

The National Russian Threat Response Center

The Government of Russia poses a multi-faceted threat to the United States and its allies. Politically, it has interfered in recent democratic elections in France, Germany, and the United States. Russia also has taken a number of actions against European states; in Ukraine alone it has occupied territory in Crimea, shut down Kiev's electrical grid, and currently is supporting armed conflict in the Donbass. Furthermore, many Russian kleptocrats take advantage of western financial institutions to preserve their plunder and avoid sanctions.

Exacerbating this threat is the severely understaffed state of U.S. national security teams. The White House has not put forth any nominees for Assistant Secretary of State in Europe, Asia, or the Middle East. There are no nominees for the Deputy Director of National Intelligence, Assistant Attorney General for National Security, or Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security positions for cyber policy, threat prevention and security policy, or infrastructure protection. These are the very government officials necessary to work with our allies to establish a robust policy to respond to Russia.

Congress has confronted extraordinary threats before. Upon the recommendation of the 9/11 Commission, Congress created the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) to break down traditional barriers to respond to an unprecedented danger. This bill would create a center similar to the NCTC, nested in the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (DNI), which immediately could respond to the multi-faceted threat Russia poses.

Mission

The Center will be responsible for synchronizing and analyzing information pertaining to Russia from across the intelligence community, diplomatic channels, and law enforcement agencies. Using its broad view across the U.S. Government, the Center will develop policy recommendations and identify gaps in the current collection and collation of intelligence pertaining to Russia.

Interagency Cooperation and Oversight

Because the threat from Russia is so varied, the Center would be structured to encourage cooperation across the U.S. Government. By coordinating with the Global Engagement Center, it will be able to counter Russian disinformation efforts both within and beyond our borders. It will be staffed with detailees from various departments and will have an oversight board representing the following agencies.

- CIA
- Department of State
- Department of Defense
- Department of Justice or FBI
- Department of Homeland Security
- Department of the Treasury

Congressional Reporting

The Center will keep Congress informed of its activities and the evolving Russian threat with annual reports to the House Foreign Affairs Committee, the House Intelligence Committee, the House Armed Services Committee, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the Senate Armed Services Committee, and the Senate Committee on Intelligence. The Center will operate for up to 8 years and will be funded through the DNI's existing programmatic authority.