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U.S. Senate Leader Visits Ukraine Amid Congress Military Aid Impasse

By AFP

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Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer. **J. Scott Applewhite / AP / TASS**

U.S. Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer arrived Friday in Ukraine in a bid to put pressure on his Republican opponents in Congress to unlock crucial aid for Kyiv as Russia's invasion enters its third year.

"We are here to show the Ukrainian people that America stands with them and will [continue] fighting to get the funding they so desperately need and deserve," Schumer, a Democrat, said in the western Ukrainian city of Lviv.

"We will not stop fighting until we gain the aid," he added.

Republican legislators in the House of Representatives have stalled the approval of $60 billion in new aid for Kyiv, with Ukrainian forces running low on supplies and equipment.

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"We are here to learn in granular detail about the armaments Ukraine so vitally needs and the consequences of the failure to deliver them — the specific advantages Russia would gain if the arms are not delivered, and the advantages Ukraine would gain if the arms were delivered," said Schumer, who was accompanied by other four Democratic senators.

Washington has provided tens of billions of dollars in military aid to Ukraine and is by far the war-torn country's biggest donor.

But U.S. funding has dried up, and former president Donald Trump's allies in the House have stalled new assistance over disputes about immigration and border policies.

President Joe Biden has urged Congress to quickly approve the additional funding, saying that "history is watching" and that abandoning Ukraine would be a gift to Putin.

Schumer echoed that statement during his visit to Ukraine, saying that "we are at an inflection point in history."

"We must make it clear to our friends and allies around the globe that the U.S. does not back away from our responsibilities and allies," he said in his statement.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky on Friday made a fresh appeal to American lawmakers in an interview with the conservative Fox News channel.

"Will Ukraine survive without support from Congress? Of course. But not all of us," Zelensky said in the interview, which was filmed near the front line in Ukraine.

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