

Issue Insight

Washington DC

Telephone: (202) 600-0130 • Email: update@issueinsight.org
Internet: <https://www.issueinsight.org> • Twitter: [@issue_insight](https://twitter.com/issue_insight)

If There Is Such Multipartisan Support In The United States Senate For Continuing Robust United States Taxpayer Borrowing (Thus Far Exceeding US\$113.1 Billion) For Ukraine, Why Only One Senator Visited Ukraine During The Recess Who Has Not Previously Visited Since 24 February 2022?

Thus Far, No Member Of The United States House Of Representatives Has Visited Ukraine During The Recess.

17% Of United States Senate Have Visited Ukraine Since 24 February 2022

**Punchbowl News
Washington DC
7 September 2023**

“News: Speaker **Kevin McCarthy** and the House GOP leadership are considering attaching billions of dollars in disaster relief to a short-term stopgap spending bill, leaving out Ukraine aid at a critical moment in the war with Russia. Such a move would set up a showdown with the Senate and President **Joe Biden** over U.S. support for its embattled ally.

Senate leaders in both parties want to pass Biden’s full \$40 billion supplemental spending request — which would go to disaster relief, border security and Ukraine — by the end of the month. Senate Minority Leader **Mitch McConnell** urged senators to pass it expeditiously Wednesday, [as we detailed](#) in our Midday edition.

Acknowledging a “difference of opinion in my party on this,” McConnell said maintaining U.S. support for Ukraine is a national security priority. He added that Ukraine isn’t just fighting for its own independence but also “degrading the military of one of our biggest rivals.” McConnell has been making this case against Russia since it invaded Ukraine in February 2022.

Yet McCarthy and his leadership team don’t seem to care about this argument. They’re planning to leave the Ukraine funding out of the supplemental package in order to consider it separately. Instead, House Republicans want to include disaster relief on a continuing resolution designed to keep federal agencies open until some point in November. Congress needs to pass a CR by Sept. 30 to avoid a government shutdown.

Adding to the complications, McCarthy wants changes to border policies as well as an increase in overall border security money in return for additional Ukraine aid, according to multiple sources familiar with the internal House GOP discussions. The White House’s supplemental request includes around \$4 billion for border-related measures.

Again, we’ll point out that this has the potential to be a very big mess. The White House and Senate Democrats are going to be hesitant to break up the supplemental. And there are bound to be disagreements between the House and Senate on the contours of any CR. With just 23 days until federal funding runs out, these kinds of tiffs could easily lead to a government shutdown.

The United States has spent more than \$100 billion [NOTE: more than US\$113.1 billion] on the Ukrainian conflict, and a growing number of House Republicans are opposed to additional

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funding. Former President **Donald Trump** [has called for linking Ukraine aid](#) to a Biden impeachment probe.

But Senate Minority Whip John Thune told us he thinks it “gets complicated” if McCarthy leaves the Ukraine money out of the CR and only includes disaster relief funding. “**At some point**, we’ve got to deal with the Ukraine issue,” Thune said. “But if they send us a vehicle that we could do something with when it comes over here, that’s also a possibility.”

Thune is saying that the Senate could amend the House-passed CR and add Ukraine funds to it. Due to House GOP opposition to Ukraine funding, this move could lead to a shutdown. **But Thune did also say** if the Biden administration “really wants” Ukraine money, “they’re probably going to have to figure out a way to accommodate some” additional border money and policy changes. “**I think we’ve** got a big demand on our side for the border, and especially, that’s going to be something that the House has to execute on getting some across the floor over there,” Thune said.

Sen. Thom Tillis (R-N.C.), a member of GOP leadership and the co-chair of the NATO Observer Group, was even more pointed when we asked him about McCarthy’s plan to leave Ukraine aid out of the CR. “**It’d be disappointing**,” Tillis told us. “I think we should get them both done [disaster relief and Ukraine aid] because we’re talking about a timeline where we have to send a signal that we’re going to sustain Ukraine.” **Tillis said** it was important to make sure that Biden’s presidential drawdown authority doesn’t lapse, which he said could create “an opening for Russia.”

And Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.) told us he’s been trying to impress on House Republicans that pulling the plug on Ukraine would amount to “creating chaos in the world” and rewarding **Vladimir Putin**.

And it’s no surprise that Biden himself doesn’t like splitting up the supplemental request, [categorically rejecting](#) the suggestion last month.”

Members Of The United States Senate Visiting Ukraine Since 24 February 2022

NOTE: The United States Senate returned from recess on 5 September 2023. One member of the United States Senate visited Ukraine during recess who had not previously visited Ukraine. The United States House of Representatives returns from recess on 12 September 2023. No members of the United States House of Representatives visited Ukraine thus far during its recess.

As of 24 August 2023

Within the 118th United States Congress, since 24 February 2022, **17%** of the United States Senate have visited Ukraine and **2.9%** of the United States House of Representatives have visited Ukraine.

Thus, **8.0%** of the members of the 118th United States Congress having visited Ukraine since 24 February 2022.

118th United States Congress (3 January 2023 to 3 January 2025)

United States Senate

(100 Members- 48 Democrats, 3 Independents (all caucus with Democrats), 49 Republicans)

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Visited Ukraine Since 24 February 2022

Democrat- 8

Independent- 1

Republican- 8

Amy Klobuchar (D- Minnesota)

Angus King (I- Maine)

Christopher Coons (D- Delaware)

Elizabeth Warren (D- Massachusetts)

Jack Reed (D- Rhode Island)

James Risch (R- Idaho)

John Barrasso (R-Wyoming)

John Cornyn (R-Texas)

Lindsey Graham (R- South Carolina)- Visited Four Times 2022/2023

Lisa Murkowski (R- Alaska)

Mark Kelly (D- Arizona)

Joe Manchin (D- West Virginia)

Mitch McConnell (R-Kentucky)

Richard Blumenthal (D- Connecticut)- Visited Three Times 2022/2023

Rob Portman (R- Ohio)- Visited Twice 2022; Retired

Sheldon Whitehouse (D- Rhode Island)

Steven Daines (R- Montana)

Susan Collins (R-Maine)

23 August 2023 (Kyiv)- Richard Blumenthal (D-Connecticut), Lindsey Graham (R-South Carolina), Elizabeth Warren (D-Massachusetts), members of the United States Senate

28 May 2023 (Kyiv)- Lindsey Graham (R- South Carolina), United States Senate

12 April 2023 (Kyiv)-Mark Kelly (D- Arizona), Lisa Murkowski (R- Alaska), Joe Manchin (D- West Virginia), members of the United States Senate

20 January 2023 (Kyiv)- Lindsey Graham (R- South Carolina), Richard Blumenthal (D- Connecticut), Sheldon Whitehouse (D- Rhode Island), members of the United States Senate

6 January 2023 (Kyiv)- Jack Reed (D- Rhode Island), Angus King (I- Maine), members of the United States Senate

3 November 2022 (Kyiv)- Christopher Coons (D- Delaware), Robert Portman (R- Ohio; retiring; second visit), members of the United States Senate

31 August 2022 (Kyiv)- Amy Klobuchar (D- Minnesota), Rob Portman (R- Ohio), members of the United States Senate

7 July 2022 (Kyiv)- Richard Blumenthal (D- Connecticut) and Lindsey Graham (R- South Carolina), members of the United States Senate

27 June 2022 (Kyiv)- James Risch (R- Idaho), the ranking minority member of the United States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations

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30 May 2022- (crossed into Ukraine at border with Moldova) Rob Portman (R- Ohio), United States Senate

14 May 2022 (Kyiv)- Mitch McConnell (R-Kentucky), Minority Leader of the United States Senate; Susan Collins (R-Maine), United States Senate; John Barrasso (R-Wyoming), United States Senate; John Cornyn (R-Texas), United States Senate

14 April 2022 (Kyiv)- Steven Daines (R- Montana), United States Senate