Suspend the Rules and Pass the Bill, H.R. 1477, With an Amendment

(The amendment strikes all after the enacting clause and inserts a new text)

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.

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Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-
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tives 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) 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.
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.

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.

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 poten-
tial 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 Head-
quarters of the United Nations, signed at Lake
Success June 26, 1947, and entered into force
November 21, 1947, between the United Na-
tions and the United States; or

(B) other applicable international obliga-
tions 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 For-

gn Affairs of the House of Representatives
and the Committee on Foreign Relations a no-
tice 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 Re-
lations of the Senate that the Government of Ven-
ezuela has returned to a democratic form of govern-
ment 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.