23 the Russian Federation and its state-affiliated,  
24 quasi-state, or occupation-era activities that per-  
25 secute, suppress, discriminate, or otherwise directly

1 or indirectly engage in or facilitate serious human  
2 rights abuse against Christians, Jews, and Muslims  
3 (including Crimean Tatars), and other religious mi-  
4 norities not affiliated with the Russian Orthodox  
5 Church, and their respective religious organizations  
6 in Russian-occupied territories of Ukraine;

7 (2) an identification of churches, synagogues,  
8 mosques, other religious facilities, including Chris-  
9 tian, Jewish, Muslim, and other minority religious  
10 institutions, that have been destroyed, damaged,  
11 seized, repurposed, or otherwise appropriated di-  
12 rectly or indirectly by persons operating for or on  
13 behalf of the Government of the Russian Federation  
14 in occupied territories of Ukraine;

15 (3) an assessment of—

16 (A) the number of Christians, Jews, Mus-  
17 lims (including Crimean Tatars), and other reli-  
18 gious minorities are not affiliated with the Rus-  
19 sian Orthodox Church, who have been subjected  
20 to persecution, imprisonment, or forced dis-  
21 placement in occupied territories of Ukraine;

22 (B) restrictions imposed on Christian, Jew-  
23 ish, Muslim, and other religions not affiliated  
24 with the Russian Orthodox Church's religious

1 practices, worship services, or religious edu-  
2 cation in occupied territories;

3 (C) efforts to compel Christian organiza-  
4 tions to affiliate with Moscow-based religious  
5 institutions or to suppress Christian activity not  
6 affiliated with Moscow-based religions;

7 (D) efforts by the Government of the Rus-  
8 sian Federation, by authorities exercising de  
9 facto governmental control in occupied terri-  
10 tory, or by entities or persons otherwise affili-  
11 ated with Russia, to compel Christian organiza-  
12 tions in Ukraine and in occupied territories—

13 (i) to affiliate with Moscow-based reli-  
14 gious institutions; or

15 (ii) to suppress Christian, Jewish,  
16 Muslim, or any other denominations not  
17 aligned with Russian state interests; and

18 (E) the overall impact of Russia's invasion  
19 of Ukraine, and its occupation of Ukrainian ter-  
20 ritory, on religious freedom in occupied terri-  
21 tories of Ukraine, including Crimea and Sevas-  
22 topol; and

23 (4) a list of individuals and entities individuals  
24 or entities affiliated with the Government of the

1 Russian Federation, or exercising de facto authority  
2 in occupied territory, that—

3 (A) are responsible for persecution, sup-  
4 pression, or discrimination against Christians,  
5 Jews, or Muslims in Ukraine and in the occu-  
6 pied territories of Ukraine; or

7 (B) have otherwise engaged in or at-  
8 tempted to engage in any of the conduct de-  
9 scribed in this subsection.

10 (b) CERTIFICATION REQUIRED.—Not later than 30  
11 days after the submission of each report required by sub-  
12 section (a), the President shall certify to the appropriate  
13 congressional committees whether there may be reasonable  
14 grounds to determine that any of individuals and entities  
15 included in the list described in subsection (a)(4) have en-  
16 gaged the any of the conduct described in subsection  
17 (a)(2) or subsection (a)(3).

18 (c) EFFECT OF POSITIVE CERTIFICATION.—If the  
19 President makes an affirmative certification under sub-  
20 section (b) with respect to a foreign person, the President  
21 shall impose applicable sanctions with respect to each such  
22 person pursuant to the authorities and procedures set  
23 forth in the applicable regulations under—

24 (1) part 583 of title 31, Code of Federal Regu-  
25 lations (relating to sanctions authorized under the

1 Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act  
2 (22 U.S.C. 10101 et seq.);

3 (2) part 589 of title 31, Code of Federal Regu-  
4 lations (relating to Ukraine-/Russia-Related sanc-  
5 tions);

6 (3) part 587 of title 31, Code of Federal Regu-  
7 lations (relating to Russian Harmful Foreign Activi-  
8 ties sanctions); or

9 (4) any other regulation under chapter V of  
10 title 31, Code of Federal Regulation, providing for  
11 the imposition of sanctions (including the blocking of  
12 property or interests in property) with respect to the  
13 conduct for which such person received an affirma-  
14 tive certification.

15 (d) EFFECT OF SUBSEQUENT NEGATIVE DETER-  
16 MINATION.—To the extent that the President determines,  
17 based on a subsequent report required by subsection (a),  
18 that an individual or entity previously listed in such a re-  
19 port no longer engages in any of the conduct described  
20 in subsection (b) or otherwise no longer meets the require-  
21 ments with respect to the applicable sanctions imposed  
22 with respect to such person under subsection (c), the  
23 President may waive or terminate such sanctions with re-  
24 spect to such person.

1 (e) FORM.—The report required by subsection (a)  
2 shall be submitted in an unclassified form, but may in-  
3 clude a classified annex.

4 (f) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DE-  
5 FINED.—In this section, the term “appropriate congres-  
6 sional committees” means—

7 (1) the Committee on Armed Services, the  
8 Committee on Foreign Affairs, and the Permanent  
9 Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of  
10 Representatives; and

11 (2) the Committee on Armed Services, the  
12 Committee on Foreign Relations, and the Select  
13 Committee on Intelligence of the Senate.