

Russia for any further invasion of Ukraine. It would bolster similar bruising sanctions drawn up by the Biden administration. It will ensure that any Russian aggression against Ukraine or its neighbors will be felt in Russia by their economy and their people.

I mentioned that my mom came to this country when she was 2 years old, from Lithuania, in 1911. Her boat landed in Baltimore. At the time, Lithuania was under the control of Tsarist Russia. It was a brutal, repressive place.

After World War II, Lithuania became part of the USSR against its will, another brutal and repressive regime. But in 1991, Lithuania became the first Soviet Republic to declare its independence. In response, Soviet tanks under control of Gorbachev rolled in to crush the new Lithuanian democracy. I was there before those tanks arrived. Their Parliament is called the Seimas. They had put sandbags around the outside of it to try to stop the Soviets and their tanks. They took me in the back, in a small room off to the side, and showed me their arsenal. It consisted of about 10 rifles that had been borrowed from farmers in the countryside to try to defend their capital, Vilnius.

Kids were assembled outside, praying the Rosary in the snow, lighting little candles by the sandbags to show the solidarity of the people of Lithuania, their determination to survive.

Soviet tanks rolled in, killed 13 innocent people, and injured dozens more. But then, to the world's astonishment—and mine too—Prime Minister Mikhail Gorbachev ordered the tanks to withdraw.

Later, another Russian President, Boris Yeltsin, supported Lithuanian independence. Years after his death, Lithuania honored him with an award for his commitment to Lithuanian statehood and bilateral relations between Lithuania and Russia.

Mikhail Gorbachev and Boris Yeltsin understood that you can brutalize a people who are determined to be free, but you can never defeat them. Ultimately, freedom will win. It is a tragedy that Russian President Putin cannot or will not learn that same lesson of history today when it comes to Ukraine.

Seventy-seven years ago, an American marine born in Ukraine raised the American flag on Iwo Jima. Today, a generation of young Ukrainians raised in freedom are holding high the yellow-and-blue flag of their own nation and saying: We too want to be free. Our message to them is very simple and straightforward: You are not alone.

Like the shipyard workers in Gdansk and the other members of the Polish Solidarity movement who helped bring an end to the decrepit and brutal Soviet Union—like the 2 million Estonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians who actually physically joined hands to defend freedom across their nations—history and the free world will stand with you.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UKRAINE

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I am here today to talk about the escalating aggression by Russia against Ukraine, an ally and a sovereign country whose territorial integrity is once again under attack. In our generation, this is where the fight for freedom is being held; this is where it is being waged. It is going to affect not just Ukraine and Eastern Europe but countries all over the world, depending on the outcome.

Today, I am going to address what I think the appropriate role is for us as Americans, what more we can do to help avoid what could become an international disaster and a humanitarian crisis.

Russia is the aggressor here, having invaded Ukraine twice in the past 8 years, illegally annexing Crimea, inserting troops and offensive military weaponry into the Donbas region of Ukraine, initiating cyber attacks against public and private entities in Ukraine, and using disinformation to try to destabilize the democratically elected Government of Ukraine.

Now they have gone further by amassing more than 100,000 troops under the command of 100 tactical groups on Russia's Ukrainian border. This Russian deployment includes rockets and tanks and artillery and is no longer just on the eastern border of Ukraine, but it is now across the borders, including the northern border, where Russian combat troops and heavy equipment have gone into Belarus. And on the Belarus-Ukrainian border, a Russian presence is being felt. It is also in Crimea and in the Black Sea area, where Russia is taking advantage of their illegal annexation to move troops in those areas close to Ukraine.

I will give you a little history about how we got here. Eight years ago, the people of Ukraine made a clear choice. They stood up to a Russian-backed, corrupt government in 2014 and made a conscious decision to turn to the West, to the European Union, to us, the United States of America.

I was in Ukraine in 2014, shortly after what is called the Euromaidan, also the Revolution of Dignity. The barricades were still there. And in the center of town, the Maidan, in Kyiv, was occupied still by Ukrainian patriots, insisting that Ukraine chart its own course. The Ukrainian people had rejected authoritarianism and, instead, embraced freedom, embraced democracy, freedom of speech, freedom to gather, freedom for the respect of law, respect for the judicial institutions in the country, and free markets.

Now, have they stumbled along the way sometimes with regard to reforms, including of the judicial system? Yes, of course. Most fledgling democracies do; all of them do. But they have made tremendous progress, and they are on their way toward becoming what they wanted to become at the time 8 years ago—again, this Revolution of Dignity that is called the Euromaidan—more like a Western European or Eastern European country that is part of the EU.

Despite Russia's unrelenting efforts to destabilize Ukraine over the past 8 years, the people of Ukraine have remained committed to this independent, sovereign, and democratic principle, that vision.

And Ukrainians today are actually increasingly patriotic and opposed to the Russian efforts to destabilize their country. According to polling data, this sentiment is especially true among young people, which makes sense because they have tasted the fruits of freedom—free enterprise, the ability to express themselves, the ability to connect with the rest of the free world. They don't want state control. They don't want repression. They don't want fear. Instead, they want liberty and prosperity.

Moscow and Russia would have the world believe that somehow this massive, unwarranted Russian buildup is about trying to shore up its border against threats from Ukraine and from NATO, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Nothing could be further from the truth, of course. This is patently false. Ukraine's military posture has always been defensive. Unlike Russia, Ukraine has upheld its commitments under the Minsk agreements, which were designed to ensure a ceasefire in the Donbas region, the eastern part of Ukraine. NATO, of course, is defensive. It is not an offensive group and is no threat to Russian territorial integrity.

My hope is that Congress can come together this week—Republicans, Democrats, Senate, and House—and issue a strong message to the people of Ukraine that we stand with them in their fight for freedom; to Russia that if they choose to invade, the armed conflict will carry a heavy cost, and the sanctions that would result from that would be devastating; and then to the world that the United States stands with its allies, not just in Eastern Europe but throughout the freedom-loving countries of the world.

I am hoping Congress will pass an extensive sanctions package, including increased security funding for Ukraine, more resources for cyber security, and funding for the Global Engagement Center at the U.S. State Department to help push back on Russian disinformation.

I want to say a word about our allies. In many respects, I believe that what Vladimir Putin has done by these aggressive actions we talked about is to strengthen the transatlantic alliance,

including those countries that are part of NATO, and go beyond that, countries in other parts of the world that understand that this is about the cause of freedom. So many have stepped up. Denmark is providing F-16 jets to nearby Lithuania. Spain is sending ships to join a NATO fleet. France is getting ready to send troops to Romania, they say. The United Kingdom has sent anti-tank weapons directly to Kyiv and supported Ukraine in so many ways.

When I was in Ukraine recently, I was there to see a cargo plane unload anti-tank weapons from the UK to Ukraine. And recently, the United States has not just increased our military assistance to Ukraine to help it defend itself, but also we have placed 8,500 of our troops on heightened alert to go to be with our NATO allies in the region in Eastern Europe. They, of course, welcome that.

Ukraine, by the way, has never asked for U.S. troops or NATO troops to defend Ukraine. They have asked for help to be able to defend themselves. And that is an important distinction.

On the Russian pipeline to Europe called Nord Stream—I think it was a bad idea before all this started and I think it is even a worse idea now—Russia provides Germany with roughly one-third of their natural gas supply already, a dependency that will increase substantially with the activation of the Nord Stream 2 Pipeline.

Let's not forget, this multimillion-dollar pipeline is one that this body, the U.S. Senate, chose not to impose sanctions on just a few weeks ago after we had already done so once before on a bipartisan basis. I will say the vote last week was not 60 votes, but it was a majority of this body voting to impose sanctions because, again, the Nord Stream 2 Pipeline is a bad idea in terms of the dependency of Europe on Russia.

Once the pipeline is complete, it will supply a lot of Russian gas to Germany, the rest of Europe, and Russia will use it as a political weapon. We have seen this. This is no surprise that they would do it. They did it in Moldova, and of course they have done it in Ukraine.

Even today, German prices are being affected by what Russia decides is appropriate. Germany has told us privately that they are willing to shut down the pipeline if Russia invades Ukraine, but they should say so publicly and clearly.

I am also concerned about Germany's resistance to approving arms sales to Ukraine. Again, Ukraine just wants the help to be able to defend itself. A great example of this is some artillery pieces that were made in East Germany decades ago. Those artillery pieces, those howitzers, are now in the hands of the Estonians. The Estonians want to provide these weapons to the Ukrainians. The Ukrainians want them. Even though they are older howitzers, they need them. They need the artillery. And yet, because they were made in

Germany—in East Germany—decades ago, under the licensing agreement, Germany has to approve Estonia sending Ukraine these weapons they so desperately need. That approval has not been forthcoming.

To me, this is outrageous that Ukraine is not receiving the weapons it needs because another country that is part of the NATO alliance is saying that they are not going to approve the transfer. I hope that will change. I hope very soon we will see that transfer approved.

Germany, by the way, might say—as I have heard from some, and I have had conversations about this with them—that they don't like to send weapons into hot spots. Well, they are certainly happy to send weapons into the Middle East. In fact, last year, as I understand it, it was their largest year ever of exports of military weapons made in Germany to other countries, including to countries like Egypt, as an example.

So we need to be sure that we are doing all we can to avoid Russia making this terrible mistake. And a big part of this should be all the countries in the region, certainly our NATO allies, standing up and providing military assistance to Ukraine and making clear that if something happens, that the consequences will be devastating because of sanctions.

The cost of freedom in Eastern Europe is at stake here, but so is, really, the stability of all of Europe. The Ukrainian officials themselves have talked about this. The Foreign Minister, Foreign Minister Kuleba, whom I met with recently in Ukraine, stated that Germany is taking a stance that “does not correspond with the level of our relations and the current security situation.”

I agree.

People listening may be wondering: Why should the United States get engaged here? Why is this Senator from Ohio passionate about this?

Well, first, in Ohio, we have a lot of Ukrainians I have gotten to know over the years, and it is not just about the Ukrainian Americans in Ohio; it is about people from all over that part of the world—Central Europe, Eastern Europe, certainly the Baltics, Lithuania, Latvia. The people whom I talk to tell me that this is, again, a seminal moment, not just in the history of Ukraine, but in the history of our world because, again, it is the fight for freedom being played out right before our eyes. These nationality groups, including, of course, the Ukrainian Americans, are deeply concerned that this continued aggression unchecked will lead to other countries, including the Baltics, including Poland and others, being subject to the same kind of pressure from Russia.

But it is also because I believe what happens in Ukraine does affect the cause of freedom more broadly. Countries all over the world are watching. Authoritarian countries are watching. Democratically elected countries are

watching. And they are wondering, in the 21st century, are we going to allow something like this to occur, when one country looks to another and says that I want that country so I am going to invade and take that land?

Again, until we had the invasion of Crimea only 8 years ago, this hadn't happened in almost 80 years since World War II on the continent of Europe.

This is something that countries are watching to get a message to see whether the United States is going to continue to be the country that joins with others, including our NATO alliance but a much broader group of freedom-loving countries to stand up for the cause of freedom and to stand up for the right of a sovereign country to be able to protect its own borders.

I recently joined a bipartisan delegation led by me and my good friend Senator JEANNE SHAHEEN. Senator MURPHY, who is on the floor tonight, was also with us. We personally met with President Zelensky. We also met with four or five other Cabinet officials, including the Secretary of Defense. We talked about the U.S. commitment to provide military assistance to ensure Ukraine can defend itself and deter the threat. If you talk to these individuals and you talk to the military officials we talked to and the commanders—and I have also been to the line of contact, where this hot water is going on with Russia even today in the Donbas region. I have been there. I have talked to the troops. You will see that there is a commitment, a strong commitment by the Ukrainians to defend themselves. They get that this is a critical time in their history.

We tried to send a clear message on a bipartisan basis. I believe we did. I believe that this time—this time—unlike 2014, when, frankly, Ukraine and the world wasn't ready, that the situation is very different. The military is prepared. The people of Ukraine have a strong sense of nationalism and a deep patriotism and they will fight and this will be a bloody conflict that we all want to avoid.

The other thing I will say about Ukraine is they are our friends. They are our allies. They share our values. When the United States was looking for help in Iraq and Afghanistan, some NATO partners came through, but so did Ukraine. Ukrainian troops were shoulder to shoulder with American troops during some very tough situations in those countries. These are our friends. This is a country that has allied with us because they believe that that is the best future for the Ukrainian people.

It is time for us to stand with them in response to this unwarranted and unprovoked Russian aggression. My hope is that Congress will act on a bipartisan and bicameral basis—the House and Senate, Republicans and Democrats—and send a strong message to Russia that would avoid a bloody conflict, deter them from taking the

actions that they are contemplating and making a terrible mistake, but also that we would send a strong message to the people of Ukraine to give them strength during this time, and, finally, a message to the global community that the lamp of freedom will not be extinguished.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. REED. Mr. President, we are 4 months into the fiscal year, and our colleagues on the other side of the aisle have still not agreed to a deal to fund the Federal Government, including the Department of Defense. In a matter of days, we will face the prospect of a long-term continuing resolution or government shutdown if an agreement on overall funding levels cannot be reached.

From the moment President Biden submitted his budget request, Republican leaders said his proposed \$12.6 billion increase for defense was not enough. So, on a bipartisan basis, we worked to raise that number to a level proposed by the ranking member of the Armed Services Committee and supported by every Republican on the committee as well as the 88 Senators who voted for the final National Defense Authorization Act.

But even with that defense number in hand, our Republican colleagues continue to draw out negotiations on a top-line funding number for the Federal Government. In doing so, they risk pushing us into a full-year continuing resolution that would fund defense at a level that is less than President Biden's initial request.

Let me say that again. They were deeply critical of the President's proposal. They worked and we worked with them to get a robust increase in defense spending, and now they are prepared to accept a number even below President Biden's request.

Make no mistake, a full-year CR will short-change our military, and it will disrupt the efficient operations of the Federal Government in the midst of international tension, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and a fragile economic recovery.

As my colleague from Ohio just pointed out, we are in a serious confrontation on the Ukrainian border between Russian forces and Ukrainian forces. And we have indicated that we want to help. A big part of that help would come from the Department of Defense, but it would be very difficult with a continuing resolution to marshal the help and support to our colleagues and our friends in Ukraine.

As I noted, the outlines of a reasonable agreement for both defense and nondefense funding have been evident for some time. Indeed, the National Defense Authorization Act, which passed on a bipartisan basis in December, set a funding level for defense that is 5 percent higher than last year's enacted level. It reflects the level proposed by

Ranking Member INHOFE. And, as chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, I fully supported that funding level and cosponsored Senator INHOFE's amendment to authorize the increase.

For his part, Senator LEAHY has adopted the NDAA defense funding levels in the bills that the Appropriations Committee introduced in November. He accommodated that increase by reducing funding for domestic programs by \$22.5 billion from the level in the administration's request.

So Democrats have agreed to increase defense funding and to reduce nondefense funding from the levels requested by the President. In doing so, Democrats proposed a budget that funds defense activities at a level that is higher than nondefense activities.

Let me underscore that point, because GOP leaders often say there should be parity between defense and nondefense spending. Senate Democrats have proposed spending bills that have \$777.5 billion for defense and \$753 billion for every other discretionary program—the VA, education, agriculture, FBI, Department of Homeland Security, and so on. Democrats have offered our Republican colleagues nearly everything they have asked for, but they won't take yes for an answer.

As we drift toward the full-year CR, our colleagues on the other side of the aisle are reacting with nonchalance to the impacts on defense.

Let me remind my colleagues what a full-year CR will mean for national defense. It will mean that defense spending would be about \$37 billion lower than the levels set out in the NDAA and lower than the funding levels requested by President Biden—yes, those levels they criticized so aggressively that President Biden suggests. If they pursue this path of a CR, the numbers for defense will be less than the President's initial request.

It means military personnel accounts will be funded \$5 billion below what the Department requested. A CR means DOD will have to cannibalize other accounts in order to provide the pay raise and other benefit increases that our servicemembers rightfully deserve.

It means the Pentagon may have to delay or suspend permanent change-of-station moves and accession of troops—again, all of this in the context, as my colleague from Ohio pointed out, of a major crisis in Europe and a growing concern about Chinese activities in the Pacific.

It means training and readiness accounts will fall about \$5.3 billion short of what the Department requested. And the key to the morale of soldiers—among one of the most important keys—is that they are well trained and they are prepared. We owe it to them to give them that training and ensure they are prepared.

It means the military healthcare account will be short over \$1 billion.

A CR also means that we will be tied to funding priorities from a year ago,

even though circumstances have changed markedly. For example, our military engagements with Afghanistan and Eastern Europe are vastly different from last year. Funding will be trapped in the wrong accounts and the Defense Department will not have the flexibility to move it where it is needed.

A CR will prevent the Defense Department from effectively modernizing and reinvesting in new programs. Because new program starts are not allowed under a CR, the Department of Defense will be forced into funding legacy systems that are outdated and inefficient. Meanwhile, important new initiatives and acquisitions would be delayed.

We won't be able to fund three additional ships and seven more Joint Strike Fighters in the Navy's 2022 budget. The Marines would have to delay procurement of the MQ-9A Reaper UAV, and the Amphibious Combat Vehicle.

The Space Force would have to cut two of the five planned national security space launch missions, and the Air Force would have to delay the Ground-Based Strategic Deterrent Program and the long-range standoff weapon.

DOD also won't be able to start over 100 military construction projects—new facilities that our servicemembers need to do their jobs safely and effectively. This includes, among others: \$32 million in Air Force corrosion and simulator projects in Florida, \$55 million for a joint operation center at Fort Polk in Louisiana, \$56 million in total projects for Wisconsin, \$75 million in total projects for Georgia, \$94 million in total projects for Michigan, \$161 million in total projects for Texas, \$186 million in total projects for California, \$251 million for a runway extension at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in Alaska, \$251 million in total projects for South Dakota, and \$321 million in total projects for North Carolina.

Finally, a CR will disrupt DOD's partnerships with outside partners in the private sector and academia, and with our allies, because they inject uncertainty, instability, and additional costs to R&D and acquisition processes.

In short, a yearlong CR will make us less competitive with our adversaries and less able to respond to the rapidly changing global landscape, which was illustrated so eloquently by my colleague from Ohio. It would be a self-inflicted wound at a dangerous time for the country and our international partners.

The impact will not only be felt on the defense side of the ledger. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to produce new and potentially dangerous strains, we risk losing \$5 billion in research at the NIH and \$2.4 billion in funding for our public health infrastructure, including funding for the CDC, BARDA, and the National Disaster Medical System.

And a CR would sacrifice \$3 billion in new investments in mental health, and