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118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 8824

To require the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to strengthen United States-European nuclear energy cooperation and combat Russian malign influence in the nuclear energy sector in Europe.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 25, 2024

Mr. KEATING (for himself, Mr. FOSTER, and Mr. HUIZENGA) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

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A BILL

To require the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to strengthen United States-European nuclear energy cooperation and combat Russian malign influence in the nuclear energy sector in Europe.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''The U.S.-European Nuclear Energy Cooperation Act of 2024''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) On February 24, 2022, the Russian Federation initiated a full-scale invasion of Ukraine which has severely threatened energy security in the United States, Europe, and around the world.

(2) The security of Ukraine's energy grid has been vital to Ukraine's success in its defense of its territory and ensuring the Ukrainian government can effectively provide goods and services to Ukrainian citizens.

(3) Ukraine has operated four nuclear power plants with 15 reactors, primarily Russian-designed water-water energetic reactor (VVER) reactors, and remains dependent on nuclear power for its energy security.

(4) Russia, in its war of aggression against Ukraine, has systematically targeted Ukraine's energy infrastructure through heavy shelling and targeted attacks, particularly in the winter months when innocent Ukrainian civilians are most vulnerable.

(5) Since March 2022, Russian forces have illegally occupied the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Station, the largest nuclear power plant in Europe, and Russian forces have surrounded the station with landmines, further threatening regional security.

(6) Russian-designed VVER reactors have been built across Europe, including in Belarus, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Slovakia, Turkey, and Ukraine.

(7) Russia uses its nuclear power plant designs and fuel services to spread malign influence and threaten United States and European energy security.

(8) As of 2021, Russia owned about 20 percent of the total uranium conversion infrastructure worldwide and in 2020, had the largest uranium enrichment capacity at close to 46 percent.

SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) in countries seeking or developing a nuclear power industry, the Department of State should prioritize the utilization of products and services from the United States, and then prioritize products and services from Europe and other allied or partner countries, including Canada, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the Republic of Korea when not directly competing with the United States; and

(2) the United States and its allies must focus on cooperation, including capacity building and early-stage project support, to expand the nuclear

industry in Europe in a way that maintains nonproliferation, security, and safety standards and aligns with international obligations and treaties while combating Russian and Chinese malign influence.

SEC. 4. STRATEGY.

(a) STRATEGY REQUIRED.—The Secretary of State, in consultation with the Secretary of Energy and the heads of other relevant Federal departments and agencies, shall develop a strategy to strengthen United States-European nuclear energy cooperation and combat Russian malign influence in the nuclear energy sector in Europe.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The strategy required by subsection (a) shall include, at a minimum, the following elements:

(1) An overview and assessment of the Secretary of State's efforts to broaden participation by United States nuclear industry entities in Europe and promote the accessibility and competitiveness of United States, European, and partner technologies and services against Russian and Chinese technologies in Europe.

(2) An overview of different nuclear reactor types that are currently deployed or under regulatory review in Europe, including large light-water

reactors, small modular light-water reactors, and non-light-water reactors, and—

(A) what role, if any, each reactor type could have in reducing Russia's influence over European energy supply by 2030, 2035, 2040, 2045, and 2050;

(B) challenges that each reactor type may face with rapid deployment, including costs, market barriers to first-of-a-kind designs, supply chain constraints, and regulatory requirements;

(C) the impacts of each reactor type on maintaining strong nonproliferation standards, including the minimization of weapons-usable nuclear material; and

(D) opportunities for the use of United States, European, and partner technologies and services in the deployment or potential deployment of each reactor type.

(3) An overview of different fuel cycles that are currently deployed or under consideration in Europe, including use of low enriched uranium, including high assay low enriched uranium, and spent fuel reprocessing, along with an analysis of the implications of each fuel cycle on—

(A) reducing and eliminating Russia's market share in Europe for uranium, conversion, enrichment, and reactor fuel between now and 2030;

(B) achieving long-term energy security free of Russian influence; and

(C) maintaining strong nonproliferation standards, including the minimization of weapons-usable material as well as high nuclear safety and security standards.

(4) An overview of nuclear reactor designs and fuel cycle infrastructure that the United States Government is currently funding the development of, and—

(A) the potential, if any, that each of these technologies have to decrease or eliminate Russia's market share in the United States and Europe for nuclear power reactors, uranium mining and milling, conversion, enrichment, fuel fabrication, deconversion, and spent nuclear fuel reprocessing in the short, medium, and long term;

(B) the impact of these technologies on the minimization of weapons-usable nuclear mate-

rial, including the use of highly enriched uranium or plutonium fuels; and

(C) an assessment of the use cases for each of these designs and fuel cycles.

(5) An overview of the United States Government's diplomatic engagements regarding the nuclear energy sector in Europe.

(6) A list of countries in Europe with active nuclear power programs, and—

(A) an analysis of each country's nuclear energy policy;

(B) an overview of existing areas of cooperation with regards to nuclear energy between each country and—

(i) the United States;

(ii) other European and friendly countries; and

(iii) adversarial countries including China and Russia; and

(C) an overview of potential areas for future cooperation between each country and the United States with regards to nuclear energy.

(7) An overview of Russian and Chinese influence in the European nuclear energy sector.

(8) An overview of how the United States Government is working with allies and partners to counter Russian malign influence within the European energy sector to include steps taken to counter Russian influence in the mining and milling, conversion, enrichment, and fuel fabrication processes as well as in reactor construction.

(9) An overview of how the United States Government balances the urgent strategic need for collaboration with allies and partners on countering Russia's influence on nuclear energy in Europe, with commercial competitiveness issues that may arise between United States companies and companies in Europe, Canada, Japan, and the Republic of Korea.

(10) An assessment of Rosatom's role in Russia's energy sector, to include an overview of strengths and vulnerabilities of the conglomerate.

(c) SUBMISSION.—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 the strategy required by subsection (a).

(d) FORM.—The strategy required by subsection (a) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may contain a classified annex, so long as such annex is provided separately from the unclassified strategy.

SEC. 5. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There is authorized to be appropriated $30,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2025 through 2029 to support critically needed engagement in Europe consistent with the strategy required by section 4(a) on countering Russian malign influence and with a particular focus on responsible nuclear power program capacity building, early stage nuclear power project support, and countering Russian disinformation campaigns.

SEC. 6. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means—

(A) the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives;

(B) the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate;

(C) the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of the Representatives; and

(D) the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate.

(2) HIGH ASSAY LOW ENRICHED URANIUM.—The term ''high assay low enriched uranium'' means uranium enriched so that the concentration of the

fissile isotope uranium-235 (U-235) is between 5 percent and 20 percent of the mass of uranium.

(3) LOW ENRICHED URANIUM.—The term ''low enriched uranium'' means fuel in which the weight percent of U-235 in the uranium is less than 20 percent.

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