

*To the Senate of the United States:*

I am returning herewith without my approval S.J. Res. 38, a joint resolution that would prohibit the issuance of export licenses for the proposed transfer of defense articles, defense services, and technical data to support the manufacture of the Aurora Fuzing System for the Paveway IV Precision Guided Bomb Program in regard to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. This resolution would weaken America's global competitiveness and damage the important relationships we share with our allies and partners.

In particular, S.J. Res. 38 would prohibit the issuance of export licenses for the proposed transfer of defense articles, defense services, and technical data for the manufacturing of the Aurora Fuzing System for the Paveway IV Precision Guided Bomb Program. The misguided licensing prohibition in the joint resolution directly conflicts with the foreign policy and national security objectives of the United States, which include strengthening defense alliances with friendly countries throughout the world, deepening partnerships that preserve and extend our global influence, and enhancing our competitiveness in key markets. Apart from negatively affecting our bilateral relationships with Saudi Arabia and the United Kingdom, the joint resolution would hamper the ability of the United States to sustain and shape critical security cooperation activities. S.J. Res. 38 would also damage the credibility of the United States as a reliable partner by signaling that we are willing to abandon our partners and allies at the very moment when threats to them are increasing.

The United States is providing the licenses that the joint resolution seeks to prohibit for many reasons. First and foremost, it is our solemn duty to protect the safety of the more than 80,000 United States citizens who reside in Saudi Arabia and who are imperiled by Houthi attacks from Yemen. The Houthis, supported by Iran, have attacked civilian and military facilities using missiles, armed drones, and explosive boats, including in areas frequented by United States citizens, such as the airport in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Second, the joint resolution would degrade Saudi Arabia's military preparedness and ability to protect its sovereignty, directly affecting its ability to defend United States military personnel hosted there. Third, Saudi Arabia is a bulwark against the malign activities of Iran and its proxies in the region, and the licenses the joint resolution would prohibit enhance Saudi Arabia's ability to deter and defend against these threats.

In addition, S.J. Res. 38 would negatively affect our NATO Allies and the transatlantic defense industry. It could, for example, produce unintended consequences for defense procurement and interoperability with and between

our partners. It could also create diplomatic and security opportunities for our adversaries to exploit.

Finally, by restricting the ability of our partners to produce and purchase precision-guided munitions, S.J. Res. 38 would likely prolong the conflict in Yemen and deepen the suffering it causes. By undermining bilateral relationships of the United States and impeding our ability to support key partners at a critical time, the joint resolution would harm—not help—efforts to end the conflict in Yemen. And without precision-guided munitions, more—not fewer—civilians are likely to become casualties of the conflict. While I share concerns that certain Members of Congress have expressed about civilian casualties of this conflict, the United States has taken and will continue to take action to minimize such casualties, including training and advising the Saudi-led Coalition forces to improve their targeting processes.

The United States is very concerned about the conflict's toll on innocent civilians and is working to bring the conflict in Yemen to an end. But we cannot end it through ill-conceived and time-consuming resolutions that fail to address its root causes. Rather than expend time and resources on such resolutions, I encourage the Congress to direct its efforts toward supporting our work to achieve peace through a negotiated settlement to the conflict in Yemen.

For these reasons, it is my duty to return S.J. Res. 38 to the Senate without my approval.

DONALD J. TRUMP.

THE WHITE HOUSE, July 24, 2019.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—  
S. 2242

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, in a moment, I will ask unanimous consent for the Senate to take up and pass legislation I have introduced to help protect our democracy from foreign interference.

Earlier today, Special Counsel Robert Mueller testified that the Russian Government's efforts to undermine our elections are "among the most serious challenges to our democracy"—a challenge he says that "deserves the attention of every American."

Mr. Mueller's testimony should serve as a warning to every Member of this body about what could happen in 2020—literally, in our next election—if we fail to act. When asked if he thought that Russia would attack our democracy again in 2020, Mr. Mueller said: "They're doing it as we sit here."

Think about that for a moment. The special prosecutor spent 2½ years looking into Russian intervention in our elections in 2016 and says not only are they going to do it, but they are doing it as we sit here.

If this were just coming from the special prosecutor, some folks might be

willing to dismiss it, but this is exactly the same message we heard earlier this week from FBI Director Wray. It is a message that all of us have heard, and being on the Intelligence Committee, I have heard repeatedly from Director of National Intelligence Coats, and we have heard this, as well, from other leaders of law enforcement and our intelligence community. Again, I point out that the leaders who have sounded the alarm about the ongoing Russian threat to our elections were all appointed by this President.

Unfortunately, in the nearly 3 years since we uncovered Russia's attack on our democracy, this body has not held a single vote on stand-alone legislation to protect our elections.

I am not here to relitigate the 2016 election or, for that matter, to second-guess the special counsel's findings. This is more a question of how we defend our democracy on a going-forward basis.

The reason we need to do this—amongst a host of reasons—is that just a month ago, the President of the United States sat in the Oval Office, and by dismissing this threat, effectively gave Russia the green light to interfere in future elections. Since then, unfortunately, my Republican colleagues have done nothing to prevent further future attempts at undermining our democracy.

Let me be clear. If a foreign adversary tries to offer assistance to your campaign, your response should not be thank you; your response should be a moral obligation to tell the FBI. Mr. Mueller, the former FBI Director and inarguably the straightest arrow in public service, said as much this afternoon.

So if the President or other members of his family or his campaign can't be trusted to do the right thing and report their foreign contacts and foreign offers of assistance to their political activities, then we need to make it a legal requirement.

That is what my legislation, the FIRE Act, is all about. The FIRE Act is a simple, narrowly targeted bill. All it does is make sure that attempts to interfere in future Presidential elections are promptly reported to the FBI and the FEC.

Let me be clear. The FIRE Act is not about prohibiting innocent contacts or the exercise of First Amendment rights. Contrary to some of the mistaken rhetoric we have heard, it does not require the reporting of contacts with foreign journalists or with Dreamers or of official meetings with foreign governments. It is simply about preserving Americans' trust in our democratic process. If a candidate is receiving or welcoming help from the Kremlin or its spy services, I think the American people should have a right to know before they head to the polls.

Consequently, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Rules and Administration be discharged from further consideration of S. 2242, the FIRE

Act; that the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; that the bill be read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection?

Mrs. HYDE-SMITH. Mr. President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. An objection is heard.

The Senator from Connecticut.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—  
S. 1247

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I thank my colleague Senator WARNER, and we will hear shortly from Senator WYDEN.

These two great colleagues are championing election security. Senator WARNER, at the helm as vice chairman of the Intelligence Committee, has done as much as any American and any Member of this body to uncover the serious Russian threat to our election system. It is a threat not just from Russia but from other countries as well. That is why I have offered and will ask unanimous consent for the passage of S. 1247, the Duty To Report Act.

This legislation, like Senator WARNER's, is based on a very simple idea: If you see something, say something. The Duty To Report Act would require campaigns, candidates, and family members to immediately report to the FBI and the Federal Election Commission any offers of illegal foreign assistance. It differs in some technical aspects—for example, with regard to family members—from Senator WARNER's proposed FIRE Act. Yet it is the same idea because it codifies into law what is already a moral duty, a patriotic duty, and basic common sense. It is already illegal to accept foreign assistance during a campaign. It is already illegal to solicit foreign assistance during a campaign. All this bill does is require campaigns and individuals to report such illegal foreign assistance directly to the FBI.

Special Counsel Robert Mueller came before Congress today to answer questions about his very comprehensive and powerful report that documents the sweeping and systematic interference in our election, as he testified, to benefit, principally, Donald Trump's campaign. Yet this measure is about the future. It is about preventing such election interference in the future and providing a mandate and a duty to report any offers of assistance from a foreign government, like Russia.

This report outlines the most serious attack on our democracy by a foreign power in our history. It tells the story of more than 150 contacts between the Trump campaign and Russian agents. It tells the story of Russian covert and overt efforts to influence the outcome of our election by helping one candidate and hurting another, and it

shows—perhaps most importantly for the purpose of this measure—that the Trump campaign knew of it, welcomed it, and happily accepted it.

Mueller testified this morning:

Over the course of my career, I have seen a number of challenges to our democracy. The Russian Government's efforts to interfere in our election is among the most serious. As I said on May 29, this deserves the attention of every American.

Equally important is that, just yesterday, FBI Director Christopher Wray came before the Committee on the Judiciary and warned that the Russians are still actively trying to interfere in our election, which is what Mueller said today when he was asked about some of the remarks and some of the efforts in the Trump campaign. He was referring to Donald Trump, Jr., when he said, "I love it," in welcoming Russia's offer of assistance to the Trump campaign in the June 9 meeting, Director Mueller said, "I hope this is not the new normal, but I fear it is."

This is the context of troubling comments that brings us here today. One of the most troubling is President Trump's own comment when asked if he would accept foreign help in 2020, and he said, "I would take it." That is why we need the Duty To Report Act. If that kind of assistance is offered, there is an obligation to report it, not to take it.

The election of 2016 was simply a dress rehearsal. With the 2020 election upon us, we must stop this kind of foreign interference and ensure that it is the American people, not Russia or any other foreign power like China or Iran, who decide who the leaders of this country will be and the direction of our democracy.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Rules and Administration be discharged from further consideration of S. 1247; that the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; that the bill be considered read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection?

Mrs. HYDE-SMITH. Mr. President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. An objection is heard.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I yield to another great colleague who has been a champion of this cause of election security, Senator WYDEN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—  
S. 890

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I thank my colleagues, Senator BLUMENTHAL and Senator WARNER, who have spoken strongly on the issue at hand, which is to protect our great country and our extraordinary 200-year experiment in self-governance. To do it, we have to

add a new tier—a strong protection—for the sanctity of our elections.

I thank Senator BLUMENTHAL. He is a member of the Committee on the Judiciary, where he is doing important work on these issues. I thank our colleague, Senator WARNER, of course, who is the vice chairman of the Intelligence Committee, on which I serve. I also thank my colleague who is still on the floor, Senator BLUMENTHAL, for all of his leadership. I look forward to partnering with him and with Senator WARNER in the days ahead.

In a moment, I will ask for unanimous consent to adopt a bipartisan bill that I have proposed with Senator COTTON. It is S. 890, the Senate Cybersecurity Protection Act. Before I ask, however, for that unanimous consent request, I will give some brief background as to why Senator COTTON and I are working on this issue and putting all of this time into this effort.

In the 2016 election, obviously, the Russians inflicted damage on our democracy by hacking the personal accounts of political parties and individuals and then by dumping emails and documents online. This tactic generated massive amounts of media coverage that was based on those stolen documents. It is clear, in my view, that the Russians and other hostile foreign actors are going to continue to target the personal devices and accounts, which are often less secure than official government devices. You don't have to take my word for it. Top national security officials in the Trump administration have said virtually the same thing.

Last year, the Director of National Intelligence—our former colleague, Senator Coats—told the Senate Intelligence Committee: "The personal accounts and devices of government officials can contain information that is useful for our adversaries to target, either directly or indirectly, these officials and the organizations with which they are affiliated."

Likewise, in a letter to me last year, the then-Director of the National Security Agency, MIKE ROGERS, said that the personal devices and accounts belonging to senior U.S. government officials "remain prime targets for exploitation."

These foreign intelligence threats are not just aimed at the executive branch. Last year, a bipartisan Senate working group examined cybersecurity threats against Senators. In its November 2018 report, the working group revealed there was "mounting evidence that Senators are being targeted for hacking, which could include exposure of personal data." Likewise, Google has now publicly confirmed that it has quietly warned specific Senators and Senate staff that their personal email accounts were targeted by state-sponsored hackers.

Unfortunately, the Sergeant at Arms—the office that is tasked with protecting the Senate's cybersecurity—is currently barred from using its resources to protect the personal devices