

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

March 29, 2022

Dear Secretary Austin and Secretary Blinken,

As Members of the Congress – particularly the California congressional delegation and Ukrainian Caucus – we write to express our deep admiration for the support provided to the Ukrainian Army, Air Force, and other parts of its military by the dedicated members of the California National Guard. We understand that since February 27, almost a dozen Guard members have been staffing a 24-7 operations center to respond in real-time to requests for equipment and supplies for their Ukrainian counterparts, as well as share information being passed on from Ukraine with the relevant U.S. military officials. We applaud Major General Baldwin’s initiative in creating this direct link between the groups and are confident it is providing invaluable information to European Command and other leaders supporting Ukrainians on the ground. We also have no doubt the training provided by the Guard through the State Partnership Program (SPP) over the past 29 years will help the Ukrainians successfully continue to counter Russia’s attacks and further advances into the country. We can think of no better validation of the important role the SPP plays in building trust and collaboration amongst our military partners.

As you know, the House and Senate recently passed the Ukraine Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2022, which provides a total of \$13.6 billion in emergency funding to support the Ukrainian people and defend global democracy in the wake of Russia’s unprovoked attack on Ukraine. This assistance is urgently needed. Estimates indicate more than 3.6 million Ukrainians have already fled from their homes to neighboring countries and Ukraine has already sustained well over \$100 billion dollars in damage. In the face of Russia’s indiscriminate attacks, a humanitarian and refugee crisis not seen in Europe since World War II is imminent. Citizens are unable to safely evacuate from many parts of the country and others are surrounded by Russian troops without their basic humanitarian needs being met. We believe the Guard’s existing relationship with Ukraine puts it in a unique position to play a role in supporting our humanitarian response.

To this point, the Guard’s response has only been possible as a result of a small amount of funding for staff provided by the State of California, and donations proactively solicited by the dedicated members of the Guard. We understand this has even included outreach to various state and local law enforcement agencies to collect any surplus body armor (body armor/helmets) to send to Ukraine. While we have the utmost confidence that the California National Guard is more than capable, willing, and able to do more, without the federal government taking key steps to activate the required authorities, they will be unable to expand their efforts. We urge you expediently take the following steps to provide the California National Guard, the Ohio National Guard and those of other states as requested or appropriate, to expedite the process to transport both military and humanitarian support to the people of Ukraine:

1. Immediately request approval of all the authorities necessary to allow the use of U.S. military aircraft to transport military equipment, medical supplies, and humanitarian support, both provided by the U.S. government as well as donations from private sources.
2. Initiate 10 U.S.C 12304b, which allows for the order of any unit of the Selected Reserve, without consent of the members, to active duty for no more than 365 consecutive days, in order to officially allocate the budget and personnel required to undertake this mission.
3. Establish a centralized office or point of contact with the requisite funding, within the California National Guard or other entity as deemed appropriate, to oversee airlift operations. This would include establishing an airlift corridor to the region (particularly Poland and Romania), creating a streamlined process for aircraft access, and developing regular flights schedules for rotating Guard transport of humanitarian assistance.
4. Streamline the application requirements and provide dedicated aircraft for the transport of humanitarian assistance donations collected by non-governmental organizations for the Denton Amendment Program (Title 10, U.S.C. Section 402), jointly administered by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Department of Defense (DOD) and the Department of State (DOS) in Ukraine. While we appreciate that this program is not designed to provide a nimble response during disaster or crisis response, this is an important, established tool that can be leveraged to provide support to refugees in the region during this time.

We are eager to work with you, Governor Newsom, Major General Baldwin, and all Guard members to find additional ways to support our Ukrainian military partners and provide humanitarian relief to those Ukrainians under threat and attack and stand ready to assist in any way we can. We stand ready to provide any support required from Washington and thank you for your close attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Adam B. Schiff  
Member of Congress



Sara Jacobs  
Member of Congress



Marcy Kaptur  
Member of Congress

Doug LaMalfa  
Member of Congress

Mike Levin  
Member of Congress

Ted W. Lieu  
Member of Congress

Mike Quigley  
Member of Congress

Eric Swalwell  
Member of Congress

Brad Sherman  
Member of Congress

Mike Thompson  
Member of Congress

Susan Wild  
Member of Congress

CC: General Daniel R. Hokanson, Chief, National Guard Bureau