



**UNITED STATES COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE  
(U.S. HELSINKI COMMISSION)**

**Hearing on “Protecting Ukrainian Refugees:  
U.S. Policy and Visa Issuance”  
Wednesday, May 25, 2022  
2:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.  
Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Room 562**

**Senator Roger Wicker, Ranking Member**

Let me join Chairman Cardin in welcoming our witnesses and for the opportunity to discuss how we can strengthen our support for Ukrainian refugees.

In March, I joined several of my Senate colleagues on a visit to the Polish border with Ukraine. We witnessed thousands of people fleeing their homeland for the safety of countries that would take them in.

We were able to speak with these refugees, meet with aid workers and Polish authorities, and even help serve meals.

Since then, millions more have fled from Ukraine to Poland and other frontline states seeking safety from Russia’s bloody, unprovoked war and the gross atrocities being perpetrated there. Most of the refugees are women and children.

I left the Ukrainian border convinced that it will take a sustained and intensified effort from the United States and the West to stop Vladimir Putin. We must remain steadfast in supporting our allies.

In the meantime, Poland has stepped up to meet this historic refugee crisis by opening its borders and offering housing and social support. Ambassador

Magierowski, I want to thank your country for all it has done – both your government and the people of Poland.

The United States needs to keep up the pressure on Russia to stop its invasion and to support displaced Ukrainian civilians.

Last week, the Senate passed a \$40 billion aid package for Ukraine. The Administration also established a new program that allows Americans to sponsor Ukrainians to come to the United States. As we continue providing defense and humanitarian aid, we need to make sure we are coordinating closely with our European allies. We should also look at our visa programs to ensure there are clear paths for Ukrainian refugees to come to America – and that any American who wants to host Ukrainian refugees knows how to do so.

I look forward to hearing from our witnesses on how they believe the United States can best support these displaced populations.