



RICHARD NEIFELD <[REDACTED]>

Reply from Senator Kaine

1 message

U.S. Senator Kaine <senator@kaine.senate.gov>

Mon, Jun 12, 2023 at 3:48 PM

To: [REDACTED]

TIM KAINE
VIRGINIACOMMITTEE ON
ARMED SERVICESCOMMITTEE ON
FOREIGN RELATIONSCOMMITTEE ON
THE BUDGETCOMMITTEE ON
HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR,
AND PENSIONS**United States Senate**
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4607WASHINGTON OFFICE:
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4607
(202) 224-4024

June 12, 2023

Mr. Richard Alan Neifeld

Fairfax, VA [REDACTED]

Dear Mr. Neifeld:

Thank you for contacting me about Ukraine. I appreciate hearing from you.

For years, Russian President Vladimir Putin has sought to destabilize Ukraine by continually violating the country's territorial integrity and attacking its people. In 2014, he launched Russia's initial invasion of Ukraine, illegally annexing the southern peninsula of Crimea and backing separatist forces in eastern Ukraine. In October 2021, Russia began moving thousands of troops and military equipment towards its border with Ukraine. Putin then launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022.

Russia's decision to attack Ukraine – without justification and against international law – is an unacceptable affront to Ukraine's sovereignty and to democracies everywhere. This is a crisis of Putin's own making. The United States and the international community offered Putin every opportunity to de-escalate diplomatically. Instead, he chose a path of conflict, at the cost of thousands of Ukrainian and Russian lives.

Putin's invasion has led to the most serious humanitarian crisis in Europe in decades and threatens to plunge the continent into instability. To date, hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians have been displaced within Ukraine, and millions of refugees have fled the country, as Russian attacks have targeted highly populated areas and civilians. The ongoing violence is likely to increase the death toll in Ukraine and lead to even more displacement and migration.

On February 28, 2022, I called on the International Criminal Court (ICC) to open an investigation into Putin's actions and Russia's invasion of Ukraine. I was pleased to see the ICC ultimately do so. This could allow Putin and other Russians to be held responsible for war crimes and crimes against humanity like deliberately attacking civilians. While this investigation will not shame Putin, it will make many Russians ashamed of Putin.

The United States, NATO, and our partners worldwide have united to ensure Putin is held accountable for his assault on the Ukrainian people. The Biden-Harris Administration – in concert with Western allies – has levied massive and devastating sanctions on Moscow’s banking, technology, and defense industries. The U.S. and its allies have also barred major Russian banks from the SWIFT international payment system and imposed sanctions on an array of Russian and Belarusian individuals who continue to support Putin, working to ensure that those complicit in Putin’s war crimes will also face serious penalties.

As Ukrainians fight to protect their country’s democracy, it is important that the U.S. continue to provide robust assistance to support them in this effort. The U.S. has been the leading provider of assistance to Ukraine since Russia’s February 2022 invasion. In March 2022, I was proud to vote for \$14 billion in humanitarian, military, and economic assistance to Ukraine included in the Fiscal Year 2022 omnibus appropriations bill. This funding was critical to showing Putin that the U.S. will not waver in its support for an independent and democratic Ukraine. I also joined a bipartisan group of Senate colleagues in urging the Biden-Harris Administration to grant Temporary Protected Status to Ukrainians in the United States following Russia’s invasion, which the Administration formally agreed to implement on March 3, 2022.

On March 8, 2022, I cosponsored the bipartisan Ban Russian Energy Import Act, legislation that would ban the import of Russian energy into the United States. I was pleased to see President Biden formally announce a U.S. ban on imports of Russian oil that same day. Although Russian crude oil only comprises about 3% of total U.S. crude oil imports each year, it is important that the U.S. not contribute in any way to financing Russia’s unprovoked war against Ukraine. I will continue to support efforts that strengthen U.S. energy independence and work to mitigate the impact of the Russian invasion on the American people, including with regard to lowering gas prices. On May 19, 2022, I voted to support a \$40 billion humanitarian and military aid package for Ukraine. This package includes economic and military support for Ukraine, funding for U.S. military forces deployed to Europe, and assistance for refugees and emergency food aid. In September 2022, I was proud to support the passage of the stopgap government funding bill, which includes \$12 billion in aid for Ukraine. Since the beginning of the Biden-Harris Administration, the United States has provided almost \$75 billion in security and military assistance to Ukraine. This aid has supplied Ukraine with additional weapons and equipment to protect itself.

On September 23, 2022, I joined Senators Marco Rubio and Dick Durbin in introducing the bipartisan Non-Recognition of Russian Annexation of Ukrainian Territory Act, S. 4937. This bill prohibits the U.S. from formally recognizing Russian claims of sovereignty over any portion of the internationally recognized territory of Ukraine. This legislation was included in the Fiscal Year 2023 (FY23) National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), which was signed into law on December 23, 2022.

In December 2022, I was proud to support the passage of the FY23 government spending bill, which appropriated an additional \$45 billion in assistance to Ukraine, and the FY23 NDAA, which authorized \$800 million for the Ukraine Security Initiative. On February 16, 2023, I joined Senators Jim Risch and Ben Cardin in reintroducing S.Res.72, a resolution recognizing violent Russian actions in Ukraine as a genocide against the people of Ukraine. I will continue to support efforts that condemn the atrocious acts committed by Russian forces in Ukraine.

In February 2023, just before the first anniversary of the invasion, President Biden traveled to Kyiv to meet with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and promised additional security assistance for Ukraine. President Biden also called for a global recommitment to Ukraine, and declared that Russia has committed crimes against humanity in Ukraine.

In March 2023, I joined Senator Mark Kelly’s bipartisan letter asking Pentagon officials to consider providing Ukraine with F-16 jets. This could give Ukraine a significant advantage on the battlefield. I will continue to support strategic efforts to provide Ukraine with resources that will be useful for Ukrainian soldiers.

The United States’ commitment to Ukraine is firm and has the steadfast, bipartisan support of Congress. The U.S., NATO, and the entire international community continue to demonstrate that Putin’s barbaric and unjust invasion of Ukraine will not go unaddressed. As a member of the Senate Armed Services and Foreign Relations Committees, I will keep your views in mind and continue working to strengthen U.S. support for the Ukrainian people’s struggle for a free and democratic nation.

Thank you again for contacting me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "TK / Kaine". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Tim Kaine