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'Insane, Ridiculous': Russian Lawmakers React to New U.S. Sanctions Bill

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Jim Bourgeois / Reuters

U.S. senators introduced a bill on Wednesday that would impose stiff new sanctions on Russia over suspected meddling in U.S. elections and aggression against Ukraine.

Targets of the sanctions would include: Russian banks that support efforts to interfere in foreign elections; the country's cyber sector; new sovereign debt; and individuals deemed to "facilitate illicit and corrupt activities, directly or indirectly, on behalf of" Russian President Vladimir Putin.

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The bill would also impose several strict measures on Russia's oil and gas sector, which makes up about 40 percent of the Russian government's revenues. The measures include sanctioning people who provide goods, services or financing to support the development of crude oil in the

country.

Russian state-owned energy projects outside of Russia including investments in liquefied natural gas projects would also face sanctions.

Here is how Russian lawmakers reacted to the news:

– Franz Klintsevich, deputy head of the Federation Council's Committee for Defense and Security:

“These sanctions have nothing to do with the incident in the Kerch Strait. This is an extension of the United States’ long anti-Russian policy, which I would compare with the bad habit of smoking a pipe before breakfast, poisoning everyone around you.”

– Oleg Morozov, member of the Federation Council’s Foreign Affairs Committee:

“Their motive is ridiculous since we’ve already been ‘punished’ for intervention and for Ukraine. Therefore, this has nothing to do with justifications [and] reasoning [for] new sanctions, but with the intention to impose them by all means.”

– Alexei Chepa, deputy head of the Duma Committee on International Affairs:

“This is an extension of the insane campaign led by the United States... Of course I’m unsure that these statements will be supported.”

– Anton Siluanov, Finance Minister:

"The United States is shooting itself in the foot [...] Russia has the necessary buffers in place to counteract the restrictions."

– Sergei Shvetsov, the Central Bank's first deputy governor:

"Our financial market is considerably more prepared than other countries and so the effects that the 2014 sanctions had will be considerably less now."

– Konstantin Kosachev, the chairman of the Federation Council’s Committee on Foreign Affairs:

"Americans want to be exceptional at everything."

Reuters contributed reporting to this article.

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