

# U.S. Senate Confirms John Tefft Will Be New Ambassador to Russia

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John Tefft delivers a speech on "The Importance of Economic Reform to Ukraine" while working as U.S. ambassador to the country.

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Senate has unanimously approved President Barack Obama's choice of John Tefft to be the next American ambassador to Russia, filling a post that had been vacant since February.

Tefft is a former envoy to Ukraine under Obama, and to Georgia and Lithuania under Republican President George W. Bush.

Following the Thursday vote, Tefft will head to Moscow with U.S.-Russia ties are severely strained over Washington's sanctions on Russia due to its support for rebels in eastern Ukraine.

Dozens of Obama's nominees to be ambassadors have been held up for months by bitter partisan fighting in the U.S. Senate. Obama only nominated Tefft earlier this month.

But both Republicans and Democrats said the dire state of U.S. relations with Russia made it imperative to let Tefft jump the queue so he could head to Moscow as quickly as possible.

In a rare show of bipartisanship, the Senate carried out his confirmation hearing, committee vote and confirmation by the full Senate in just a few days this week, just in time for Congress to leave Washington on Aug. 1 for a five-week recess.

However, Republicans refused to accede to a Democratic request to confirm several other ambassadors before leaving town. That group included Obama's nominee for Guatemala, one of the Central American countries involved in the current U.S. child immigrant crisis.

**See also:**

[U.S. Senate Panel Backs John Tefft as New Ambassador to Russia](#)

[Kremlin Approves John Tefft as U.S. Ambassador to Russia](#)

[Washington Asks Moscow to Approve John Tefft as new U.S. Ambassador, Report Says](#)

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