

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. _____

To authorize certain actions with respect to Serbia.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. GRASSLEY introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred
to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To authorize certain actions with respect to Serbia.

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 “Supporting the Rule
5 of law, Building Institutional Justice, and Accountability
6 Act” or “SRBIJA Act”.

7 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

8 In this Act—

9 (1) the term “European Union” means the po-
10 litical and economic union of that name, including
11 its member states and institutions;

1 (2) the term “NATO” means the North Atlan-
2 tic Treaty Organization; and

3 (3) the term “Secretary” means the Secretary
4 of State.

5 **SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

6 It is the sense of Congress that—

7 (1) Serbia has experienced serious democratic
8 backsliding, as reflected in the 2024 Country Report
9 on Human Rights and European Parliament’s 2025
10 report on Serbia, which cited significant problems
11 with the rule of law, judicial independence, media
12 freedom, and corruption;

13 (2) the Government of Serbia, under the leader-
14 ship of President Aleksandar Vučić and the ruling
15 coalition, has responded to sustained student-led and
16 civic protests with measures that international ob-
17 servers, the European Parliament, and United Na-
18 tions experts have characterized as including exces-
19 sive use of force, arrests of demonstrators, and pres-
20 sure on independent media;

21 (3) the Government of Serbia has simulta-
22 neously pursued a foreign policy deepening political,
23 economic, and security ties with the Russian Federa-
24 tion and the People’s Republic of China, even as it

1 maintains formal candidate status for European
2 Union membership;

3 (4) the United States has an enduring interest
4 in a stable, democratic, and sovereign Serbia that is
5 committed to regional peace and security and firmly
6 anchored in Euro-Atlantic institutions and free from
7 malign external influence;

8 (5) the collapse of the renovated railway station
9 canopy in Novi Sad on November 1, 2024, which
10 killed 16 people, and which many Serbian citizens
11 attribute to corruption-linked negligence in state in-
12 frastructure contracting, warrants a full, trans-
13 parent, and independent accounting;

14 (6) the Secretary should press the Government
15 of Serbia to permit independent, credible investiga-
16 tions into the Novi Sad disaster and into allegations
17 of excessive force against peaceful protesters, and to
18 hold accountable any officials found responsible;

19 (7) Serbia and Iran have deepened technological
20 and political ties despite extensive United States and
21 international sanctions on Iran, signing a memo-
22 randum of understanding on information and com-
23 munications technology and artificial intelligence co-
24 operation in February 2025 and holding bilateral po-
25 litical consultations in April 2025; and

1 (8) in July 2026, the Government of Serbia
2 sent a cabinet minister to Tehran as President
3 Vučić’s personal envoy to the funeral of former Ira-
4 nian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, joining delega-
5 tions from Russia and China at a time when most
6 European governments were not represented.

7 **SEC. 4. STATEMENT OF POLICY.**

8 It is the policy of the United States—

9 (1) to support the aspirations of the citizens of
10 Serbia for transparent, accountable, and democratic
11 governance and impress upon the Government of
12 Serbia that deepened United States engagement de-
13 pends on credible, verifiable progress toward demo-
14 cratic accountability and rule of law;

15 (2) to impose financial and visa sanctions on
16 malign actors who contribute to the destabilizing sit-
17 uation in the Western Balkans, including in Serbia
18 under Executive Order 14033 (relating to blocking
19 property and suspending entry into the United
20 States of Certain persons contributing to the desta-
21 bilizing situation in the Western Balkans) as well as
22 those in the Western Balkans who support the Rus-
23 sian Federation’s malign actions around the world
24 under Executive Order 14024 (relating to Blocking
25 property with respect to specified harmful foreign

1 activities of the Government of the Russian Federa-
2 tion); and

3 (3) to impose sanctions described in section
4 8335 of the Western Balkans Democracy and Pros-
5 perity Act (22 U.S.C. 10704) for foreign persons
6 who the President determines have—

7 (A) undertaken actions or policies that
8 threaten the peace, security, stability, or terri-
9 torial integrity of any area or state in the West-
10 ern Balkans;

11 (B) engaged or attempted to engage in ac-
12 tions or policies that undermine democratic
13 processes or institutions in the Western Bal-
14 kans;

15 (C) engaged or attempted to engage in cor-
16 ruption related to the Western Balkans, includ-
17 ing corruption by or on behalf of, a government
18 in the Western Balkans, or a current or former
19 government official in the Western Balkans;

20 (D) engaged or attempting to engage in se-
21 rious human rights abuses in the Western Bal-
22 kans; or

23 (E) engaged or attempted to engage in,
24 acts that obstruct or threaten the implementa-
25 tion of any regional security, peace, coopera-

tion, or mutual recognition agreement or framework or accountability mechanism related to the Western Balkans, including—

(i) the Prespa Agreement of 2018;

(ii) the Ohrid Framework Agreement of 2001;

(iii) United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999);

(iv) the General Framework Agreement for Bosnia and Herzegovina, done at Dayton November 21, 1995 (commonly known as the “Dayton Accords”);

(v) the Conclusions of the Peace Implementation Conference Council held in London in December 1995, including the decisions or conclusions of the High Representative, the Peace Implementation Council, or its Steering Board; and

(vi) the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, or, with respect to the former Yugoslavia, the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals.

SEC. 5. REPORT AND STRATEGY.

(a) REPORT.—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days
2 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Sec-
3 retary, in coordination with the Director of National
4 Intelligence and the Secretary of Defense, shall sub-
5 mit to the appropriate congressional committees an
6 unclassified report, which may include a classified
7 annex, examining—

8 (A) the extent of Russian political, eco-
9 nomic, energy, and security influence in Serbia;

10 (B) the extent of investment, infrastruc-
11 ture, and political and security-sector ties be-
12 tween Serbia and the People’s Republic of
13 China, including any implications for NATO
14 and European Union interests in the Western
15 Balkans; and

16 (C) the extent to which Serbia’s close eco-
17 nomic, political, and other ties with the Russian
18 Federation and the People’s Republic of China
19 risk United States interests, including when
20 pursuing bilateral cooperation in the fields of
21 defense, telecommunications, and national secu-
22 rity.

23 (2) DEFINITION.—In this subsection, the term
24 “appropriate congressional committees” means—

1 (A) the Committee on Foreign Relations,
2 the Select Committee on Intelligence, and the
3 Committee on Armed Services of the Senate;
4 and

5 (B) the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the
6 Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence,
7 and the Committee on Armed Services of the
8 House of Representatives.

9 (b) STRATEGY.—

10 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after
11 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary,
12 in coordination with the heads of other relevant Fed-
13 eral departments and agencies, shall submit to the
14 Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and
15 the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of
16 Representatives a detailed strategy that—

17 (A) outlines specific objectives for bilateral
18 engagement that reflect the current domestic
19 political environment in Serbia including an as-
20 sessment of how the U.S.-Serbia Strategic Dia-
21 logue will further these objectives;

22 (B) assesses the tools, resources, and for-
23 eign assistance funding available to support
24 independent media, civil society, and judicial re-
25 form in Serbia;

1 (C) assesses whether the Government of
2 Serbia has taken credible steps to investigate
3 the Novi Sad disaster and allegations of exces-
4 sive force against protesters;

5 (D) assesses the extent to which the Gov-
6 ernment of Serbia's foreign and security policy
7 remains aligned, or has diverged, from that of
8 NATO and the European Union, including
9 through its ties to Russia and China;

10 (E) includes bilateral consultations on
11 issues of corruption, public procurement, and
12 rule of law including in the context of EXPO
13 2027; and

14 (F) includes a path forward for the United
15 States to support continued progress in the Eu-
16 ropean Union-led dialogue between Serbia and
17 Kosovo in accordance with section 8340 of the
18 Western Balkans Democracy and Prosperity
19 Act (22 U.S.C. 10709).

20 (2) FORM.—The strategy required by para-
21 graph (1) shall be submitted in unclassified form,
22 with a classified annex as necessary.

23 **SEC. 6. U.S.-SERBIA STRATEGIC DIALOGUE.**

24 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall cease partici-
25 pation in the U.S.-Serbia Strategic Dialogue unless the

1 Secretary, at a minimum, addresses the following issues
2 during any iteration of the U.S.-Serbia Strategic Dia-
3 logue:

4 (1) Serbia's relations with Russia, China, and
5 Iran.

6 (2) Ensuring free and fair elections in Serbia.

7 (3) Anti-corruption, public procurement, and
8 rule of law reform in Serbia.

9 (4) Strengthening democratic governance, the
10 freedom of the press, and freedom of assembly in
11 Serbia.

12 (b) CERTIFICATION REQUIRED.—Not less than 10
13 days prior to any iteration of the U.S.-Serbia Strategic
14 Dialogue, the Secretary shall submit in writing to the
15 Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the
16 Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representa-
17 tives a certification that the issues described in subsection
18 (a) will be addressed and a detailed overview of how the
19 Secretary or the appropriate Department of State rep-
20 resentative at the Dialogue plans to address the issues
21 during that iteration of the Dialogue.

22 (c) CESSATION OF FUNDING.—If the Secretary fails
23 to provide the certification required by subsection (b), no
24 Department of State official or employee is authorized to

1 participate in the U.S.-Serbia Strategic Dialogue or ex-
2 pend any appropriations for that purpose.

3 **SEC. 7. ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE TO SERBIA.**

4 (a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Con-
5 gress that, after the submission of the certification de-
6 scribed in subsection (c), should the Government of Serbia
7 take steps to reinforce its Euro-Atlantic path, including
8 a credible and independent accounting of the Novi Sad
9 canopy collapse and accountability for excessive use of
10 force against peaceful protesters—

11 (1) the President should take steps to improve
12 the bilateral relationship between the United States
13 and Serbia, including actions to bolster Serbia’s
14 democratic institutions and its resilience to malign
15 foreign influence;

16 (2) the Secretary, in consultation with other
17 heads of relevant Federal departments and agencies,
18 should seek to further enhance people-to-people con-
19 tacts and academic exchanges between the United
20 States and Serbia; and

21 (3) the President, in consultation with the Sec-
22 retary of Defense, should maintain, and as appro-
23 priate, expand security and defense cooperation with
24 Serbia consistent with Serbia’s alignment with
25 NATO and European Union security priorities.

1 (b) IN GENERAL.—Upon submission to Congress of
2 the certification described in subsection (c), additional as-
3 sistance is authorized to be provided to Serbia.

4 (c) CERTIFICATION DESCRIBED.—The certification
5 described in this subsection is a certification submitted to
6 Congress by the President that Serbia has shown signifi-
7 cant and sustained progress toward independent judicial
8 accountability, media freedom, and alignment of its for-
9 eign and security policy with that of the European Union
10 and NATO.

11 **SEC. 8. SUNSET.**

12 This Act shall cease to have any force or effect begin-
13 ning on the date that is five years after the date of the
14 enactment of this Act.