

SCR 23 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Veterans, Emergency Management, Federal and World Affairs

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Meeting Dates: 3/6, 3/11

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The resolution states the Oregon Legislative Assembly supports a ceremonial sister state relationship with Cherkasy Oblast, Ukraine, stands in solidarity with the people of Ukraine, and condemns Russia's war against Ukraine.

Fiscal impact: No fiscal impact

Revenue impact: No revenue impact

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Desire for peace and end to the conflict
- Cold War and Ukrainian independence
- Impact of conflict on the Ukrainian people
- Opportunities for learning and cultural exchange
- Medical aid and sources of supplies in Ukraine

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Sister partnerships between cities, states, and other subnational governments are partnerships promoting agreed upon activities, cultural exchanges, and trade and business ties. Cherkasy Oblast is a state-equivalent entity with roughly 1.2 million residents, located in the geographic center of Ukraine. According to the Cherkasy Governor and the Rebuild Ukraine International Exhibition, Cherkasy has high employment and growth in manufacturing, an agricultural and industrial base with a growing service sector, and historical and natural tourism opportunities.

Ukraine declared independence from the Soviet Union in 1991. Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022, though Russian-backed fighters took control of large portions of Donetsk and Luhansk in 2014, and Russia annexed Crimea in February of that year. The war is currently described as one of attrition, and the World Bank estimates, through data ending December 31, 2024, that it would cost \$524 billion to rebuild Ukraine's economy.

Estimates of military casualties on either side of the conflict vary, as neither regularly publishes statistics covering the number of soldiers lost. In December 2024, President Zelensky of Ukraine stated about 43,000 soldiers had been lost since the invasion began. Civilian casualty estimates, and counts of those missing, also vary. The United Nation's Human Rights Monitoring Mission has identified over 12,000 civilians killed and 28,000 wounded, but they do not have access to areas Russia controls. Other estimates suggest losses are substantially higher, with up to 1 million deaths or injuries in total on both sides.

The United Nations estimated 6.7 million refugees had left Ukraine by October 2024. As of November 2023, the Oregon Department of Human Services estimated more than 4,500 individuals from Ukraine had resettled in Oregon. The Department accepted applications from community agencies for part of \$2.25 million in federal funding to help Ukrainian refugees with housing, employment assistance, health care, and legal assistance.

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Senate Concurrent Resolution 23 states the Oregon Legislative Assembly supports a ceremonial sister state relationship with Cherkasy Oblast, Ukraine, stands in solidarity with the people of Ukraine, and condemns Russia's war against Ukraine.