

New ambassador to Ukraine meets with newly formed coalition

U.S.-Ukraine Foundation

WASHINGTON – The Coalition for a Secure and Democratic Ukraine met with the new U.S. ambassador to Ukraine, William B. Taylor Jr., on June 6 to discuss ways to strengthen the U.S.-Ukraine partnership.

U.S.-Ukraine Foundation President Nadia McConnell began the meeting with an overview of the U.S.-Ukraine Foundation's work, which was followed by Ambassador Taylor's introductory remarks.

Ambassador William Green Miller, co-chair of the Coalition for a Secure and Democratic Ukraine, and Mark Levin, NCSJ executive director, spoke about the coalition's planned work.

With over 30 representatives of member-organizations and potential member-organizations present at the meeting, issues such as promoting the U.S. Congress-Verkhovna Rada partnership, supporting Ukraine's integration into the Euro-Atlantic community, and promoting Ukraine's market reform and democratic development, as well as encouraging Ukraine's energy efficiency were discussed.

The Coalition for a Secure and Democratic Ukraine has been created to support steps to further strengthen U.S.-Ukraine relations. Co-chaired by Ambassadors Steven Pifer and Miller, former U.S. ambassadors to Ukraine, the coalition will build on the success of the Jackson-Vanik Graduation Coalition.

Member-organizations in the Coalition for a Secure and Democratic Ukraine include the U.S.-Ukraine Foundation, NCSJ, SigmaBleyzer, the Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs, the Ukrainian American Coordinating Council, Ukrainian-American Environmental



Members of the Coalition for a Secure and Democratic Ukraine gather around the new U.S. ambassador to Ukraine, William Taylor Jr. (standing, center), following their discussion.

Association, The Bleyzer Foundation and the Ukrainian Federation of America.

The coalition intends to engage on an array of issues. It has assigned early priority to promoting the establishment of a closer institutional relationship between the U.S. Congress and Ukraine's Parliament. Such a link will promote interaction and mutual understanding between the two legislative branches. The coalition also will work to foster the integration of a democratic, market-oriented Ukraine into the Euro-Atlantic community.

The Coalition for a Secure and Democratic Ukraine is the successor to the Jackson-Vanik Graduation Coalition, which promoted Ukraine's removal from the provisions of the Jackson-Vanik amendment and extension of permanent normal trade relations status to Ukraine.

By March, when Congress passed legislation to accomplish this, the Jackson-Vanik Graduation Coalition had faxed, emailed and delivered nearly 1,000 letters to Congress, met with members of Congress and key Congressional staff,

held a press conference on Capitol Hill, wrote numerous newspaper articles and mobilized countless constituents throughout the United States to contact their congressional representatives. The Jackson-Vanik Graduation Coalition represented more than 250 businesses and Ukrainian American, Jewish American and other non-governmental organizations.

Those interested in joining the Coalition for a Secure and Democratic Ukraine may contact Marta Matselioukh at martam@usukraine.org or 202-223-2228.