

U.S. Lawmakers Submit Updated Magnitsky Bill

By [Natalya Krainova](#)

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Fifteen ranking members of the U.S. House of Representatives have submitted a bill to impose visa bans and asset freezes on Russian officials implicated in the death of lawyer Sergei Magnitsky.

The bill is an [updated version](#) of a similar one submitted to the chamber in April 2011, the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission [said](#) on its website Thursday.

"Since Russian authorities have not provided justice to Mr. Magnitsky and his family, the United States should do what it can to hold individuals accountable for these heinous crimes," Representative James McGovern said, Magnitsky's former employer, Hermitage Capital, said in a statement Friday.

The updated bill doesn't specifically name any officials, a Hermitage Capital spokesperson said. Neither did the previous version.

The earlier bill called for sanctions on Russian officials implicated in the detention, prosecution and death of Magnitsky and in the conspiracy to defraud the Russian Federation of taxes on corporate profits through fraudulent transactions and lawsuits against Hermitage.

Unlike the new version, that bill didn't call for sanctions against officials implicated in other crimes.

The Senate version of the bill, posted on the Library of Congress website, also slams Russia for several unresolved murders, including those of Natalya Estemirova, Umar Israilov, Paul Klebnikov and Anna Politkovskaya.

It also criticizes Russia's behavior in the death of Vera Trifonova while she was in custody, the near-fatal beatings of Mikhail Beketov and Oleg Kashin and the continued imprisonment of Mikhail Khodorkovsky, Alexei Kozlov and Platon Lebedev, among other things.

The earlier bill stipulated that sanctions would be lifted after Russia "has thoroughly investigated" Magnitsky's death and "brought the Russian criminal justice system into compliance with international legal standards."

The text of the updated bill hadn't been posted on the Library of Congress website as of Friday.

In the summer of 2011, the United States barred dozens of unidentified Russian officials from entering the country because of their connection with the death of Magnitsky.

Magnitsky's supporters have asked Western governments to impose sanctions against 60 officials.

Magnitsky was detained in 2008 by law enforcement officials whom he had accused of defrauding the Russian government of millions of dollars. He spent 11 months behind bars.

He died of complications from health problems and, according to an independent Kremlin-ordered investigation, a beating administered by prison guards hours before his death.

One prison doctor is under investigation for negligence, but no senior officials have been charged over his death.

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