

Submitter: Vic Echevarria
On Behalf Of: DAWN Inc
Committee: House Committee On Rules
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SCR23

Dear Members of the Senate Committee on Veterans, Emergency Management, Federal and World Affairs,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. My name is Victor Echevarria, and I come before you to express my strong support for SCR 23 and establishing a sister state relationship between Oregon and Cherkasy Oblast in Ukraine. As the war in Ukraine continues to devastate lives and communities, now is the time for Oregon to stand in solidarity with those who are fighting not only for their homeland but for the principles of democracy and peace.

Like many Oregonians, I hold a deep desire to see an end to the brutal conflict initiated by Russia's invasion. The violence has brought suffering on a scale not seen in Europe in decades. We must affirm our shared humanity by supporting the Ukrainian people in their time of need and promoting peaceful cooperation between our regions.

This war has stirred memories of the Cold War era, when Ukraine struggled under Soviet control, and it underscores the significance of their 1991 independence. That historic moment was a turning point, marking Ukraine's right to self-determination—a right now being defended yet again at immense human cost.

The people of Ukraine have shown extraordinary courage in the face of destruction. In cities like Cherkasy, families have endured missile strikes, food shortages, and a relentless threat to their lives and livelihoods. Communities have been uprooted, hospitals overburdened, and children traumatized. These aren't distant headlines—they are real people who, like us, dream of safety, education, and a future for their children.

This is where Oregon can make a meaningful difference. A sister state relationship would open channels for educational, cultural, and humanitarian exchange. Imagine students from Oregon and Cherkasy connecting across borders—learning languages, traditions, and histories. Let us share our classrooms, our art, and our values.

There is also great potential for collaboration in medical aid. Ukrainian hospitals are in dire need of supplies, from trauma kits to basic medications. Oregon's medical institutions and nonprofits are well-positioned to provide critical support. A formal relationship could streamline the delivery of resources and create lasting partnerships

between health professionals in both regions.

In this time of global uncertainty, let Oregon be a beacon of compassion and cooperation. A sister state relationship with Cherkasy Oblast is not just symbolic—it is a practical, impactful step toward peace, resilience, and international friendship.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Victor Echevarria