From: Tavlarides, Mark <mtavlarides@bgrdc.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 21, 2022 11:48 AM
To: Tavlarides, Mark <mtavlarides@bgrdc.com>
Subject: Re: Support U.S.-Azerbaijan Relations in FY23

Good morning – Following up on my email yesterday, below is a Dear Colleague letter from Reps. Chabot and Cohen. To sign the letter, please use this Quill link. For more information, please reach out to Mark Erste (mark.erste@mail.house.gov) with Congressman Chabot or Rachel Citron (rachel.citron@mail.house.gov) with Congressman Cohen. **Note that the deadline to sign is Monday, April 25 by COB.**

Support Azerbaijan in FY23 SFOPS Appropriations

Sending Office: Honorable Steve Chabot
Sent By: mark.erste@mail.house.gov

Deadline: Monday, April 25, COB

Dear Colleague,

As Co-Chairs of the Congressional Azerbaijan Caucus, we invite you to join us in urging support for U.S.-Azerbaijan relationship in the FY 2023 State and Foreign Operations Appropriations bill.

Azerbaijan is a critical partner of the United States. Azerbaijan is strategically positioned as the only friendly gateway to Central Asia, situated bordering Russia to the north and Iran to the south. This has allowed Azerbaijan to provide a crucial supply route for U.S. forces in Afghanistan and Azerbaijan's troops were among the last partner militaries to leave Afghanistan, facilitating the U.S. withdrawal to the end. Azerbaijan it is also a strong counterterrorism partner and a friend of our ally Israel.

Furthermore, Azerbaijan has been supportive of Ukraine during Russia's illegal and unprovoked invasion, setting an example for other non-NATO post-Soviet states. Critically, in December 2020, Azerbaijan began operation of the Southern Gas Corridor, a pipeline that will bring Caspian Sea gas to Europe, thereby lessening the continent's reliance on Russian energy supplies.

This year's letter expresses our support for Azerbaijan during the appropriations process and specifically asks for support for demining assistance coordinated for with the Government of Azerbaijan. In the aftermath of the fall 2020 war between Azerbaijan and Armenia we should also take the opportunity to support peacebuilding efforts between the two countries.

With these priorities in mind, we would appreciate your support of our efforts to strengthen the U.S.-Azerbaijan relationship. To sign on to the letter, please use this Quill link and for more information, please have your staff reach out to Mark Erste (mark.erste@mail.house.gov) with Congressman Chabot or Rachel Citron (rachel.citron@mail.house.gov) with Congressman Cohen.

Sincerely,
Steve Chabot Steve Cohen
Co-Chair, Congressional Azerbaijan Caucus Co-Chair, Congressional Azerbaijan Caucus

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Dear Chair Lee and Ranking Member Rogers:
As you begin consideration of the FY 2023 State and Foreign Operations bill, we urge you to recognize the strategic value of the U.S.-Azerbaijan partnership in the new global reality.
Azerbaijan has been a long-standing partner of the United States, cooperating on multiple fronts from fighting against terrorism and drug trafficking, to preventing nuclear proliferation, to stabilizing the wider Caspian region. It is also worth noting that Azerbaijani troops were among the last partner militaries to leave Kabul airport, facilitating the evacuation until the very end.
As recognized by European leaders, Azerbaijan will be a key partner in replenishing the potential energy shortage in Europe that may occur from Russian aggression against Ukraine. Moreover, Azerbaijan continues to be a major energy supplier for our mutual ally Israel, despite open threats and covert action by Iran. These threats have ratcheted up since Azerbaijan took back control of its border with Iran. As threats in the region increase, especially those towards energy infrastructure in the Caspian Sea, it is vital for the United States to explore opportunities for further assistance in border security, maritime security, and non-proliferation to Azerbaijan.
Furthermore, as the world watches the Russian invasion of Ukraine, it is worth noting that Azerbaijan has provided significant humanitarian aid to Ukraine during this trying time, an exception among former Soviet non-NATO countries that led Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy to publicly thank the President of Azerbaijan for this courageous step.
In light of our partnership and shared interests with Azerbaijan, and the United States' good relations with the countries of the South Caucasus, the U.S. must remain ready to help the region achieve an enduring peace. Therefore, we believe that the U.S. should participate in demining activities and refrain from any initiative that could undermine the trust we have built with the region.
In this context, we believe that any U.S. assistance or humanitarian aid programing for areas within the internationally-recognized borders of Azerbaijan should be coordinated with or run through the Government of Azerbaijan. It is important that any program in these territories is in line with the United States' support for the principle of internationally recognized territorial integrity.
Sincerely,

Related Legislative Issues

Selected legislative information: Appropriations, Foreign Affairs

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From: Tavlarides, Mark
Sent: Wednesday, April 20, 2022 11:23 AM
To: Tavlarides, Mark <mtavlarides@bgrdc.com>
Subject: Support U.S.-Azerbaijan Relations in FY23

Good afternoon,

Co-Chairs of the Congressional Azerbaijan Caucus Steve Chabot and Steve Cohen have circulated a draft letter (attached) for FY2023 appropriations regarding U.S.-Azerbaijan relations. This letter will be sent to Chair Lee and Ranking Member Rogers of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs. The letter does not include any funding requests.

Given your boss's strong support for the U.S.-Azerbaijan relationship, we hope your boss will sign the letter.

To sign the letter, please reach out to Rep. Cohen's office (rachel.citron@mail.house.gov) or Rep. Chabot's office (mark.erste@mail.house.gov).

Best,
Mark

Mark J. Tavlarides
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Note: BGR Government Affairs, LLC has filed registration statements under the Foreign Agents Registration Act with regard to its representation and dissemination of information on behalf of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Additional information is on file with the Foreign Agents Registration Unit of the Department of Justice in Washington, DC.