

May 8, 2022

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Senate Majority Leader  
S-221, United States Capitol  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Senate Minority Leader  
S-230, United States Capitol  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader Schumer and Leader McConnell:

Russia's ongoing war has subjected the Ukrainian people to astounding violence and depravity. In full view of the international community, Russia has inflicted terror on the nation of Ukraine, taken countless lives, destroyed cities, committed atrocities against innocent Ukrainian populations, and triggered Europe's largest refugee crisis since World War II.

In response, the international community has mobilized unprecedented resources to support Ukraine in their fight, and has rallied to support the Government and people in Ukraine, as well as the more than 13.5 million<sup>1</sup> Ukrainians who have been driven from their homes.

The \$33 billion funding package that the Biden Administration has put forth for consideration by Congress is a significant proposal, and would fund critically needed resources and assistance for Ukraine. The \$20.4 billion in additional security and military assistance for Ukraine and the region comes on top of the already close to \$4 billion that the Administration has provided to Ukraine so far since Russia's invasion, and has been vital in aiding in Ukraine's defense. I have called for continued and rapid assistance in support of Ukraine's military, and our approval of this funding will be critical.

Additionally, the \$8.5 billion in economic assistance to aid in the Ukrainian government's efforts to support civil functions and Ukrainian businesses, and the \$3 billion in humanitarian assistance towards addressing desperate needs – including food security, both in Ukraine and internationally – add to the urgency in Congress's consideration of this bill.

I am concerned, however, that the proposed humanitarian portion of the funding does not meet the scale of need, in particular with regard to global food security. For that reason, I support –

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<sup>1</sup> International Organization for Migration, '*One in Six People Internally Displaced in Ukraine*'. <https://www.iom.int/news/one-six-people-internally-displaced-ukraine#:~:text=Geneva%20E2%80%93%20More%20than%20600%2C000%20additional,7.7%20million%2C%2017%20per%20cent> and UNHCR, Operational Data Portal. <http://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine>

and I urge my colleagues to support – an increase in funding for food assistance in this package to at least \$5 billion.

Even prior to Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, global hunger had reached dire levels. According to the *2022 Global Report on Food Crises*, published by the Global Network Against Food Crises, nearly 193 million people were experiencing food insecurity at crisis levels in 2021 – surpassing all prior records documented by the report<sup>2</sup>. In the countries that the report has identified as being consistently among the most concerning, food insecurity had nearly doubled over five years.

These global trends face alarming escalation the longer Russia wages war on Ukraine. Ukraine and Russia combine to produce roughly 30 percent of the world’s wheat exports<sup>3</sup>. According to the United Nations (UN), in the eight months that led up to the start of the war Ukraine alone had exported 50 million metric tonnes of grain. Ukrainian exports during that period fed nearly 400 million people<sup>4</sup>. With supply and export disruptions combining with rising fuel, fertilizer, and cooking oil prices, the World Food Program (WFP) cautions that close to 50 million new people will be driven to acute hunger – with sub-Saharan Africa being hit the hardest.

In Ukraine and in the surrounding region, the UN estimates that more than 10 million people are in desperate need of critical assistance, including food aid<sup>5</sup>. One-third of all Ukrainian households are facing food insecurity, with much of that concentrated on families who have been forced into refugee or internally displaced person status. Significant additional international food assistance is needed in Ukraine to prevent the hunger crisis from intensifying.

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and humanitarian groups have performed a critical function in responding to this crisis, by providing hot meals, food supplies, critical medical care, cash support, and other desperately needed assistance to the people of Ukraine. In addition to providing boosted funding to support the lifesaving efforts by these organizations, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) should take all appropriate steps to make these funds available to organizations with demonstrated success, as expeditiously as possible. USAID should be encouraged to provide this funding to an expanded partner base, utilizing the capacity of local organizations or those that work to activate local entities, as well as innovative and non-traditional partners. By working to quickly implement these funds based on ability to make, or continue to make, a proven impact on the ground – we can help ensure that these funds are having a maximized impact in aiding those most in need.

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<sup>2</sup> World Food Programme, ‘*Global Report on Food Crises – 2022*’. <https://www.wfp.org/publications/global-report-food-crises-2022#:~:text=The%202022%20Global%20Report%20on,economic%20shocks%2C%20and%20weather%20extremes>.

<sup>3</sup> Agricultural Market Information System, Market Monitor [http://www.amis-outlook.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/amis/docs/Market\\_monitor/AMIS\\_Market\\_Monitor\\_current.pdf](http://www.amis-outlook.org/fileadmin/user_upload/amis/docs/Market_monitor/AMIS_Market_Monitor_current.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> United Nations, ‘*WFP appeals for re-opening of Ukraine ports to avert looming famine threat*’. <https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/05/1117722>

<sup>5</sup> OCHA, ‘*WFP Ukraine and Neighboring Countries Situation Report #15, 1 May 2022*’ <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/wfp-ukraine-and-neighbouring-countries-situation-report-15-1-may-2022>

I appreciate your consideration of this request, and I look forward to continuing to work with you and our colleagues to support a strong and effective response to assist all those who are impacted by Russia's ongoing war in Ukraine.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark R. Warner". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mark R. Warner  
United States Senator