

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 22, 2026

The Honorable Pete Hegseth
Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301

Dear Secretary Hegseth,

We write to follow up on bipartisan concerns recently expressed in Congressional hearings about seemingly stalled disbursement of key Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 defense appropriations. Specifically, we urge you to obligate Congressionally appropriated FY26 funds in Public Law 119-75 for Ukraine and the Baltic Security Initiative (BSI) without any further delay. These two specific allocations have strong and broad bipartisan Congressional support.

Ukraine has persistently and bravely repelled a four-year Russian onslaught, but its military needs and deserves continued American support. Maintaining Ukrainian capabilities and pressure are particularly timely as the Administration tries to negotiate an end to the war and amid increasing signs of a weakening Russian economy. Accordingly, the \$400 million in security assistance for Ukraine that was included in the FY26 defense appropriations bill should be disbursed immediately.

Similarly, Congress has repeatedly supported strong assistance for the Baltic States. These front-line NATO allies have a powerful memory of living under the Soviet yoke. They are consistently among the top NATO countries in terms of military spending as a percentage of GDP. They also are the targets of sustained Russian belligerence, threats, and sabotage. In fact, a Russian testing of NATO might very well start in the Baltics. As such, Congress appropriated \$200 million in the FY26 defense appropriations bill for the BSI, which was codified in the FY26 *National Defense Authorization Act* (Public Law 119-60), funds we similarly expect to be released without delay. We understand from recent testimony that there was a minor drafting error in the FY26 appropriations tables related to the Defense Security Cooperation Agency, and while that issue will be resolved, there is no reason to delay execution on the \$200 million for the BSI.

We urge you to swiftly obligate these Congressionally appropriated funds for Ukraine and the Baltics and request that you immediately provide a spend plan for execution, which was promised to Congress by May 15. Any further delays—particularly as the Department reportedly plans troubling U.S. troops withdrawals from the region—risks our ability to adequately deter Russia.

Thank you for your continued support of our partners and allies on the frontlines of democracy.

Sincerely,



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



Charles E. Grassley
United States Senator



Kevin Cramer
United States Senator



Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



Thom Tillis
United States Senator



Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator