

# Rep. Brostoff, Colleagues: Open letter to the people of Ukraine

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To the heroic people of Ukraine,

Wisconsin stands with you as you face one of the most unnecessary and shameful acts of military aggression in modern history. Without provocation, Vladimir Putin has chosen to engage in a premeditated war based on revisionist grievances and his own twisted quest for power at all costs. Today, we see those costs plainly – thousands of lives have already been lost, hundreds of thousands of civilians have been displaced from their homes, and the shadow of war is cast over every corner of Ukraine. Unfortunately, we know that President Putin is ready and willing to escalate this war, no matter how many Ukrainian or Russian lives will be lost.

Ukraine has been proudly and fiercely independent since 1991. For over thirty years, the Ukrainian people have worked hard to develop their sovereign nation and have fought to address corruption with the hope of pursuing a life of freedom and peace.

Eight years ago, Ukrainians came together to chart a new path forward – a path of democracy, free from President Putin's machinations and Russian meddling. Instead of accepting that reality, Putin and his allies responded by illegally annexing Crimea and provoking war in the Donbas. When President Putin provided his muddled and fabricated rationale late last month for expanding the war and invading Ukraine, it became even clearer that he was unwilling to consider either reason or facts. People of Ukraine, people of Wisconsin, and people of the world know: this war is Vladimir Putin's, and Putin's alone.

We know that the people of Ukraine want only to live in peace, and we are horrified at President Putin's decision to break that peace with this unprovoked and illegal

invasion. Ukrainian cities and lives are being destroyed, from Kyiv to Zaporizhzhia, from churches to schools, and the world is watching. We condemn these actions in no uncertain terms, and unequivocally denounce any further military actions carried out by Russia in Ukraine. We call on the international community to continue to sanction and isolate Putin and his regime and to continue providing much-needed aid and support to the people of Ukraine. This war *must* end, and Russia must lay down arms and leave Ukraine's borders immediately. We will accept nothing less than an unconditional ceasefire and a complete end to the Russian occupation of Ukraine.

To the people of Ukraine and to Ukrainians around the world, you have the right to protect your land, your history, your culture. And we have a moral obligation to support and affirm your right to live freely. We recognize that this is an especially heart-wrenching time for those in our own Ukrainian-American communities, seeing the country of their birth or heritage torn apart and their family members and friends under the unimaginable threat of violence and dislocation. **You are not alone.** We are united against aggression and war, and we stand ready to listen and to speak out against these horrors during this difficult time, and for years to come.

Слава Україні! Героям слава!

In Solidarity,

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