

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3203

November 26, 2023

Dear Colleague:

I hope you enjoyed a happy Thanksgiving with your family and friends. As we enter the last weeks of the 2023 Senate Session, I want to give you an update on the tasks the Senate must work to complete before we close out this year.

As you know, Congress passed the bipartisan Continuing Resolution shortly before Thanksgiving. Over the past week, there have been ongoing discussions to ensure Congress is well-positioned to finish full-year funding bills early next year. The Senate and House must continue to work in a bipartisan, bicameral fashion so that we can complete the first tranche of appropriations bills, Agriculture, Energy and Water, MilCon-VA, and Transportation-HUD, before the January 19 deadline.

Of course, there are other bipartisan priorities we must address before the end of the year, including national security supplemental funding, NDAA, and military promotions, among others. Senators should be prepared to stay in Washington until we finish our work.

One of the most important tasks we must finish is taking up and passing a funding bill to ensure we as well as our friends and partners in Ukraine, Israel, and the Indo-Pacific region have the necessary military capabilities to confront and deter our adversaries and competitors. It's also critical that we provide humanitarian assistance for innocent Palestinian civilians who have nothing to do with Hamas. These national security priorities are interrelated and demand bipartisan Congressional action.

That's why I intend to bring the President's national security supplemental package to the floor as soon as the week of December 4th. The biggest holdup to the national security assistance package right now is the insistence by our Republican colleagues on partisan border policy as a condition for vital Ukraine aid. This has injected a decades old, hyper-partisan issue into overwhelmingly bipartisan priorities. Democrats stand ready to work on common-sense solutions to address immigration, but purely partisan hard-right demands, like those in H.R. 2, jeopardize the entire national security supplemental package.

Negotiations between Democrats and Republicans have continued through the Thanksgiving holiday. We will need bipartisan cooperation and compromise to achieve a reasonable, realistic agreement that both sides can support. I urge you to engage with our Republican colleagues quickly to help push for a bipartisan path forward in the coming weeks.

Remember what President Zelenskyy told us in the Old Senate Chamber when he addressed Senators in September, "If we don't get the aid, we will lose the war." Nothing would make autocrats like Putin or Xi happier right now than to see the United States waver in our

support for the Ukrainian people and its military. This is not just about Ukrainian or Transatlantic security, it's about American security as well because an unchecked Putin would be an emboldened Putin.

To update Senators on the situation in Ukraine, there will be an all-Senators classified briefing in the coming days. I urge every Senator to attend.

The decisions we will have to make in the coming weeks on the aid package could determine the trajectory of democracy and the resilience of the transatlantic alliance for a generation. Giving Putin and Xi what they want would be a terrible, terrible mistake, and one that would come back to haunt us. The Senate must once again rise to the occasion and meet the historic moment. We cannot let partisan politics get in the way of defending democracy; that would be playing right into the hands of Putin and Xi.

In the coming weeks we must also confront the brazen and reckless blockade of military promotions, another area where extreme and unprecedented obstruction by a single Republican Senator has eroded centuries of Senate norms and injected extreme partisanship into what has long been a bipartisan process. The Rules Committee has acted on a resolution that would allow the Senate to quickly confirm the more than 350 military nominations being blocked by Senator Tuberville. In the coming weeks, I will bring this resolution to the floor so we can swiftly confirm the hundreds of highly qualified and dedicated military leaders being held up by Senator Tuberville before the end of the year.

Also this work period, we will complete our work on the bipartisan National Defense Authorization Act. I thank Armed Services Committee Chairman Jack Reed and the members of the committee for their leadership and hard work. While a number of outstanding issues remain, once a final agreement has been reached, I will work with Speaker Johnson, Leader McConnell, and Leader Jeffries to pass the NDAA before the end of the year.

Finally, this coming week, the Senate will continue working to confirm President Biden's diverse and experienced nominees and add more of those nominees to the federal bench.

We have a lot that the Senate must get done before the end of the year. Just as we have done all year, it will take bipartisan cooperation to move these bills through the Senate. Senators should expect long days and nights, and potentially weekends in December. I will share additional information about the upcoming schedule at our lunch on Tuesday.

I look forward to seeing you this week.

Sincerely,



Charles E. Schumer
United States Senator