



By: TA | AP Brief

Zelenskyy will meet with Trump in anticipation of new US sanctions against Russia



President Donald Trump and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy will meet Tuesday ahead of Sen. Lindsey Graham's funeral, their second sit-down this month and after a far-right activist with the U.S. president's ear had a widely publicized change of heart on Russia's war against Ukraine.

Trump is set to welcome Zelenskyy to the White House as the Ukrainian leader travels to Washington to honor Graham, whose **final act as a public official** was visiting Kyiv and securing an agreement on a package of sanctions that seek to punish countries that purchase Russian oil, gas and other exports.

But Zelenskyy is now being bolstered by an unusual source: **Laura Loomer**, known primarily for her incendiary social media posts and her influence with the president.

Traveling through Ukraine, Loomer has witnessed Moscow's barrage firsthand and interviewed Zelenskyy while admitting she was "bamboozled by Russian propaganda."

Loomer said she spoke to Trump after she met with Zelenskyy in Ukraine last week, and she also expects to meet with the U.S. president once she returns from her trip.

"It's looking good for Ukraine, right?" Loomer said during an **interview with The Associated Press**. "Going into this meeting next week at the Oval Office is looking pretty good."

Ahead of the meeting, Zelenskyy has also warned that Russia has been aiding Iran as the war persists by capturing satellite imagery of U.S. bases in the Gulf region that later appear in Iran.

The Ukrainian president also asserted that there was a "clear correlation" between Russia's images and subsequent Iranian strikes.

"The purpose is clear," Zelenskyy said earlier this month. "None of us in the world should turn a blind eye to one very simple fact: Evil always seeks ways to make things worse and spread further."

On Monday, Trump downplayed any impact of potential Russian assistance for Iran.

"I don't think they've been doing it, certainly not at a high level," Trump told reporters on Air Force One as he traveled to Michigan. "And if they have, it has been very un-impactful."

Still, he said he would raise the issue with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Sanctions legislation

Zelenskyy has a busy itinerary during his latest visit to Washington. In addition to his White House meeting, Zelenskyy will head to the Capitol to meet with senators on Tuesday evening after Graham's funeral at Washington National Cathedral, according to a person with knowledge of the meeting who was not authorized to discuss it publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity.

Republican leadership is hoping to advance **Graham's sanctions legislation** this week, although the Senate is juggling several other priorities before lawmakers leave Washington for the August recess.

The bill has dozens of backers from both parties and is seen as the main policy tribute to Graham, who **died unexpectedly** this month from a tear in his aorta.

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The legislation also includes sanctions against Putin, senior Russian political and military leaders, and Russian financial institutions and energy projects.

Trump met with Zelenskyy on the sidelines of

the NATO summit earlier this month in Ankara, Turkey, and announced that the U.S. will give Ukraine a **license to make Patriot** air defense systems, a long-running request from Kyiv in order to counter Russian missile attacks.

The air defense systems are expensive to make and are in high demand. Noting that he and Zelenskyy have “actually developed a good relationship,” Trump said the U.S. will help Ukraine produce the Patriots and that the country would be able to produce them “pretty quickly.”