

106TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 4249

To foster cross-border cooperation and environmental cleanup in Northern Europe.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 12, 2000

Mr. GEJDENSON (for himself and Mr. LANTOS) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations

A BILL

To foster cross-border cooperation and environmental cleanup in Northern Europe.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Cross-Border Coopera-
5 tion and Environmental Safety in Northern Europe Act
6 of 2000”.

7 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.**

8 (a) FINDINGS.—The Congress finds the following:

1 (1) Northern Europe is an increasingly vital
2 part of Europe and one that offers great opportuni-
3 ties for United States investment.

4 (2) Northern Europe offers an excellent oppor-
5 tunity to make progress toward the United States vi-
6 sion of a secure, prosperous, and stable Europe, in
7 part because of—

8 (A) historical tradition of regional coopera-
9 tion;

10 (B) the opportunity to engage Russia in
11 positive, cooperative activities with its neighbors
12 to the west;

13 (C) commitment by the Baltic states to re-
14 gional cooperation and integration into western
15 institutions; and

16 (D) longstanding, strong ties with the
17 United States.

18 (3) The United States Northern Europe Initia-
19 tive (NEI) provides the conceptual and operational
20 framework for United States policy in the region, fo-
21 cused on developing a regional network of coopera-
22 tion in the important areas of business and trade
23 promotion, law enforcement, the environment, en-
24 ergy, civil society, and public health.

1 (4) A central objective of the United States
2 Northern Europe Initiative is to promote cross-border
3 cooperation among the countries in the region.

4 (5) A wide variety of regional and cross-border
5 projects have been initiated under the United States
6 Northern Europe Initiative since the Initiative was
7 established in 1997, including the following:

8 (A) A United States-Lithuanian training
9 program for entrepreneurs from Belarus and
10 Kaliningrad.

11 (B) The Great Lakes-Baltic Sea Partner-
12 ship program that is being implemented by the
13 Environmental Protection Agency.

14 (C) A Center of Excellence for Treatment
15 of Multidrug-Resistant Tuberculosis in Riga,
16 Latvia.

17 (D) A regional HIV/AIDS strategy being
18 developed under United States and Finnish
19 leadership.

20 (E) Multiple efforts to combat organized
21 crime, including regional seminars for police of-
22 ficers and prosecutors.

23 (F) Programs to encourage reform of the
24 Baltic electricity market and encourage United
25 States investment in such market.

1 (G) Language and job training programs
2 for Russian-speaking minorities in Latvia and
3 Estonia to promote social integration in those
4 countries.

5 (H) A mentoring partnership program for
6 woman entrepreneurs in the northwest region of
7 Russia and the Baltic states, as part of broader
8 efforts to promote women's participation in po-
9 litical and economic life.

10 (6) Norway, Sweden, and Finland have made
11 considerable efforts to provide assistance to the
12 newly independent Baltic states and to the North-
13 west region of Russia. In particular, the United
14 States notes the request placed before the European
15 Union by Finland in 1999 for the creation and ex-
16 tensive funding by the European Union of a "North-
17 ern Dimension" Initiative to substantially address
18 the problems that now exist in Northern Europe
19 with regard to economic development, protection of
20 the environment, the safety and containment of nu-
21 clear materials, and other issues.

22 (7) The United States commends the endorse-
23 ment of the "Northern Dimension" Initiative by the
24 European Council at its meeting in Helsinki, Fin-
25 land in December 1999 and calls on the European

1 Union to act on that endorsement through the provi-
2 sion of substantial funding for the Initiative.

3 (8) While the European Union, its member
4 states, and other European countries should clearly
5 take the lead in addressing the challenges posed in
6 Northern Europe, in particular through appropriate
7 yet substantial assistance provided by the European
8 Union, the United States-Northern Europe Initia-
9 tive, and this Act are intended to supplement such
10 efforts and build on the considerable assistance that
11 the United States has already provided to the Baltic
12 states and the Russian Federation. Partnership with
13 other countries in the region means modest United
14 States investment can have significant impact.

15 (9) The United States Northern Europe Initia-
16 tive's focus on regional environmental challenges is
17 particularly important. Northern Europe is home to
18 significant environmental problems, particularly the
19 threat posed by nuclear waste from Russian sub-
20 marines, icebreakers, and nuclear reactors.

21 (10) In particular, 21,000 spent fuel assemblies
22 from Russian submarines are lying exposed near
23 Andreeyeva Bay, nearly 60 dangerously decrepit nu-
24 clear submarines, many in danger of sinking, are
25 languishing in the Murmansk area of Northwest

1 Russia, whole reactors and radioactive liquid waste
2 are stored on unsafe floating barges, and there are
3 significant risks of marine and atmospheric contami-
4 nation from accidents arising from loss of electricity
5 or fire on deteriorating, poorly monitored nuclear
6 submarines.

7 (11) This waste poses a threat to the safety
8 and stability of Northern Europe and to countries of
9 the Eurasian continent.

10 (12) Under the Cooperative Threat Reduction
11 Act of 1993 and the United States Northern Europe
12 Initiative, the United States has provided assistance
13 to Russia to address these environmental challenges.

14 (13)(A) In addition, the Environmental Protec-
15 tion Agency has facilitated the expansion and up-
16 grading of a facility for the treatment of low-level
17 liquid radioactive waste from the decommissioning of
18 nuclear submarines docked at naval facilities in the
19 Arctic region of Russia.

20 (B) The Environmental Protection Agency has
21 also initiated a project to construct an 80-ton proto-
22 type cask for the storage and transport of civilian-
23 controlled spent nuclear fuel, much of it damaged
24 and currently stored onboard an aging vessel an-
25 chored in Murmansk Harbor. Currently in the de-

1 sign phase, this project is scheduled for completion
2 in 2000.

3 (14) Working with the countries in the region
4 to address these environmental problems remains
5 vital to the long-term national interest of the United
6 States.

7 (15) The United States and other countries are
8 currently negotiating a number of agreements with
9 Russia which will provide internationally accepted
10 legal protections for the United States and other
11 countries that provide nuclear waste management
12 assistance to Russia. Regrettably, it has not yet been
13 possible to resolve remaining differences over liabil-
14 ity, taxation of assistance, privileges and immunities
15 for foreign contractors, and audit rights.

16 (16) Concluding these agreements is vital to the
17 continued provision of such assistance and to the
18 possible development of new programs.

19 (17) With the election of Russian President
20 Vladamir Putin, the opportunity presents itself to
21 surmount these problems, to conclude these out-
22 standing agreements, and to allow assistance pro-
23 grams to move forward to alleviate this problem.

24 (18) United States Government agencies are
25 currently studying whether programs under the Co-

1 operative Threat Reduction Act of 1993 can address
2 cleanup and decommissioning of tactical submarines.

3 (b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this Act is to dem-
4 onstrate concrete support for continued cross-border co-
5 operation in Northern Europe and immediate efforts to
6 assist in the clean up of nuclear waste in that region.

7 **SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

8 It is the sense of Congress that—

9 (1) the United States Northern Europe Initia-
10 tive is a sound framework for future United States
11 involvement in Northern Europe;

12 (2) the European Union should move expedi-
13 tiously to authorize and fund the proposed “North-
14 ern Dimension” Initiative at appropriate yet sub-
15 stantial levels of assistance;

16 (3) the United States should continue to sup-
17 port a wide-ranging strengthening of democratic and
18 civic institutions on a regional basis to provide a
19 foundation for political stability and investment op-
20 portunities, including cross-border exchanges, in
21 Northern Europe;

22 (4) the United States should demonstrate con-
23 tinued commitment to address environmental secu-
24 rity challenges in Northwest Russia, in cooperation
25 with partners in the region; and

1 (5) recently-elected Russian President Vladimir
2 Putin should rapidly conclude pending nuclear waste
3 management agreements to enable assistance pro-
4 grams to go forward.

5 **SEC. 4. SUPPORT FOR UNITED STATES NORTHERN EUROPE**
6 **INITIATIVE PROJECTS.**

7 (a) AVAILABILITY OF AMOUNTS FROM EAST EURO-
8 PEAN AND THE BALTIC STATES ASSISTANCE.—Of the
9 amounts available for fiscal year 2001 to carry out the
10 provisions of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 and the
11 Support for Eastern European Democracy (SEED) Act
12 of 1989 for assistance and for related programs for East-
13 ern Europe and the Baltic States, not less than
14 \$2,000,000 shall be used for projects described in sub-
15 section (c).

16 (b) AVAILABILITY OF AMOUNTS FROM INDE-
17 PENDENT STATES OF THE FORMER SOVIET UNION AS-
18 SISTANCE.—Of the amounts available for fiscal year 2001
19 to carry out the provisions of chapter 11 of part I of the
20 Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 and the Freedom for Rus-
21 sia and Emerging Eurasian Democracies and Open Mar-
22 kets Support Act of 1992 for assistance for the inde-
23 pendent states of the former Soviet Union and related pro-
24 grams, not less than \$2,000,000 shall be used for the
25 projects described in subsection (c).

1 (c) PROJECTS DESCRIBED.—The projects described
2 in this subsection are United States Northern Europe Ini-
3 tiative projects relating to environmental cleanup, law en-
4 forcement, public health, energy, business and trade pro-
5 motion, and civil society.

6 **SEC. 5. REPORT ON ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY.**

7 Not later than 180 days after the date of the enact-
8 ment of this Act, the Secretary of State, in consultation
9 with the heads of other appropriate Federal departments
10 and agencies, shall prepare and submit to the Congress
11 a report on—

12 (1) the threat to the environmental security of
13 the countries of Northern Europe and other coun-
14 tries of Europe and Asia presented by Russian ma-
15 rine nuclear reactors, waste, and contamination; and

16 (2) identifying the possibilities for new and ex-
17 panded United States and multilateral assistance
18 programs for environmental clean-up in Northwest
19 Russia, including technical exchanges and private-
20 public partnerships.

21 **SEC. 6. DEFINITIONS.**

22 In this Act:

23 (1) NORTHERN EUROPE.—The term “Northern
24 Europe” means the northwest region of the Russian
25 Federation (including Kaliningrad), the Republic of

1 Belarus, the Republic of Estonia, the Republic of
2 Latvia, the Republic of Lithuania, the Kingdom of
3 Denmark, the Republic of Finland, the Republic of
4 Iceland, the Kingdom of Norway, the Republic of
5 Poland, and the Kingdom of Sweden.

6 (2) UNITED STATES NORTHERN EUROPE INI-
7 TIATIVE.—The term “United States Northern Eu-
8 rope Initiative” means the framework agreement es-
9 tablished in 1997 between the United States and the
10 countries of Northern Europe to promote stability in
11 the Baltic Sea region and to strengthen key institu-
12 tions and security structures of the United States
13 and the countries of Northern Europe.

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