



**Ukrainian Congress Committee of America-Illinois Division  
2247 W. Chicago Avenue Chicago, IL 60622**

November 20, 2019

The Honorable Adam D. Kinsinger

U.S. Representative to the U.S. Congress – Illinois 16<sup>th</sup> Congressional District

628 Columbus Street Suite 507

Ottawa, IL 61350

1221 Longworth House Office Building

Washington, D.C. 20515

### **Appeal for continued bipartisan support of Ukraine in Congress**

Dear Congressman Kinsinger:

On behalf of the Ukrainian-American community in the state of Illinois, we want to thank you for your support of Ukraine and we appeal for your continued bipartisan support. The current depiction of Ukraine as a corrupt country is of great concern to us, as it does not present the full picture.

Ukraine broke free from Soviet control in 1991 and has been struggling to break from its past, building new institutions, educating its young generation, and ushering in a country independent from Russia. In 2013-2014, Ukrainians rose up and ousted a corrupt, pro-Russian dictator, insisting on their right to join Western institutions as the surest path to security and economic prosperity. The country that has risen since then is inclusive and democratic; freedom of speech and movement is the norm. Corruption remains a persistent problem, but one that the new government has pledged to curb. Since the Revolution of Dignity five years ago, corruption in the energy sector and in banks was significantly reduced. Ukraine's courts remain the fundamental challenge.

The United States has long viewed Ukraine as strategically important. Its location, its embrace of democracy, and its size as the largest European country by territory has made it the most important country defending Europe from Russian encroachment. Starting in 2014, Congress put sanctions on Russia for its invasion and occupation of Ukrainian territory and supported Ukraine through generous military and civilian assistance. Ukraine purchases weapons from the United States and has rebuilt a strong combat army that has staved off further Russian attacks. We urge you and encourage you to continue and increase this support.

Skeptics often ask why Ukraine matters to the United States. There are many answers. First, Ukraine gave away the world's third largest nuclear arsenal and its uranium stockpile in exchange for security guarantees from the United States, the United Kingdom and Russia in 1994. In other words, the United States is indebted to Ukraine. Second, Ukraine participates in all NATO peacekeeping operations and has spent more than 5 percent of its GDP on defense since the war started. Third, the United States has long supported the right of self-determination and Kyiv's fight for freedom is just that. Fourth, Ukraine is a US partner in energy security and cooperation. Fifth, Ukraine has much to offer the United States and international investors. Historically known as the "breadbasket of Europe," Ukraine is set to become the "food basket" of the world. Ukraine fully cooperates with the United States in hi-tech, space exploration, and defense joint production. Plus, Ukraine is the number one software engineering force in Central and Eastern Europe and the third global IT outsourcing hub.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, nearly two million Ukrainian-Americans live in the United States. We pay taxes and vote in support of American interests and Ukraine's freedom.

We are grateful for Congress's overwhelming bipartisan support of Ukraine in the face of Russian aggression and hope that your support will continue.

Sincerely,

*Ihor Diaczun*

Ihor Diaczun, President



Marta Farion, Vice-President

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