



## White House Suggests Reducing Financial Aid to Ukraine

Published documents on October 20 have revealed that the \$105 billion funding request President Joe Biden made to Congress would have America's monthly subsidy to the regime in Kyiv reduced to \$825 million.

In his speech on October 19, Biden stated that U.S. aid to Ukraine would be linked to funding for Israel, Taiwan, and the U.S. border, voicing hopes that such a package would obtain bipartisan support in Congress. Bloomberg, citing an unnamed source, reported last Tuesday that details of the bill "are still being worked out," but that the bill would entail the entire fiscal year, which ends in October 2024. The previous Ukraine aid request, which contributed to the deposition of erstwhile House Speaker Kevin McCarthy this month, was for \$24 billion and covered only three months.



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Based on the 69-page [proposal](#) the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) sent to the acting speaker of the house, Patrick McHenry, Ukraine aid would amount to \$61.4 billion while Israel would get \$10.6 billion.

Moreover, the document also divulged that the United States has been sending \$1.1 billion monthly to Ukraine under the Economic Support Fund program, enabling the Kyiv regime to pay government employees.

"This request provides a glidepath from \$1.1 billion per month in direct budget support to \$825 million per month," for a total of \$11.775 billion, the OMB request stated. These numbers are according to the latest International Monetary Fund (IMF) estimates of Ukraine's 2024 budget and US "assumptions of robust burden sharing by the EU, Japan, and other donors."

Supporting Kyiv was crucial, as Russia "is explicitly seeking to ensure that Ukraine's economy collapses in order to secure Ukraine's surrender," the OMB letter claimed, adding that money would be provided "through the World Bank as reimbursements for authorized and verified expenditures to the Government of Ukraine in line with the current conditionality framework" developed by the United States.

Congressional action was necessary "to ensure that we can continue to meet Ukraine's battlefield needs and protect its people," as the funding hitherto authorized by Congress "has nearly run out," National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan told reporters in a conference call October 20.

Since October 3, when Kevin McCarthy was ousted reportedly over clinching a clandestine deal on Ukraine funding with the White House, the House of Representatives has been without a speaker.



Written by [Angeline Tan](#) on October 23, 2023

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Meanwhile, over in Ukraine, the Kyiv regime on October 19 gave the greenlight in the first reading a bill meant to forbid organizations linked to Russia.

Bill 8371 has been broadly interpreted to be targeting the country's canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church even without explicitly stating so. Officially, the bill would outlaw the activities of "religious organizations associated with Russia."

Among the 404 active members of Ukraine's Verkhovna Rada, 267 voted in favor of the bill, with 15 against and two abstentions.

The government of President Volodymyr Zelensky deems the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (UOC) to fit the outline of the bill, as the UOC is in communion with the Moscow Patriarchate of the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC).

Notably, the UOC is the largest denomination in Ukraine. While it condemned Russia in February 2022, when the Russo-Ukrainian conflict intensified in fighting, the UOC has not proclaimed itself autocephalous — independent — of the ROC.

For its part, the Kyiv regime has established a rival organization, the Orthodox Church of Ukraine (OCU), which the U.S.-backed Ecumenical Patriarchate in Istanbul acknowledged as autocephalous in 2019.

Authors of the aforementioned bill have claimed that this bill would "allow citizens of Ukraine to realize the right to freedom of worldview and religion guaranteed by the Constitution of Ukraine."

Based on reports by the BBC, the bill took almost 10 months to feature on Ukraine's parliamentary agenda owing to objections from within Zelensky's ruling party, "Servant of the People." Vassily Malyuk, the head of the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU), was among those in Ukraine's Rada who advocated for the bill, alleging that it was important to clamp down on "collaborators" allegedly operating in UOC parishes.

On their end, various UOC bishops have begged Ukrainian lawmakers to "think of their souls" before the vote. The UOC has pledged to contest the bill if it materializes, though all of its legal challenges so far have been dismissed.

"Politicians are once again letting the religious beliefs of millions of Ukrainians be destroyed for their corporate intrigues," Metropolitan Kliment, a spokesman for the UOC, told the BBC.

Kliment posited that the bill was part of the "de-Christianization" of Ukraine, adding that the very people promoting it and the OCU "will vote tomorrow for the introduction of same-sex marriage in Ukraine, and after tomorrow I can't even imagine what else."

Bill 8371 would mandate the Ukrainian government's bureau of "Ethnic Politics and Freedom of Conscience" to state that a certain religious organization is based in Russia, after which it can demand that the said organization "correct" the matter. If that fails, the government could demand that a court ban the group.

Having said that, as the UOC is not a single legal entity in reality, the Ukrainian government would have to investigate the Archdiocese of Kyiv, around 50 dioceses, and about 9,000 individual parishes.

In effect, the proposed law could mandate the "cooperation" of the UOC with the whims of the Zelensky government, or be used as an excuse by local and regional authorities to seize church property, as per testimonies from the BBC's sources.



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Under Zelensky's rule, church confiscations have already been underway in Ukraine for months. Seven of Ukraine's regions have outlawed the UOC so far. In March, Zelensky's government took action against the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra — one of the country's most ancient monasteries — and conducted a raid of the premises in August, after UOC monks refused to leave. Last month, Kyiv also ordered the seizure of 74 church properties in the capital as well, turning over many of the seized churches to the government-controlled OCU.

Moscow has denounced Kyiv for persecuting the canonical Orthodox church as well as slammed Washington for sweeping Ukraine's actions under the carpet.



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