



SUSPENDING NORMAL TRADE RELATIONS WITH RUSSIA AND BELARUS ACT

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The Suspending Normal Trade Relations with Russia and Belarus Act takes decisive action to respond to Russia's continued unprovoked attacks on the people of Ukraine and to hold Belarus accountable for its support for Russia's aggression. This legislation counters Russia's unconscionable actions and Belarus' complicity by suspending normal trade relations with Russia and Belarus.

This legislation includes additional provisions to expand the United States' trade tools to stop Russia's unacceptable and unjust war on Ukraine and to hold Belarus accountable for its involvement. Specifically, the bill:

- Provides the President with time-limited authority to increase tariffs on products of Russia and Belarus, until January 1, 2024;
- Requires the U.S. Trade Representative to use the voice and influence of the United States to seek suspension of Russia's participation in the World Trade Organization (WTO) and to halt Belarus' WTO accession and accession-related work; and
- Provides the President with the authority to restore normal trade relations with Russia and Belarus if these countries have ceased their acts of aggression against Ukraine and other certain conditions are met. Congress has the authority to overrule such decision through a congressional disapproval process.

Background

The United States currently extends normal trade relations (NTR), also called most-favored-nation (MFN) treatment to all but two countries – Cuba and North Korea. In practice, duties on imports from a country without NTR status are set at higher levels than those on products of countries that benefit from normal trade relations treatment.

In 1951, the United States withdrew MFN treatment for imports from almost all communist countries, pursuant to Section 5 of the Trade Agreements Extension Act, which was later superseded by Title IV of the Trade Act of 1974. Section 402 of that Act, the so-called Jackson-Vanik amendment, withholds MFN status for certain countries that deny their citizens the right to freedom of emigration, unless those countries meet certain conditions. The President may waive the application of those conditions with respect to any country and extend normal trade relations to that country, subject to a congressional disapproval process.

Russia remained subject to the Jackson-Vanik amendment until Congress terminated the applicability of Title IV of the Trade Act to Russia in the Russia and Moldova Jackson-Vanik Repeal and Sergei Magnitsky Rule of Law Accountability Act of 2012 after Russia acceded to the WTO. This bill authorized permanent normal trade relations for Russia. Belarus receives normal trade relations treatment in accordance with chapter 1 of Title IV of the Trade Act of 1974 and has not yet acceded to the WTO.