

# GOP's 'Putin wing' balks at supplying weapons to Ukraine on loan

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By [Steve Benen](#)



The year before the United States entered World War II, Franklin D. Roosevelt proposed something called the Lend-Lease Act of 1941. The goal was relatively straightforward: In order to assist our British allies, American policymakers created a law that allowed the White House to lease or lend military supplies to any government “whose defense the president deems vital to the defense of the United States.”

Yesterday, as The New York Times [reported](#), the House voted to use the same 81-year-old law to allow President Joe Biden to quickly supply weapons to Ukraine on loan.

The 417-to-10 vote to invoke an extraordinary, eight-decade-old law created to battle Hitler reflected a growing bipartisan sense of urgency in Congress to bolster the Ukrainian military as it digs in for an ugly and protracted artillery war in the south and east of the country. The Senate passed the legislation unanimously this month.

Biden, of course, [will sign](#) the legislation.

But as the policymaking process moves forward, let's not brush past the list of members who opposed the measure. In fact, there were [10 Republicans](#) who voted “no” yesterday, and many of their names were familiar:

1. Andy Biggs of Arizona
2. Dan Bishop of North Carolina
3. Warren Davidson of Ohio
4. Matt Gaetz of Florida
5. Paul Gosar of Arizona
6. Marjorie Taylor Greene of Georgia
7. Thomas Massie of Kentucky
8. Ralph Norman of South Carolina
9. Scott Perry of Pennsylvania
10. Tom Tiffany of Wisconsin

Note, each of these members knew the Ukraine Democracy Defense Lend-Lease Act would pass easily. They also knew the leadership of both parties supported the bill. But these 10 Republicans wanted to be on record in opposition to the measure anyway.

The vote came two days after the House also approved largely symbolic legislation endorsing the sale of Russian oligarchs' luxury assets in order to fund additional aid to Ukraine. It passed 417 to 8, with four Republicans — North Carolina's Madison Cawthorn, Greene, Massie, and Texas' Chip Roy — among the opponents.

Circling back to our earlier coverage, since Russia's invasion of Ukraine, there have been a series of House votes on measures related to the attack, each of which have been approved easily, despite opposition from a modest contingent of far-right lawmakers — who've picked up some unflattering nicknames.

Rep. Liz Cheney, for example, has labeled them the GOP's "Putin wing." The Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee called them the "GOP's pro-Putin faction." A Washington Post report added yesterday, the group of Republicans have formed "what some Democrats (and even critics on the right) have labeled 'Putin's Caucus.'"

It was in March when this began in earnest. When the House voted overwhelmingly to ban oil imports from Russia, for example, 15 House Republicans opposed the measure — including most of the members who voted "no" yesterday.

A week earlier, the House easily passed a non-binding resolution in support of Ukrainians, which three Republicans opposed, most of whom also voted "no" yesterday.

Soon after, the House voted to suspend normal trade relations with Russia, and that measure was only opposed by eight Republicans, most whom also voted "no" yesterday.

Earlier this month, the House also passed a bill directing the Biden administration to collect evidence of Russian war crimes. Six Republicans opposed the measure, each of whom also voted "no" yesterday.

As for the Venn diagram, how many House GOP members voted against the resolution in support of Ukrainians, the ban on Russian oil imports, the suspension of normal trade relations with Russia, the resolution on Russian war crimes, the sale of Russian oligarchs' luxury assets, *and* the lend-lease policy?

Just one: Thomas Massie. The Kentucky Republican is perhaps best known for being derided by Donald Trump as a "third-rate grandstander."