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## United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6225

April 3, 2026

Dear Secretary Rubio and Secretary Bessent,

We write to express our concerns about the national security implications of a delegation of the Russian Duma—all of whom are under U.S. sanctions—visiting the United States, reportedly for meetings with members of the House of Representatives and executive branch officials. As you know, unlike the U.S. Congress, the Duma is not a separate and equal branch of government. Its members include Kremlin subordinates who have committed numerous cyber and ransomware attacks on Americans and have facilitated war crimes against Ukrainian civilians. Remarkably, they are today helping Iran target U.S. military and diplomatic personnel across the Middle East. The delegation came onto U.S. soil for one purpose: to advance the Kremlin’s strategic aims—including gathering additional useful intelligence. They did not come to engage in dialogue or in pursuit of democratic aims.

This visit comes at a time when Russia’s intentions are unambiguously clear. Numerous public reports have cited Russian support for Iran’s military targeting of American service members in the Middle East. European intelligence agencies have reported that Russia intends to attack the member states of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in the coming years. And Putin has made it clear that peace in Ukraine is a mirage. His singular ambition for Ukraine is to erase its existence.

The delegation included individuals who are far from innocent participants in a cultural exchange. It included Vyacheslav Nikonov, who in 2023 referred to the United States and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization as the “Fourth Reich” on Russian television. Mikhail Delyagin has advocated for destroying Ukraine’s energy sector. Boris Chernyshov once claimed that Russian retaliatory strikes were “an expression of our hatred [of Ukraine].” Nikonov, Chernyshov, Isakov, and Delyagin, along with other members of the delegation, are sanctioned pursuant to Executive Order 14024, which indicates that these individuals were sanctioned because they engaged in conduct deemed to be harmful to U.S. national security. It is troubling that, despite those concerns, the U.S. government would give these individuals access to U.S. government institutions.

It is important that Congress and the public understand the scope of the Russian delegation’s actions here in the United States and the access they may have had to sensitive information. To that end, we respectfully request responses to the following:

- 1) What is the justification for waiving sanctions on these individuals? Were there any limitations or conditions attached to those waivers?
- 2) Please explain why sanctions were also waived to facilitate the delegation's aircraft landing at a U.S. airport. What security precautions were conducted at the airport?
- 3) Please provide a full list of all individuals that traveled from the Russian Federation, including a flight manifest.
- 4) Was a counterintelligence assessment conducted for all individuals traveling to the U.S.? If so, please provide a classified summary of each such assessment.
- 5) What meetings did the delegation have with administration officials?

We appreciate your timely attention to these questions.

Sincerely,



Senator Jeanne Shaheen  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Foreign Relations



Senator Roger Wicker  
Chairman  
Committee on Armed Services