

# Democrats force House vote on increased military aid to Ukraine

Patrick Martin  
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The Democrats in the House of Representatives have succeeded in forcing a floor debate and vote on legislation to provide more military and financial aid to Ukraine, over the opposition of House Speaker Mike Johnson and the Trump White House.

In a procedure known as a discharge petition, a total of 218 representatives, a numerical majority, have given their signatures to force the vote. This includes all 215 Democrats, as well as two Republicans, Brian Fitzpatrick of Pennsylvania and Don Bacon of Nebraska, and Republican-turned-independent Kevin Kiley of California.

Bacon is retiring from Congress, while Kiley's seat has been effectively eliminated by the Democratic gerrymander of California's congressional delegation, although he may seek to retain his seat by running as an independent.

Kiley made the right-wing character of the pro-Ukraine legislation explicit, saying that it was necessary both to show support for Ukraine in its war with Russia, and to warn Russia against providing support to Iran in the current US-Iran war.

"Recent Ukrainian gains have created an opportunity for peace, but the collapse of the recent ceasefire shows that leverage is needed for diplomacy to succeed," Kiley declared in a written statement. "Congress can act now, in a bipartisan way, to strengthen that leverage and advance a durable peace that protects the interests of the United States and our allies."

He continued: "We must also send a strong message that Russian support for Iran's targeting of U.S. military assets will not be tolerated."

The legislation sent to the floor by the discharge petition was introduced by Rep. Gregory Meeks (NY), the senior Democrat on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, last year. It authorizes additional weapons

and financing to Ukraine, affirms US support in the war with Russia, imposes additional economic sanctions on Russia and pledges to provide funding for reconstruction in Ukraine after the war ends.

It also declares US support for NATO, in a rebuke to Trump's public threats to withdraw from the imperialist alliance. "NATO remains vital to United States national security interests and the United States remains fully committed to defending its allies under Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty," the bill's text reads.

House Speaker Mike Johnson opposed the legislation and has refused to permit it to come to the floor for nearly a year. He has now set a vote on the bill for the first week of June, when it is expected to pass. More than likely, however, it will either be bottled up in the Senate or vetoed by Trump.

A discharge petition is a rarely used procedure to bypass the Speaker, but it has now been successfully employed six times since the beginning of 2025. This is largely because the Republican majority is so narrow that only a handful of defections—at present, the number is three—can force a vote, provided all Democrats sign the petition.

The Ukraine Support Act has three main components:

- Reiterating US support for Ukraine and NATO and creating a special coordinator for rebuilding efforts after the end of the war
- Authorizing \$1.3 billion in direct military aid to Ukraine and up to \$8 billion in direct loans
- Expanding sanctions and export control targeting Russian government officials and the country's financial, oil and mining sectors, while limiting President Trump's ability to lift those sanctions.

The bill also proposes rebuilding US weapons stockpiles depleted through the Ukraine war—and even

more by the war in Iran.

Every Democrat signed the petition to boost US support to Ukraine, in a war that serves the interests of both European and American imperialism. NATO provoked the reactionary Russian invasion in 2022 through its relentless expansion to the east after the collapse of the Soviet bloc. Despite repeated pledges not to do so, NATO has absorbed all the former members of the Warsaw Pact, except Russia, and several Soviet successor states, like Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine.

Among the Democrats endorsing stepped-up US intervention in the war with Russia—which carries with it the danger of a nuclear conflict—are all three members of the Democratic Socialists of America in Congress, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Rashida Tlaib and Greg Casar, as well as Summer Lee, a former DSA organizer, and others identified as members of the supposedly radical “Squad,” like Ilhan Omar and Ayanna Pressley.

They stood shoulder to shoulder with Republican supporters of the war on Iran, like Kiley, and with Democratic warmongers like Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries and former Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

Former House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer spoke in support of the discharge petition Wednesday on the House floor. “Soon, the House will have a long overdue vote on expressing its support for Ukraine and our opposition to the Russian invasion,” he said. “This House has now voted on bipartisan bills to assist Ukraine 12 times since the full invasion in 2022. On average, [those] bills have passed 80% of the votes on this House Floor. We’ll have the opportunity to do it again, to stand for freedom, democracy, and our Ukrainian allies.”

There has been no discharge petition on the war in Iran, in part because a vote to invoke the War Powers Act is privileged under House rules and cannot be blocked by the Speaker. Democrat Ro Khanna introduced bipartisan legislation requiring a congressional vote to authorize the war. The measure was defeated in March by 219-212, with four Democrats voting “no” and ensuring its defeat. A similar bill was defeated in April by 214-213, with a lone Democrat, Jared Golden of Maine, providing the deciding “no” vote.

These votes are entirely for show, since the

Republican-controlled Senate has repeatedly rejected resolutions invoking the War Powers Act in relation to Iran, and Trump would veto or simply refuse to comply with such a measure if it did pass.



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