



## CONGRESS OF RUSSIAN AMERICANS, INC.

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July 22, 2017

TO: Donald Trump,  
President of the United States of America  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.  
Washington, District of Columbia 20500

Dear President Trump,

This correspondence comes to you from the Congress of Russian Americans (CRA), a national organization established in 1973, that has thousands of members, primarily American citizens of Russian ancestry and heritage. The CRA is a recognized voice of Russian Americans. Our members have contributed to enriching this nation, and the CRA Hall of Fame includes a Nobel laureate alongside many Russian-American innovators, artists, and leaders in humanities, arts, and sciences. The CRA stands staunchly in support of the American ideals of democracy, civil rights, human dignity, and the rule of law.

We are compelled to write to you in order to express great regret over the efforts of some in the U.S. Congress to make permanent the sanctions that the Obama administration imposed on the Russian Federation. There is no doubt that the course of U.S.-Russia relations that the previous administration espoused destabilized the situation on the world stage. Mr. Obama's decision to impose sanctions on Russia undermined world peace and resulted in needless economic losses. Not only has Mr. Obama's crusade to encircle and contain Russia proven itself ineffective, it has also been a major hindrance to constructive dialogue. What's more – the politicians' angry rhetoric, disseminated by way of a one-sided propaganda barrage, engenders hatred for all things Russian. The five million Russian Americans living in this country have to bear the brunt of the consequences of these thoughtless words and actions.

It does not serve America's interest at all to spiral downward into the abyss of russophobia. If the sanctions that the previous administration imposed on Russia become codified as part of U.S. law, the end results will be long-lasting. A case in point is the Jackson-Vanik amendment that constrained trade with the Eastern Block nations because of the Soviet Union's emigration policies. That law, passed in 1974, continued in force for nearly four decades, long past the point when the impetus for its enactment ceased to exist.

Mr. President, the CRA believes that there are no fundamental reasons why two great world powers America and Russia cannot find a way to a peaceful and mutually-advantageous cooperation. For all these reasons, the Congress of Russian Americans respectfully asks that you decline to sign into law the bill making permanent the sanctions imposed on Russia.

Sincerely,

Natalie G. Sabelnik,  
President, Congress of Russian Americans  
On behalf of the CRA National Board of Directors