

The Honorable Gregory W. Meeks
Chairman
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
United States House of Representatives
Washington D.C. 20515

The Honorable Michael McCaul
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
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March 2nd 2021

Dear Chairman Meeks and Ranking Member McCaul,

Please allow us to express our sincere gratitude for your personal leadership in strengthening the transatlantic relationship and for your continuous support for the prosperity and security of the Baltic States. Almost two decades ago, the bi-partisan congressional support demonstrated for the Baltics' accession to NATO was vital, and the newly established Baltic Security Initiative program carries the same weight in improving our defence capabilities, thus therefore serving as a strong deterrent against Russia.

As countries on NATO's Eastern flank, our countries are determined to work hand-in-hand with the United States to defend our common values and to reinforce the transatlantic ties between Europe and the United States. We also see the need and opportunity for cooperation in helping the Georgian people, as well as Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus in achieving their aspirations for democracy and prosperity. As we all know from our recent experience, Russia's malign activities surpass all physical borders, and they do not limit themselves to only their neighbouring countries. We have to stand together against Russia's attempts to keep these countries in their "sphere of interest" by cultivating mistrust towards democratic institutions and attempting to create rifts in transatlantic relations.

As you very well know yourself, Russia is very close to achieving all of these detrimental goals with its "Trojan horse" – the Nord Stream 2 (NS2) pipeline. Nord Stream 2 is a malign influence project designed to further Russia's geopolitical aims. The completion of NS2 will give Russia yet another tool to pressure and blackmail Ukraine as it continues to face Russia's brutal aggression and military occupation of its regions. Over 14,000 Ukrainians have died and every week, more Ukrainian soldiers give their lives to protect their homeland and entire Europe. History shows that Russia uses its energy exports as a coercive mechanism against its neighbouring countries. NS2 will increase the (energy) dependence of Europe, which, in turn, will weaken European resilience against malign activities. Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and most other European countries, as well as the European Parliament have repeatedly called on the European Union to stop the Nord Stream 2 project. If NS2 is completed as planned, Russia will yet again have proven that Western principles and values can be corrupted and sold for money.

We are grateful that President Joe Biden's administration has prioritised the revitalisation of the transatlantic relationship, and we truly see the momentum building for rebuilding our partnership in climate, trade, cyber, and security relations, especially when it comes to countering Russia and the increasing influence of China. We cannot turn a blind eye to Nord Stream 2, and need to make a stand together by loudly voicing that this project is counter to our common goals of building a democratic, free and prosperous world.

We greatly appreciate Congress' overwhelming bipartisan support on this matter both in 2019 and now in 2021 by passing the Protecting Europe's Energy Security Act and Protecting Europe's Energy Security Clarification Act intended to stand against the completion of the Nord Stream 2 pipeline and support European energy security. We have also been thrilled to see strong statements from members of the House and Senate ever since the construction of the pipeline re-started on February 6th. As the pipeline is just months away from completion, we ask the House Committee on Foreign Affairs to act swiftly and implement robust oversight to ensure this malign influence project- the Nord Stream 2 pipeline never sees completion.

Yours sincerely,



Rihards Kols
Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee
Parliament of Latvia



Marko Mihkelson
Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee
Parliament of Estonia



Žygimantas Pavilionis
Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee
Parliament of Lithuania

CC:

Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur

Congressman Bill Keating

Congressman Adam Kinzinger

Congressman Brian Fitzpatrick