



COMPTROLLER

UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

1100 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1100

SEP 29 2023

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Leader Jeffries:

I write to express the Department of Defense's deep concern with the absence of security assistance funding for Ukraine in the continuing resolution (CR) being considered in the House, H.R. 5525, or any similar continuing resolution that might be proposed. The Department of Defense (DoD) is anxious to avoid a lapse in appropriations, but it is important that a CR protect our security interests and uphold our commitments and our values.

As you know, the Department has been providing vital security assistance to Ukraine since Russia's unprovoked invasion in February 2022, thanks to the bipartisan support of Congress. It is just as vital today that we continue that support.

Today, DoD has exhausted nearly all available security assistance funding for Ukraine. We are already out of funding for the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative, one of the two security assistance tools we have.

The other funding tool we need are those funds provided to replenish our military's inventories for the weapons and supplies we've provided to support Ukraine in their fight via drawdown. We have only \$1.6 billion remaining of the \$25.9 billion Congress has provided. We have already been forced to slow down the replenishment of our own forces to hedge against an uncertain funding future. Failure to replenish our military services on a timely basis could harm our military's readiness.

Without additional funding now, we would have to delay or curtail assistance to meet Ukraine's urgent requirements, including for air defense and ammunition that are critical and urgent now as Russia prepares to conduct a winter offensive and continues its bombardment of Ukrainian cities. For example, a lack of USAI funding now will delay contracting actions that could negatively impact the Department's ability to purchase essential additional 155mm artillery and critical munitions essential for the success of Ukraine's Armed Forces.

This ammunition is critical to sustaining Ukraine's Armed Forces, including for their ongoing counteroffensive. An inability to ensure timely procurement and deliveries could undermine essential Ukrainian operations to retake additional territory or defend against potential future Russian offensives.

It would also affect our ability to support Ukraine's land forces, including obstacle breaching equipment, sustainment of previously provided small Unmanned Aerial Systems, systems to detect, analyze, and locate adversary signals, and demolitions equipment. It would affect training, maintenance and sustainment of the equipment we have previously provided, exportability efforts, spare parts, and other activities to ensure the Ukrainian Armed Forces receive a full capability.

A funding cutoff would also send a negative signal to our defense industrial base, which we have asked to step up munitions production across the country, resulting in increased defense capacity and higher employment. We cannot afford to throw that progress away. In fact, we are counting on it to implement our National Defense Strategy. It is important to note that from workers supporting Stinger and AMRAAM manufacturing in Arizona to factories producing components for Patriot interceptors and GMLRS in Arkansas, this funding is strengthening the American economy and creating hundreds of new American jobs.

Some have suggested that the Department could still execute the mission and support Ukraine's needs if we were given permission to transfer funds from inside a short-term CR from our own needs to fund more security assistance. I want to be clear, the Department does not support that approach, which will create unacceptable risk to us. Under a CR, the Department will be operating at a level approximately \$25 billion below our budget request for FY2024, which was and is consistent with the Fiscal Responsibility Act funding levels.

The bottom line is we cannot sustain adequate levels of Ukraine assistance with transfer authority alone.

Delays to additional funding would also be perceived by Ukraine as a sign of wavering U.S. support and likely as a betrayal of our previous commitments. Allies and partners are also unlikely to sustain their increased level of support without clear, continuing U.S. leadership. As you know, Secretary Austin successfully engages over 50 nations every month to press for sustained support. It is crucial that the U.S. continues to lead this global coalition, and we need the resources to underwrite our leadership role.

The Department appreciates your leadership on this vital matter, and I am sending an identical letter to the Speaker of the House as well as the Senate Majority and Minority Leaders.



Michael McCord