

Politics

Top Democrat Sees Additional Nord Stream 2 Sanctions from Biden

By [Daniel Flatley](#)

March 9, 2021, 4:17 PM EST

A senior Democratic senator said he expects the U.S. to impose additional sanctions aimed at stopping construction of the Nord Stream 2 pipeline as President Joe Biden comes under increasing pressure to counter Russian influence in Europe.

“The Biden administration is working up their sanctions case that can stand up in court, but those take time and they’ve been in office less than two months so I encourage them to accelerate those efforts,” Senator Bob Menendez, chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, said during a conference call with reporters on Tuesday. “I think they are engaged in a full diplomatic push to stop Nord Stream 2.”

Bipartisan sentiment in Congress overwhelmingly favors stopping the pipeline, which would carry gas from Russia to Germany. But the Biden administration faced bipartisan criticism last month after it held off on sanctions against German entities involved in the construction of the pipeline, despite arguing that the project undermines European security.

The administration has argued that it needs more time to assemble evidence of all those involved in the construction and has suggested more sanctions are coming. Germany backs the project and wants to make a deal with the U.S. in order to complete the pipeline.

Menendez said the need to repair U.S. relationships with NATO allies such as Germany that were strained during former President Donald Trump’s term in office shouldn’t preclude forcing a halt to the pipeline’s construction

“How you have a rapprochement with Germany isn’t Nord Stream or nothing,” Menendez said. “I think that there are many different elements to that relationship. I know this is very important to the Germans but that doesn’t mean that it is the end all and be all. I think the administration can balance both.”

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Lawmakers from both parties have urged the administration to levy more sanctions over the pipeline. Last week, Senator Ted Cruz said he would delay the confirmation of William Burns to be CIA director over the issue.

Members of Congress have been pushing for additional sanctions, including on vessels and ports they say are clearly helping with construction or involved in the project. They are urging the State Department to issue an interim report identifying additional entities to be sanctioned before a mandatory report is due in less than three months.

– *With assistance by Nick Wadhams*

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