

Durbin, Duckworth Join Bipartisan Request to Expedite NATO Expansion

by Dalton Brown, News Reporter
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WASHINGTON, D.C. - In a bipartisan letter to President Joe Biden, both of Illinois' U. S. Senators - Dick Durbin (D-IL) and Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) - joined several other senators from across the country and political aisle to ask Biden to expedite the addition of Sweden and Finland into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

Sweden and Finland recently announced their intent to join NATO, according to the senators' letter. The senators wrote that the addition of Sweden and Finland into the alliance would send a "clear message" to enemies of NATO, including Russian President Vladimir Putin.

“As Russia’s unprovoked invasion of Ukraine has proven, NATO, along with our democratic partners around the world, is more united than ever in opposition to the illegal acts of war waged by President Putin,” the senators wrote in the letter.

“Expanding NATO to include Finland and Sweden will send a clear message to Vladimir Putin, and any leader that attempts to follow in his path, that the free world stands ready to defend its values and sovereignty.”

In the letter, the senators recalled the support the U.S. received from its NATO allies after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attack and wrote that the U.S. is ready to support them now amidst “increasing acts of aggression from Putin’s Russia and its proxies.”

The senators also voiced their support for the U.S. offering military assistance to Sweden and Finland, even before they are officially included in NATO.

“We reiterate our full support for the United States to provide mutual security assurances to the governments of Sweden and Finland,” the senators wrote. “Should these two allies face threats or acts of aggression prior to their potential accession to the alliance, the United States should commit our full support.”

In addition to Durbin and Duckworth, other senators who signed the letter include Mitch McConnell (R-KY), Joe Manchin (D-WV), Mitt Romney (R-UT), Lindsey Graham (R-SC), Tim Kaine (D-VA), Charles Schumer (D-NY), Tim Scott (R-SC), Cory Booker (D-NJ), Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) and several others.

The full text of the letter and the full list of senators who signed it can be found [here](#).