

United States Senate

September 9, 2022

The Honorable Samantha Power
Administrator
U.S. Agency for International Development
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Ambassador Power,

Russia's war in Ukraine continues to inflict terrible harm on the Ukrainian people, the region, and beyond. American safety and prosperity are threatened when lawless authoritarians cannot be dissuaded from waging an unjust war on an American partner. Despite assessments that Ukraine would fall to Russian forces within 72 hours, Ukrainian resistance, backed by American and coalition weapons, continues to hold. The United States has provided tens of billions of dollars across multiple funding packages to help Ukraine defeat Vladimir Putin, prevent massive humanitarian harm, and mitigate a global food crisis. We are worried, however, that the American people's generosity is not being properly and swiftly used to help Ukraine. These extraordinary Congressional appropriations must be quickly and effectively mobilized to address the unfolding crisis.

The delivery of humanitarian aid is of particular concern. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) was appropriated approximately \$7 billion dollars in humanitarian aid dollars across two supplemental aid packages. However, as of September, USAID has obligated only 73.78% of the first Ukraine supplemental package and 50.03% of the second package; over \$2.8 billion remains un-obligated. While USAID has made positive progress in recent months on the speed of committing and obligating these aid dollars, more needs to be done. Issues arising from the slowness of obligation and over-reliance upon UN agencies have been compounded by the fact that USAID only has the equivalent of four and a half full-time contracting officers overseeing billions of taxpayer dollars through the Bureau of Humanitarian Assistance (BHA). Repeated, bipartisan calls for the Department of State and USAID to onboard new nongovernmental organization partners, fast-track the delivery of food aid, and augment BHA's contracting capacity have remained unanswered.

Supporting Ukrainians as they fight to expel Russia from their territory, averting a global humanitarian crisis, and preventing mass starvation are all urgent missions, and Congress has stepped up to the plate by providing billions of dollars in emergency funding. The fiscal and programmatic effectiveness of the U.S. response must improve.

Therefore, we request detailed information on the following:

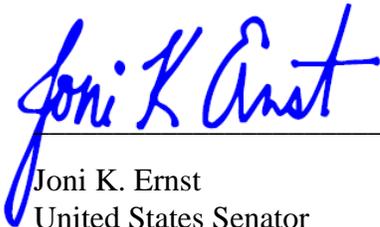
1. A detailed strategy to expediently fully obligate all existing humanitarian assistance made available by Division N of the *Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2022* (P.L. 117-103) and the *Additional Ukraine Supplemental Appropriations Act* (PL 117-128), with the exception of not more than 25 percent of total FY2022 appropriations for International Disaster Assistance which, consistent with prior years, is required to

cover contingencies that may arise during the first quarter of FY2023 in the absence of a full-year appropriation.

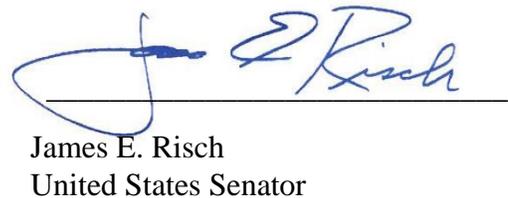
2. A staffing plan produced by USAID's Bureau of Management that aligns the Bureau's contracting officers and their warrant size to each Bureau's workload requirements.

The undersigned senators will ensure that every dollar appropriated by Congress through these emergency supplemental packages is put to work to protect our vital national security interests. This includes continued oversight to ensure that the appropriated aid is effectively and speedily delivered to mitigate the global humanitarian crisis.

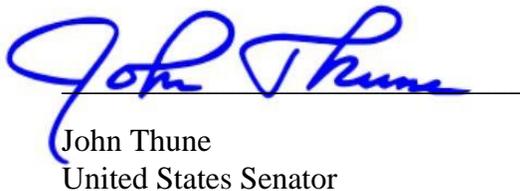
Sincerely,



Joni K. Ernst
United States Senator



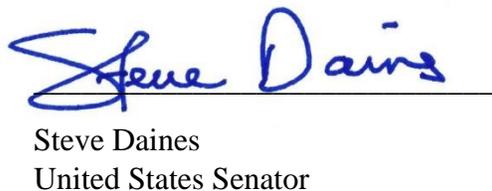
James E. Risch
United States Senator



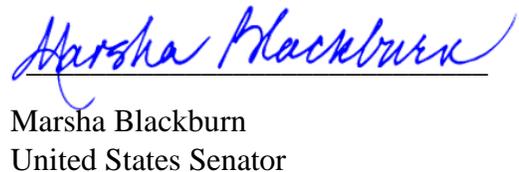
John Thune
United States Senator



Charles E. Grassley
United States Senator



Steve Daines
United States Senator



Marsha Blackburn
United States Senator



Shelley Moore Capito
United States Senator