

Rep. Joe Wilson, *South Carolina*  
Chairman

Sen. Benjamin L. Cardin, *Maryland*  
Co-Chairman



June 16, 2023

Dear President Biden,

In the face of Russia's wanton aggression, we ask that you work with our NATO allies to ensure Ukraine receives a concrete and achievable pathway to NATO membership at the upcoming NATO Summit.

Next month, leaders from the 31 member states of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization will gather in Vilnius, Lithuania for what should be the most momentous summit for NATO since the end of the Cold War. The 2022 NATO Summit in Madrid was a critical moment to forge Alliance unity in the face of Russia's full-scale war of aggression against Ukraine and the very idea of a Europe whole, free, and at peace. However, this year's summit challenges the Atlantic Alliance to lay the crucial groundwork for restoring that peace, expanding it, and establishing fresh mechanisms to enforce it. It is in that spirit that we urge that the United States should take a forward leaning position in Vilnius and beyond to ensure Ukraine has a concrete, near-term path to NATO membership as soon as conditions allow.

Ukraine's recovery and Europe's long-term security depend on our efforts during this moment. Russia could continue to be a threat to Ukraine, a disaster for European peace, and a challenge to U.S. interests around the world. Counting Ukraine as an Ally is also squarely in the Alliance's self-interest: Ukraine in NATO will be a premier military power and the only European state to have faced Russian forces on the field since the end of the Cold War—and won. Ukrainian membership will also be a powerful expression of our shared values and solidarity with a democratic, open society that has demonstrated remarkable resilience in the face of the unendurable.

It is clear that forward progress on Ukraine's integration into NATO will not happen without U.S. leadership. Even if establishing a date for Ukraine's accession may be beyond the reach of this Summit, a clear and achievable pathway to membership, alongside robust security commitments until accession occurs, is the minimum outcome we should expect from the meeting in Vilnius. We urge you to ensure the Alliance's upcoming Summit truly meets the demands of this fraught moment and lays the foundation for a more peaceful, prosperous, and secure Europe.

Sincerely,

Joe Wilson  
Member of Congress  
Chairman, Helsinki Commission

Steve Cohen  
Member of Congress  
House Ranking Member, Helsinki Commission

Richard Blumenthal  
United States Senator  
Commissioner, Helsinki Commission

Sheldon Whitehouse  
United States Senator  
Commissioner, Helsinki Commission



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Mike Lawler  
Member of Congress  
Commissioner, Helsinki Commission



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Richard Hudson  
Member of Congress  
Commissioner, Helsinki Commission



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Lloyd Doggett  
Member of Congress



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Lindsay Graham  
United States Senator



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Mike Quigley  
Member of Congress



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Marcy Kaptur  
Member of Congress



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Brian Fitzpatrick  
Member of Congress



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Thomas H. Kean, Jr.  
Member of Congress.



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Sheila Jackson Lee  
Member of Congress