

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 10, 2023

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chair
Senate Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Susan Collins
Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Majority Leader Schumer, Minority Leader McConnell, Chair Murray, and Vice Chair Collins:

We urge you to ensure that the final package for the national security supplemental includes the full \$10 billion in humanitarian assistance requested by the President, including for refugee and emergency food aid. This funding would roughly match U.S. emergency spending on humanitarian assistance appropriated since the beginning of Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, and would come at a time when global needs are only rising. Beyond the moral significance of continuing our country's tradition as the world's leader in delivering life-saving humanitarian aid, this assistance promotes global stability and security by helping manage and provide for displaced populations, preventing recruitment to extremism, and mitigating economic pressure on partner governments.

Without these funds, global efforts led by the United States to address ongoing and expanded crises in Sudan, Nagorno-Karabakh, Burma, Syria, and other humanitarian responses will suffer reductions in support. This would directly threaten U.S. national security and the security of our partners.

If these funds are not included, U.S. assistance for displaced Ukrainians could be reduced by as much as 75 percent. As you know, Ukrainians have valiantly fought against Vladimir Putin's unjust and unprovoked invasion of their country. To sustain their heroic struggle, Ukrainians not only need weapons and ammunition, but also basic humanitarian support for the families and communities they are fighting to defend. An estimated 16 million people in Ukraine and more than 6.3 million Ukrainian refugees in the region rely on humanitarian assistance.¹ While other donors have provided the majority of total humanitarian and economic assistance that has been delivered to Ukraine (roughly double U.S. support), U.S. leadership has been critical in this effort. We must continue to lead the way in ensuring aid reaches sick, wounded, and displaced Ukrainians suffering as a result of Putin's brutality.

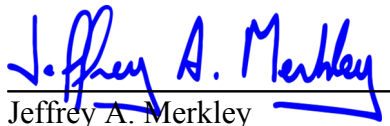
¹ OMB, *President's request for Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 emergency supplemental funding*, (October 20, 2023), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Letter-regarding-critical-national-security-funding-needs-for-FY-2024.pdf>


As supporters of a strong U.S.-Israel relationship, we believe Israel has the right and obligation to defend itself against Hamas – a terrorist organization whose horrific attacks on October 7 and long history of violence against Israelis and Palestinians make clear its total disregard for innocent human life. We also know from our country’s own experiences that protecting civilians and ensuring access to desperately needed food, water, medical care, and shelter for innocent civilians caught in the middle of conflict is critical for strategic success. Preventing Hamas from ever again threatening Israeli lives does not depend solely on Israel’s ability to degrade Hamas militarily. It also requires giving Palestinians hope for a better future, starting with making sure that humanitarian aid continuously reaches vulnerable civilians in Gaza. This is why the United States and our implementing partners, working closely with the Israeli government, undertake extensive oversight procedures so that U.S. assistance flows only to its intended recipients.

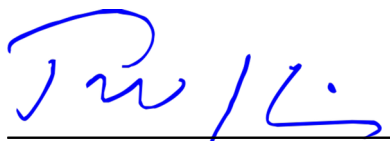
The ongoing conflicts in Europe and the Middle East have impacts beyond their borders. The proliferation of global crises is putting pressure on millions of innocent civilians who are bearing the brunt of the fighting, and key U.S. partners, including in Europe and the Middle East, continue to grapple with how to manage the outbreak of violence in their regions. These realities underscore the importance of the United States maintaining its indispensable leadership role in support of assistance that effectively responds to dire humanitarian needs and prevents further instability.


We thank you for your consideration of this important request.

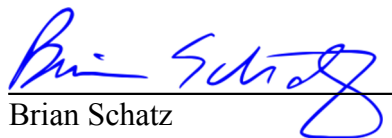
Sincerely,


Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator


Tim Kaine
United States Senator

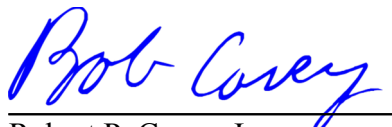

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United States Senator




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Alex Padilla
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United States Senator



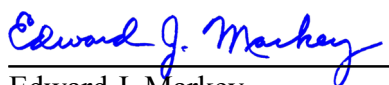
Raphael Warnock
United States Senator



Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator



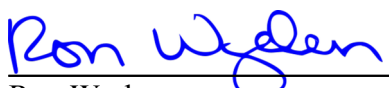
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United States Senator



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Tina Smith
United States Senator



Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator

/s/

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United States Senator

Mark R Warner

Mark R. Warner
United States Senator

Tammy Duckworth

Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator