



**A statement from Representative Marcy Kaptur (D-OH)**  
Reaction to Atlantic Council Nord Stream 2 Launch Event

As co-chair of the bipartisan Congressional Ukraine Caucus, I send warmest greetings to our friends in Ukraine and across the Transatlantic Community. I express my thanks to the Atlantic Council for hosting this important event on a very timely topic—the dire threat of Nord Stream 2 to transatlantic security.

I congratulate Anders Åslund for authoring this report entitled, “What will the impact be if Nord Stream 2 is completed?” as well as Ambassador John Herbst, Ambassador Fried, and Melinda Haring for joining this conversation.

I am deeply concerned with the near completion of the Nord Stream 2 pipeline, which is 95% close to being finished.

This Russian malign influence project is designed to bypass Ukraine, depriving that country of its critically needed transit fees. It would also increase Europe’s dependence on Russia for its energy needs.

Tragically, Russia has a demonstrated history of using energy to undermine global democratic institutions. For example, in 2006 and 2009, Russian authorities cut off gas flows through Ukraine during the bitter cold of winter. This led to suffering not only for Ukraine’s people, but also folks in neighboring countries like Bulgaria and Romania.

Just last year, the Kremlin attempted to coerce neighboring Belarus into forming a union state with Russia by engaging in a cutoff of oil shipments. Now, Russian dictator Vladimir Putin hopes to consolidate his control of Europe’s energy markets to achieve his sinister aims and drive a wedge in the transatlantic alliance.

Additionally, the pipeline would also undermine Ukraine’s security, a nation facing down brutal Russian aggression. I believe Ukraine to be the scrimmage line on the European continent. Yet due to Russia’s illegal war on Ukraine, over 14,000 innocents have lost their lives and millions more have been displaced.

Russia amassed over 100,000 troops in and close to Ukrainian territories. I strongly condemn Russia’s unilateral escalatory behavior and am thankful for Ukraine’s measured response to defend its territory.

The pipeline will further provide the Kremlin another funding source to continue its human rights crackdown within Russia itself. Just last year, Russian opposition leader, Alexei Navalny nearly perished after a Kremlin-ordered attempt on his life. Russian security forces poisoned him with a chemical weapon, Novichok, in contravention of the Chemical Weapons Convention.



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Yet after spending five months recovering in a medically-induced coma in Berlin, Mr. Navalny bravely returned to Russia where he was immediately detained and sent to a modern-day gulag.

I am disturbed by recent reporting that Mr. Navalny is in critical condition, and I call for his immediate release and the provision of robust medical care. It is simply perplexing why certain European countries would seek greater energy integration with this thug regime through the Nord Stream 2 pipeline.

This Atlantic Council report is so important because it highlights what would happen if the pipeline would be completed:

I agree that Russia would completely abandon the Ukrainian transit line, giving the Kremlin a freer hand for its military action in Ukraine. It also would undermine Europe's energy security by concentrating gas flows through pipelines controlled solely by Russia.

I am also troubled by the implications in the report that Nord Stream 2 could have devastating geopolitical effects. By driving a wedge between Western and Eastern Europe, Russia will undermine unity in the European Union and importantly the NATO alliance at a time when transatlantic solidarity is needed more than ever.

Finally, I share the report's concerns that a completed Nord Stream 2 would help Russia spread its corruption throughout Europe and corrode democratic institutions. I am personally troubled by the role former German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder has played to advocate for the pipeline. He is willing to write off Ukraine and undermine liberty in Europe just to enrich himself on the board of Gazprom.

For these reasons, our Congressional Ukraine Caucus has led efforts in the House of Representatives to pass sanctions on Nord Stream 2, now twice on an overwhelmingly bipartisan basis. These sanctions are not discretionary. They are mandatory. I continue to strongly urge the Administration to move more swiftly to sanction the pipeline to ensure it never sees completion.

Additionally, we must reject false compromises that would allow for the completion of the Nord Stream 2 pipeline in exchange for Kremlin pledges to keep gas flowing through Ukraine. I have little faith that the Kremlin will follow through on its word. As proof, Russia has already wound down gas flows through the TransBalkan route by completing its other diversionary pipeline, TurkStream.

In the face of these challenges, I am so grateful to President Biden for his commitment to liberty in Europe. It is in his DNA.



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I remember fondly my trip with then-Vice President Biden and the late Senator McCain to Ukraine in 2014 to celebrate the inauguration of President Poroshenko. I thank President Biden for his opposition to Nord Stream 2 and his comments that the pipeline is a “bad deal” for Europe.

While I fully support sanctioning Nord Stream 2, I also stand ready to restore relations with Germany which suffered greatly under the previous Administration. Yet, improving relations with Germany can be done without permitting this dangerous geopolitical project to be completed.

To this end, I support increasing political, economic, and cultural ties between our great nations. I am honored to represent thousands of Americans of German heritage and am so grateful for the contributions they have made to Northern Ohio. It is always a pleasure to visit with the very able German Ambassador to the United States, Emily Haber, and look forward to working with her to strengthen bilateral ties.

In conclusion, I thank the Atlantic Council for hosting this event to launch this important report. I know that working together across the aisle and across the Atlantic, we will ensure a Europe that is undivided, prosperous, energy secure, and free.