

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 4, 2025

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington DC, 20500

Dear President Trump:

Vladimir Putin is a ruthless dictator who has led the Russian Federation into a war of aggression against Ukraine with the explicit goal of denying Ukraine and its people their collective rights to independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity. Our country, in coordination with our allies and partners and with bipartisan support has imposed sweeping financial sanctions, stringent export controls, and aggressive trade restrictions on the Russian Federation.

In April 2022, Democrats and Republicans in Congress passed two significant pieces of bipartisan legislation: the *Suspending Normal Trade Relations with Russia and Belarus Act* (Pub. L. 117-110) and the *Ending Importation of Russian Oil Act* (Pub. L. 117-109). The former revoked Russia's permanent normal trade relations (PNTR) status to ensure Russian goods and services do not enjoy privileged, "most-favored nation" access to the U.S. market, and the latter banned the importation of all energy products from the Russian Federation. Both laws recognize that the Russian Federation's exportation of goods, particularly in the energy sector, is central to its ability to wage its war of aggression on Ukraine.

The language in these laws is clear. Though they provide the President the ability to restore normal trade relations and lift the import ban on Russian energy products, respectively, Congress purposefully set a high bar for these actions. Specifically, Congress mandated that the Russian Federation must: reach an agreement relating to the withdrawal of its forces and cessation of military hostilities that is accepted by the free and independent government of Ukraine; recognize the right of the people of Ukraine to independently and freely choose their own government; and pose no immediate military threat of aggression to any North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) member.

We will not allow you to usurp congressional authority. Over the past few weeks, you have made baseless claims that show a fundamental misunderstanding of this conflict. You have erroneously claimed that Ukraine "should have never started [the war]", despite the fact that there is no doubt that Russia's army crossed Ukraine's border in February 2022 and illegally annexed Crimea nearly a decade prior. You have called Ukraine's democratically-elected president a "dictator", while praising Russia's dictator as "a very smart guy." And last week you staged a press conference in an attempt to publicly coerce Ukraine to accept peace under Russia-dictated terms.

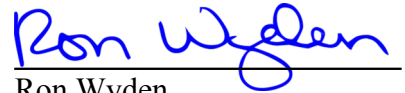
In light of your worrisome statements, we wish to remind you that you must not—and cannot, under statute—attempt to restore normal trade relations or lift the import ban on Russian energy products unless and until Ukraine’s peace demands are met and their free and independent government has accepted a peace agreement. Ukraine must be at the table to determine its future, and conditions for peace cannot be imposed on Ukraine.

We will be unwavering in our support for a secure, democratic, and sovereign Ukraine, free to choose its own leaders and make its own future. We encourage you to do the same.

Sincerely,



Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



Jacky Rosen
United States Senator



Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



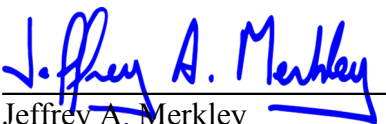
Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



Raphael Warnock
United States Senator



Peter Welch
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



Gary C. Peters
United States Senator