



Written by [Veronika Kyrylenko](#) on May 17, 2022

Senate Advances \$40B Aid Package for Ukraine

The United States got one step closer to sending more than \$40 billion — or roughly one percent of the entire U.S. federal budget — to the Zelensky regime in Ukraine when the U.S. Senate supported a motion to initiate debate on a bill formally known as the Additional Ukraine Supplemental Appropriation Act 2022.

The motion got 81 votes, and since the legislation is proceeding under standard Senate rules, at least 60 votes were needed to overcome a Republican filibuster. Thirty-seven Republicans voted with Democrats, eight abstained, and 11 Senators opposed the funding.

The senators who voted against the package were Marsha Blackburn (R-Tenn.), John Boozman (R-Ark.), Mike Braun (R-Ind.), Mike Crapo (R-Id.), Bill Hagerty (R-Tenn.), Josh Hawley (R-Mo.), Mike Lee (R-Utah), Cynthia Lummis (R-Wy.), Roger Marshall (R-Kan.), Rand Paul (R-Ky.), and Tommy Tuberville (R-Ala.).

The 11 senators criticized the Biden administration's wasteful spending at a time when the American economy is in shambles and Americans are struggling to make ends meet.

"Spending \$40 billion on Ukraine aid — more than three times what all of Europe has spent combined — is not in America's interests. It neglects priorities at home (the border), allows Europe to freeload, short changes critical interests abroad and comes w/ no meaningful oversight," [tweeted](#) Senator Hawley.

Last week, the package of military and humanitarian assistance was [held up by Senator Paul](#), who argued that "we cannot save Ukraine by dooming the U.S. economy."

Reminding the public that his "oath of office is to the U.S. Constitution, not to any foreign nation," Paul contended that the United States doesn't always need to be "the policeman that saves the world, particularly when it is on borrowed money."

However, instead of rejecting the bill in its entirety, the senator proposed amending it to allow for a special inspector general to oversee how the money is spent.

While Paul insisted on the provision written into the legislation itself, Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) and Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) made a rare joint offer to allow an amendment vote on the language Paul sought.

The vote comes on the heels of McConnell and three other senators — Susan Collins (R-Maine), John Cornyn (R-Texas), and John Barrasso (R-Wy.) — [paying a surprise visit](#) to President Volodymyr Zelensky in Kyiv this past Saturday.

During the trip, McConnell [seemingly downplayed](#) the opposition among his own party to the massive



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“aid package” to Ukraine. He said, for example, that it had “broad bipartisan support,” including from “an overwhelming majority of Republicans.” McConnell portrayed those opposing the bill as “isolationists” who wouldn’t affect the final decision.

The U.S. House voted 368-57 last Tuesday to approve the measure. All Democrats and most Republicans backed it, with 75 Republicans voting “no.”

One may wonder where all the money will go to. According to the House Appropriations Committee [summary of the bill](#), the spending bill includes provisions that aim to cover the cost of the war in Ukraine but also support “friendly” European nations and cover the expenses of U.S. federal bodies involved in supporting Ukraine.

Ukraine and Europe

- \$6 billion for the so-called Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative, which allows the Department of Defense to purchase weapons and other military services for Ukraine;
- \$8.8 billion for the Economic Support Fund to respond to emerging needs in Ukraine
- \$1 billion to help settle Ukraine’s refugees in the U.S. and Europe
- \$5 billion to address food shortages around the world caused by the war;
- \$3.9 billion for the mission and intelligence support of European Command Operations. The bill also increases the cap on assistance that can be provided to friendly foreign nations from \$450 million to \$950 million;
- \$500 million to support Ukraine’s economic and energy needs through the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

The bill includes \$11 billion to provide equipment to Ukraine and other regional allies, if needed.

The United States (some overlap with above items)

- \$13.926 billion for numerous missions of the Department of State, including, among others, \$4 billion for the Foreign Military Financing Program to “provide additional support for Ukraine and countries affected by the situation in Ukraine” and \$8.766 billion for the Economic Support Fund to “respond to emergent needs in Ukraine, provide needed budget support to assist with Ukraine’s continuity of government”;
- \$9.06 billion to replenish U.S. equipment stocks already sent to Ukraine;
- \$4.365 billion for the U.S. Agency of International Development (USAID), the vast majority of which would be used “to provide emergency food assistance to people around the world suffering from hunger as a result of the conflict in Ukraine” and other humanitarian needs;
- \$600 million for the Defense Production Act;
- \$67 million for the Department of Justice to seize, retain, and sell forfeited property from Russian oligarchs (e.g., yachts);
- \$52 million for the Department of Treasury to trace Russian financial activity related to the war;
- \$54 million for the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to provide medical support, screening, and related public health activities for arrivals and refugees from Ukraine.

The new legislation, set to be voted upon on Wednesday, would bring American support of Ukraine to nearly \$54 billion, including the \$13.6 billion in support Congress enacted in March, according to a January report by the Congressional Research Service cited by [USNews.com](#). This is roughly \$6 billion more than the U.S. spent on all foreign and military aid in 2019.

Back in April, President Biden asked Congress to approve \$33 billion in funding to aid Ukraine. The



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U.S. House has increased the funding by \$7 billion.



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