

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 20, 2024

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden  
President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

## **Re: Humanitarian Assistance for Armenia**

Dear President Biden,

We respectfully ask that you allocate urgent humanitarian assistance to Armenia using funds from recently enacted appropriations measures. On March 23, 2024, you signed into law the Consolidated Appropriations Act for 2024 (P.L. 118-47), and more recently, on April 24, you signed into law the National Security Act of 2024 (P.L. 118- 50). Collectively, these two bills provided in excess of \$17.8 billion for international disaster, migration, and refugee assistance. While we appreciate that USAID and the State Department have allocated more than \$15 million for Armenia in fiscal years 2023 and 2024, we believe that additional aid is necessary to meet the urgent needs of the Armenian refugee population from Nagorno-Karabakh.

As you know, in 2023, approximately 120,000 Armenians were forced from their homes in the Nagorno-Karabakh region after months of being brutally starved and then under military attack by the Azerbaijani government, which resulted in the ethnic cleansing of the region's entire Armenian population and the death of some 200 Armenians and over 400 wounded. According to the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), Armenia is currently housing more than 115,000 refugees, including 36,000 children, who fled violence and oppression at the hands of Azerbaijani forces. This is in addition to the 26,700 refugees that previously resided in Armenia who fled after attacks in 2020.

Because many Armenian refugees were forced from their homes after months of being blockaded without adequate resources and personal items, they are in urgent need of assistance, including food, basic staples, cash, housing, mental health counseling, and employment aid. Our understanding is that the Armenian government may require up to \$2 billion in additional urgent humanitarian assistance to provide ongoing resources for the refugee population and ensure that basic needs are met. We respectfully request that the United States contribute a sizable amount of this funding requirement and work to encourage other international donors and organizations to respond in kind.

As we recently recognized the 109th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, the United States must take steps to ensure that the persecution of ethnic Armenians never takes place again. This includes providing additional humanitarian and economic support to Armenia, bolstering U.S.-Armenia ties, and holding Azerbaijan accountable, including the possible imposition of sanctions for any human rights violations that took place during the ethnic cleansing of Armenians from

Azerbaijani territory last year. Finally, the United States should take a leadership role in encouraging the government of Azerbaijan to uphold its international legal obligation to ensure that any refugees are given the right to return to their homes under safe and secure conditions with international guarantees.

Thank you for your continued leadership advancing American interests, championing human rights, and fighting for a more peaceful and equitable world.

Sincerely,



Sheldon Whitehouse  
United States Senator



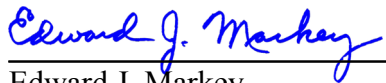
Jack Reed  
United States Senator



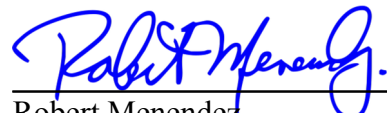
Sherrod Brown  
United States Senator



Debbie Stabenow  
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey  
United States Senator



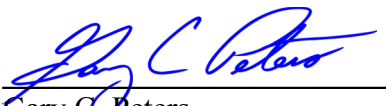
Robert Menendez  
United States Senator



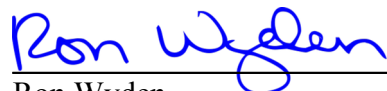
John Fetterman  
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker  
United States Senator



Gary C. Peters  
United States Senator



Ron Wyden  
United States Senator



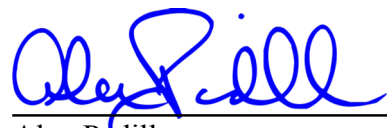
Elizabeth Warren  
United States Senator



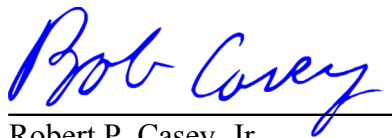
Chris Van Hollen  
United States Senator



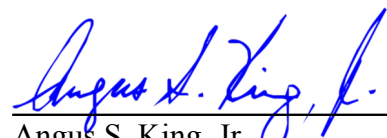
Raphael G. Butler  
United States Senator



Alex Padilla  
United States Senator



Robert P. Casey, Jr.  
United States Senator



Angus S. King, Jr.  
United States Senator



Christopher S. Murphy  
United States Senator



Tammy Baldwin  
United States Senator



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Richard J. Durbin  
United States Senator



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Jacky Rosen  
United States Senator



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Raphael Warnock  
United States Senator