

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

September 10, 2024

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20500-0001

Dear President Biden,

Thank you for your Administration's steadfast support for Ukraine and its fight for liberty in the face of Vladimir Putin's illegal and unprovoked war of aggression. Your leadership has helped ensure that Russia's initial advances into Ukraine were stopped and inspired our indispensable NATO alliance to stand united with Ukraine in defense of freedom and democracy.

In that spirit of our shared commitment to the defense of Ukraine, we write to request that you immediately end your Administration's limitations on Ukraine's use of long-range weapons provided by the US and other NATO allies to strike legitimate military targets inside Russia. Unless these restrictions are lifted, Ukraine will continue to struggle to achieve victory in its fight to defend its sovereignty and its people. The Ukrainian people will continue to suffer unnecessary death, loss, and hardship as Russia capitalizes on this policy and escalates its bombardments across Ukraine.

Since Russian forces launched their full-scale invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022, the brave people of Ukraine have repeatedly demonstrated their ability to achieve incredible feats on the battlefield in defense of their nation. In the early months of the war, Putin and much of the world expected Russian forces to conquer Kyiv in a matter of days. Under President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's decisive leadership, Ukraine not only halted Russia's advances, but inflicted devastating losses from which the Russian armed forces will not recover for years. Then in the spring of 2023, Ukraine launched a counteroffensive that liberated over half of the territory that Russian forces illegally occupied.

By the summer of 2024, Ukraine was suffering from Russia's creeping advances in the Donetsk region. Despite this difficult operating environment and contrary to all expectations, Ukraine struck out on the offensive once again on August 6, 2024, when its forces crossed the border into Russia's Kursk Oblast. Ukraine's successful counteroffensive operation into Russia has changed the very nature of the war. The new offensive has also further demonstrated why the existing policy of limiting Ukraine's use of long-range weapons to strike inside of Russia is unsustainable and inconsistent with the realities of this war.

Many identifiable and relevant military targets on Russian soil are currently in striking distance of the long-range weapons provided by NATO countries. Because Russia knows that Ukraine is limited in its ability to strike these targets, it has been able to concentrate its defenses on the front line in Ukraine rather than on protecting the Russian rear. Ukraine was in part led to carry out its extremely risky campaign deep inside Russia so it could attack targets that long-range weapons like ATACMs could have struck from Ukrainian soil, were it not for the limitations on their use. Ukraine's operations in Kursk show that Russia is far too comfortable in its ability to focus on its offensive operations rather than on defending itself.

Furthermore, from Russia's perspective, Ukraine is already using US weapons to strike on Russian territory, as Moscow sees Crimea as inviolable Russian territory, and yet Ukraine repeatedly strikes it with ATACMs,

Storm Shadow missiles, and other Western-provided weapons. Additionally, using domestically sourced weaponry, Ukraine's long-range strikes against Russian airfields in the Volgograd, Voronezh, Kursk, Savasleyka, and Borisoglebsk regions have been bold, but remain less accurate and effective because of the Administration's policy. Ukraine has already called Russia's bluff.

Unleashing the precision and power of the more sophisticated long-range weapons will do more than just allow Ukraine to use the weapons it already has at its disposal to their full potential. Such counterstrikes will save lives by better reducing Russia's capabilities to conduct its murderous bombardments against civilian targets in Ukraine that have tragically come to define the war. It could prevent future attacks like that which struck the children's hospital in Kyiv on July 8, 2024, and killed 42 people, including 5 children, and injured 190 more or the September 3, 2024 strike in Poltava that killed at least 51, and injured over 200 people.

Furthermore, the restrictions on Ukraine's use of long-range weapons to attack targets inside of Russia are inconsistent with those that we would ever accept for our own operations or those we place on other security partners who use American weapons to defend their sovereignty and people, such as Israel. Despite a regrettable and costly pattern of hesitance to authorize the use of new assets Ukraine could use to win its war for liberty, including F-16s, ATACMs, or Abrams tanks, each were ultimately provided. However, delay in delivery of these capabilities is not without consequences, and have cost Ukraine precious time and priceless lives that it never should have had to spare.

Throughout this war, Ukraine has repeatedly proven that while Russia's military remains dangerous, it is all too often little more than a hollow façade of power against a properly equipped, determined, and innovative Ukrainian people — much like Putin's increasingly tyrannical regime. It is time that America and our NATO allies aspire not only to preventing Russia from prevailing, but to fully enable Ukraine to achieve victory on behalf of its courageous people. It is time that America and our NATO allies finally allow Ukraine to fight with its full potential. Ukraine can win this war, but only if fully supported by its security partners. Ukraine is not intimidated by Putin's tyranny, and in the defense of liberty, we should not be either.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter and we look forward to continuing to work closely with you and your Administration to ensure Ukraine can achieve swift and total victory against Russia.

Sincerely,



Marcy Kaptur
Member of Congress



Brian Fitzpatrick
Member of Congress



Mike Quigley
Member of Congress



Joe Wilson
Member of Congress



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



Roger Wicker
United States Senator



Dina Titus
Member of Congress



Jim Costa
Member of Congress



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



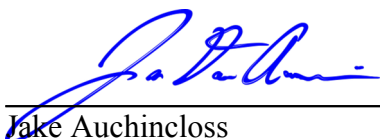
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Gabe Amo
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Sheldon Whitehouse
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Jake Auchincloss
Member of Congress



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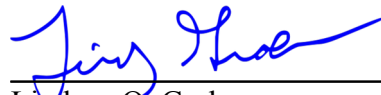
Charles E. Grassley
United States Senator



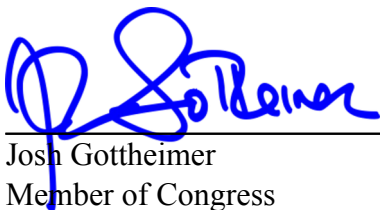
Rosa L. DeLauro
Member of Congress



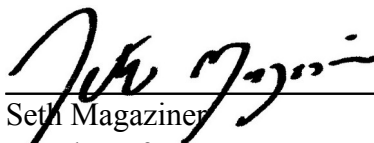
Mike Flood
Member of Congress



Lindsey O. Graham
United States Senator



Josh Gottheimer
Member of Congress



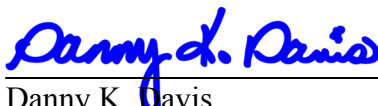
Seth Magaziner
Member of Congress



Martin Heinrich
United States Senator



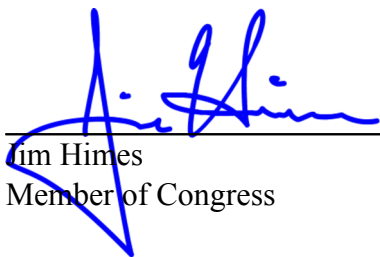
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Danny K. Davis
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Lloyd Doggett
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Jim Himes
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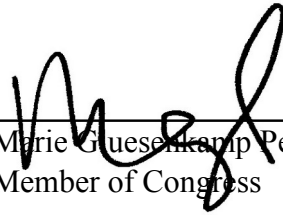
Adam B. Schiff
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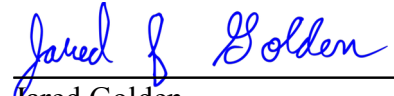
Bradley Scott Schneider
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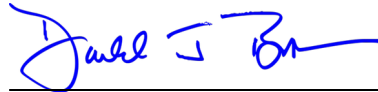
Marie Guesenken Perez
Member of Congress



Jared Golden
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Don Bacon
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CC:

The Honorable Antony J. Blinken, Secretary of State, U.S. Department of State

The Honorable Lloyd J. Austin III, Secretary of Defense, U.S. Department of Defense