

Thomas Massie, Long a Friend to Russia, Votes Against Resolution Supporting Ukraine

Three Republicans voted against a resolution affirming that America "stands steadfastly, staunchly, proudly, and fervently behind the Ukrainian people"

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Rep. Thomas Massie (R-Ky.) ZACH ROBERTS/NURPHOTO/AP

Massie retweeted Rosendale's statement last week and [has criticized](#) sending aid to Ukraine, but there may be more to his vote on Wednesday than a belief that America should focus on its own borders. Massie has long been friendly with the Russians, tweeting in 2018 "[dialogue is good.](#)"

But that dialogue has brought Massie in contact with several unsavory Russian characters. Along with the unabashedly pro-Moscow then-Rep. Dana Rohrabacher, Massie was part of an infamous 2017 dinner meeting at the D.C.

eatery Bistro Bis with Maria Butina (later imprisoned for being an unregistered influence agent of Moscow) and her handler, the Russian central banker Alexander Torshin (later subject to U.S. sanctions for “[worldwide malign activity](#)”). Butina and Torshin are now notorious for their op to [infiltrate the NRA](#) as a means to influence in the GOP. But when Butina was first arrested, Massie wrote an [op-ed in her defense](#) claiming that America’s “Russophobic rhetoric seems to have turned into a witch hunt.

Massie’s support of Russia has not just been rhetorical, and includes a long string of votes that align with Moscow’s interests. In 2017 he was [one of four nays](#) in a congressional vote to reaffirm NATO’s mutual defense pact, calling the alliance’s expansion into Eastern Europe “unwise and unaffordable.” That same year he [voted against](#) a sanctions package targeting Russia. In 2019, Massie was [the only member of Congress](#) to vote against a measure refusing to recognize Russia’s annexation of Crimea. Now, he’s refusing to side with the democratic American ally Russia invaded last week and continues to bombard.

Massie posted [a Twitter thread](#) featuring several reasons he voted against the resolution on Wednesday, including that the move to offer Ukraine “defensive security assistance” is open-ended; that the U.S. should not also condemn Belarus, which is allied with Russia; and that “crippling sanctions could also drive Putin to become more desperate, inciting him to resort to drastic measures such as escalating the weapons employed or the people targeted.”

Massie’s vote against supporting Ukraine comes two days after he was [one of three House members](#) to vote against a bill making lynching a hate crime.

This post has been updated.

<https://www.rollingstone.com/politics/politics-news/thomas-massie-votes-against-ukraine-resolution-1315534/>