

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 10, 2015

Senator Thad Cochran  
Chairman  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Room S128, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Barbara Mikulski  
Vice Chairwoman  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Room S128, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Cochran and Vice Chairwoman Mikulski,

We write today to request that the Appropriations Committee appropriate funding, consistent with the Ukraine Freedom Support Act of 2014 (H.R. 5859; P.L. 113-272), for the purpose of providing defensive weapons to Ukraine.

The Ukrainian people and their elected government are engaged in a desperate struggle to defend their country against better-armed Russian-backed separatists. Following the February 12, 2015, “Minsk II” ceasefire agreement, separatists—with support from the Kremlin—laid siege to the strategically important city of Debaltseve. There are concerns that the port city of Mariupol may be next.

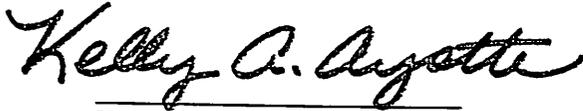
The flagrant violation of the February 12, 2015, ceasefire by President Putin-backed separatists requires a strong response from the United States and the West. On February 25, 2015, General Philip Breedlove, the Commander of Supreme Allied Command, Europe and U.S. European Command, said, “More than 1,000 pieces of Russian military equipment have been transferred into Ukraine, including tanks, armored personnel carriers, heavy artillery pieces and other military vehicles and equipment... These are not the actions of a good faith negotiating partner.”

There is growing bipartisan consensus within Congress, the administration, and among former officials—such as Zbigniew Brzezinski, Madeline Albright, and George Shultz—that the United States should provide defensive weapons to Ukraine. While these weapons would not allow Ukraine to outmatch the Russian military, they would enable Ukraine to better defend itself and increase the costs of President Putin’s aggression in Ukraine. By increasing costs for President Putin’s aggression, it would discourage future aggression in eastern Europe that could even more directly threaten U.S. national security interests.

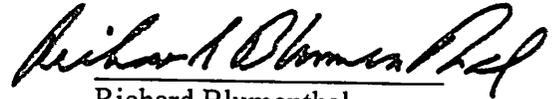
We fully support the authorization provided under the Ukraine Freedom Support Act to provide defensive weapons to the Government of Ukraine. Congress can send an important message to Ukraine, the Kremlin, and the world by appropriating the authorized funding in accordance with the law.

Thank you for your consideration of our request and for your leadership on the Senate Appropriations Committee.

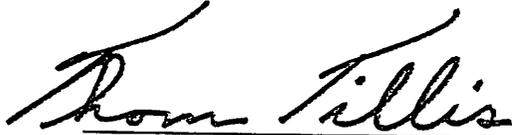
Sincerely,



Kelly A. Ayotte  
United States Senator



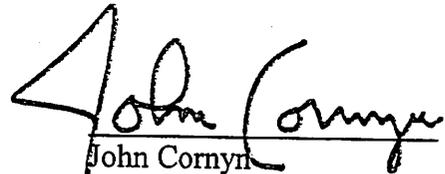
Richard Blumenthal  
United States Senator



Thom Tillis  
United States Senator

Sherrod Brown  
United States Senator

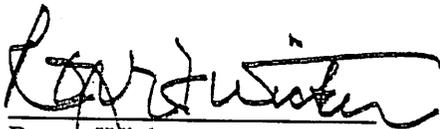
M. Michael Rounds  
United States Senator



John Cornyn  
United States Senator

Marco Rubio  
United States Senator

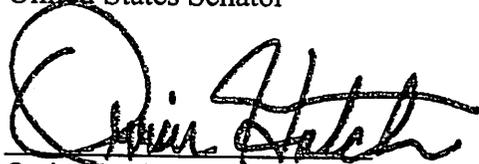
James Risch  
United States Senator



Roger Wicker  
United States Senator



Cory Gardner  
United States Senator



Orrin Hatch  
United States Senator



Johnny Isakson  
United States Senator



Dan Sullivan  
United States Senator