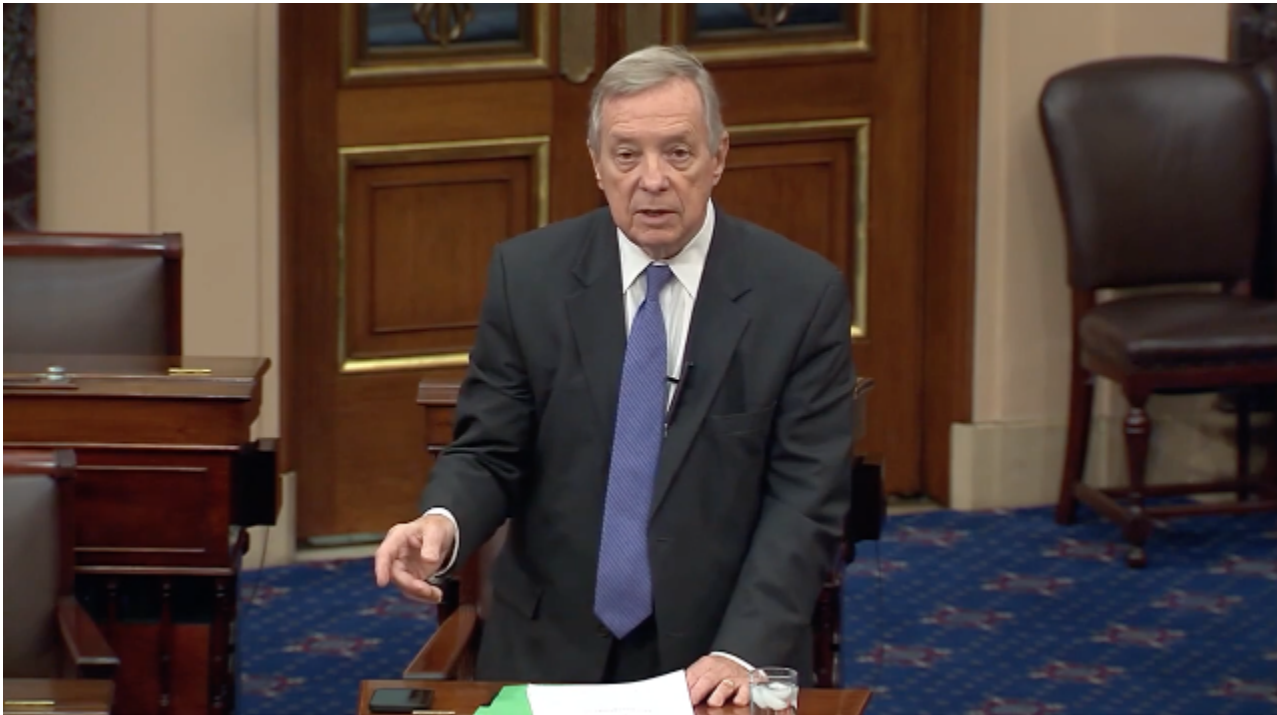


Durbin Statement On The One-year Anniversary Of Russia's War On Ukraine

by Maddie Carlos

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WASHINGTON – U.S. Senate Majority Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL), Co-Chair of the Senate Ukraine Caucus, released the following statement on the one-year anniversary of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022:

“One year ago today, Russian dictator Vladimir Putin launched a full-scale military invasion of Ukraine, an ill-fated throwback to the era when aggressor nations tried to seize their neighbor's territory by force—all in blind pursuit of some warped Soviet nostalgia trip. Putin was willing to sacrifice thousands of Ukrainian and Russian lives,

the reputation of his country, and the international order established after the horrors of World War II. Perhaps having listened to too many years of his own country's brainwashing propaganda, Putin also thought Ukraine would fall in a matter of days or weeks. He thought the transatlantic alliance and community of democracies had atrophied and wouldn't respond. Putin was wrong. The Ukrainian people repelled Putin and heroically clawed back seized territory. They withstood brutal attacks on civilians and critical infrastructure, and war crimes by any standard.

“In the year since Putin's renewed unjustified and unprovoked war, the United States and NATO rallied around our friends in Ukraine. In Congress, we passed essential humanitarian and military aid packages, and pledged our support to Ukrainian President Zelensky. As the brave Ukraine people continue to fight back against Russia, we will continue to stand loyally by Ukraine and punish Putin for destroying cities, ripping apart families, and killing innocent lives. He will be held accountable for these atrocities.”

In response to the war crimes committed by Russians, Durbin introduced the *Justice for Victims of War Crimes Act* – which updates the current war crimes statute to enable prosecution of war criminals in the United States regardless of the nationality of the perpetrator or victim. The bill was recently [signed into law](#) by President Biden. Durbin-authored legislation restricting U.S. recognition of any Russian forcibly annexed areas of Ukraine also passed as part of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 National Defense Authorization Act.