



## CEEC Statement on National Security Supplemental Funding Bill

The Central and East European Coalition (CEEC), representing more than 20 million Americans of Central and Eastern European descent, reiterates its unequivocal support for the people of Ukraine and their ability to defend their territory. Russia's barbaric actions not only violate human rights and the American-led rules-based order, but they directly threaten America's national security interests. Congressional idleness when it comes to Ukraine funding is unacceptable. Every week we delay funding, Russia gains further advantages. Congress must pass the National Security Supplemental Funding bill immediately.

As the leader of the free world, acting in concert with our European partners, America cannot let our allies stand alone at this pivotal moment.

Russia is emboldened by our lack of coherent leadership. Russia garners support from the most corrupt countries in the world and continues to exhaust Ukraine's capacity to defend itself by launching some of the most extensive missile barrages seen in the entire war at the start of the 2024 New Year. This is done explicitly to exhaust Ukraine's supply of defensive military capacity, and deliberately targets civilians in the cold winter months. Without immediate passage of the supplemental, Ukraine will be less able to defend itself, hurting American interests.

The war is not just about Ukrainian territory. It is in our direct interest to support Ukraine, not only because it is waging a defensive war against a cruel aggressor. If Putin overtakes Ukraine, he will act on his repeated threats to Poland and the Baltic states. We would be obligated to expend far greater resources than proposed in the supplemental, including troops on the ground in territories covered by NATO's Article 5 protection.

Lt. Gen. Hodges (Ret.) echoes this claim. Russia "could cut the Baltic States off from the rest of the Alliance ... advancing by land through Poland" Hodges stated in recent remarks. The Supplemental could hinder the development of an 'axis of evil' as Putin is working closely with Iran, North Korea, and China to subvert American interests across the globe.

The CEEC recognizes that there are also domestic political priorities. However, it is said that one may not care much about foreign policy, but foreign policy will find a way to care about you. The CEEC calls upon Congress to protect our security and support Ukraine by passing the National Security Funding Supplemental immediately.

January 25, 2024

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