

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 13, 2022

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Majority Leader
Room S-221
United States Capitol

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
Room S-220
United States Capitol

Dear Majority Leader Schumer and Minority Leader McConnell,

In April, you both requested that the co-chairs of the Senate NATO Observer Group lead a congressional delegation to the NATO Summit in Madrid to convey strong, bipartisan support for the Alliance at one of the most consequential moments in its history. Our delegation, which included Senators Blunt, Fischer, Durbin, Coons and Ernst, visited Finland and Sweden prior to attending the NATO Summit in Madrid, Spain on June 29th - 30th.

In Finland and Sweden, we met with their respective leadership who underscored the longstanding existing partnership with NATO that would facilitate a seamless integration into the Alliance. We understood how both countries would be net contributors to NATO, bringing capabilities to expand the Alliance geographically along the Northern flank and through the Baltic Sea, but also offering strong capabilities in the cyber, AI, and quantum sectors to contribute to the collective defense of all allies. In Sweden, we received a commitment from its leadership to reach the 2 percent GDP defense spend commitment by 2028, if not sooner. Finland already meets the NATO target by spending 2 percent of its GDP on defense

At the NATO Summit, we met with the NATO Deputy Secretary General who provided an impressive readout of the NATO Summit in delivering a new strategic concept, establishing a new baseline for the European deterrence and defense posture amid Russia's war on Ukraine, and identifying China as a challenge to the Alliance. We met with NATO aspirant countries to demonstrate our support and encouragement for their reform efforts made in pursuit of NATO membership and underscored bipartisan support for NATO's open door policy to new members. We also had the opportunity to meet with President Biden, Secretary Austin and Secretary Blinken to better understand U.S. efforts to support the Ukrainian government in responding to Russia's unprovoked war against Ukraine.

Our delegation believed it was important we spoke with one united voice at this critical moment in NATO's history. Once Turkey came to an agreement on the eve of the Summit to advance Sweden and Finland's applications for membership, we conveyed our strong commitment in the Senate to swiftly ratify the Washington Treaty to advance their applications to full membership.

These are unprecedented times in the history of our Alliance, and our allies and partners, especially Finland and Sweden, are anxious to move quickly from candidate status to full membership. In a May letter to President Biden, 82 Senators pledged to play their part in swiftly advancing Finland and Sweden's NATO membership. To that end, we ask that the treaty ratification process is completed before the August recess and hope that other NATO member countries will do the same. We pledge to work with you to ensure that the U.S. Senate takes this opportunity to send an unmistakable message of support to NATO at this critical moment in the history of the Alliance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jeanne Shaheen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name and last name clearly distinguishable.

Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Thom Tillis". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name and last name clearly distinguishable.

Thom Tillis
United States Senator