

September 10, 2021

The Honorable Nancy P. Pelosi
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate

The Honorable Kevin O. McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate

RE: Support for the Counter-Kleptocracy Act

Dear Congressional Leaders,

As organizations and individuals who work to combat the abuse of power in the public and private sectors, we write in support of the Counter-Kleptocracy Act (CKA). From our collective experience working and living around the world, we believe the Act would help expose and counteract authoritarian and kleptocratic regimes across the globe, and begin to appropriately address foreign corruption as a U.S. national security interest of the first order.

Emerging and existing authoritarian and kleptocratic regimes around the world, from parts of the Middle East to the Northern Triangle to parts of Southeast Asia and Eastern Europe, are increasingly employing corruption to gain and maintain power. In doing so, they threaten global political and economic security, including key national security interests of the United States and its allies, by contributing to violent extremism, organized crime, mass migration, and political and economic volatility, among other harms. These and other consequences of corruption were made clear by the recent memorandum from the Biden Administration designating the fight against foreign corruption as a core U.S. national security interest.¹ Absent strong interventions from the U.S. government, these corrupt and kleptocratic regimes will continue to threaten the national security of the United States and its allies, and endanger public safety and public health, impoverish vulnerable societies, sow the seeds of economic and social unrest, and imperil the prospects and promises of democratic governance across the globe.

It is critical that Congress meet this moment by adopting measures that are specifically designed to disrupt foreign corruption and kleptocracy, and it can begin to do so by approving the CKA.

The CKA is a straightforward and relatively short amalgamation of bipartisan anticorruption bills that have been introduced in both the 116th and 117th Congresses. Specifically, the CKA is comprised of the Combating Global Corruption Act (H.R. 4322, S. 14); the Foreign Corruption Accountability Act (H.R. 3887); the Foreign Extortion Prevention Act (H.R. 4737); the Golden Visa Accountability Act (H.R. 4142); the Justice for Victims of Kleptocracy Act (H.R. 3781, S. 2010); the Revealing and Explaining Visa Exclusions for Accountability and Legitimacy (REVEAL) Act (H.R.

¹ The White House, "Memorandum on Establishing the Fight Against Corruption as a Core United States National Security Interest," June 3, 2021, available at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/06/03/memorandum-on-establishing-the-fight-against-corruption-as-a-core-united-states-national-security-interest/>.

4557, S. 2392); and the Transnational Repression Accountability and Prevention (TRAP) Act (H.R. 4806, S. 2010). Each of these bills have garnered strong bipartisan support and, as demonstrated here and elsewhere, the overwhelming support of civil society organizations and prominent individuals committed to eradicating corruption.

The CKA would enhance existing U.S. sanctions programs that target corrupt actors, encourage cooperative anticorruption efforts among the United States and its allies, and empower the U.S. government to fight foreign corruption at its source. On their own—but especially together—the reforms in the CKA can help turn the tide against authoritarian and kleptocratic regimes and provide strong new means of preventing and ameliorating some of the most harmful uses of corruption across the world.

We look forward to working with you to turn this bill into law as soon as possible. For any questions, or for additional information, please contact Scott Greytak, Director of Advocacy for Transparency International's U.S. office, at sgreytak@transparency.org.

Sincerely,

Organizations

**Academics Stand Against Poverty
Accountability Lab
Africa Faith and Justice Network
Anti-Corruption Data Collective
Centre for the Study of Corruption, University of Sussex
Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington (CREW)
Crude Accountability
EG Justice
Estonian American National Council
Financial Accountability and Corporate Transparency (FACT) Coalition
Free Russia Foundation
Freedom House
Global Financial Integrity
Human Rights First
Integrity Initiatives International
International Coalition Against Illicit Economies (ICAIE)
Joint Baltic American National Committee
Jubilee USA Network
Never Again Coalition
Open Contracting Partnership
Oxfam America
Public Citizen
Repatriation Group International
The ONE Campaign
The Sentry
Transparency International—U.S. Office
Ukrainian Congress Committee of America
UNISHKA Research Service**

Prominent Individuals

Carrie F. Bekker, Compliance Consultant

Frank Vogl, Chairman, Partnership for Transparency Fund; Co-founder, former Vice Chairman, Transparency International

Liz David-Barrett, Director, Centre for the Study of Corruption, University of Sussex

Dr. Michael J. Dziedzic, Affiliate Faculty at the Terrorism, Transnational Crime and Corruption Center and editor of *Criminalized Power Structures: The Overlooked Enemies of Peace*

Matthew H. Murray, Esq., Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce, Europe, the Middle East and Africa; Currently Adjunct Professor, Columbia University, School of International and Public Affairs

Nate Sibley, Research Fellow, Kleptocracy Initiative, Hudson Institute

Shaazka Beyerle, Author, *Curtailing Corruption: People Power for Accountability and Justice*