



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3605

September 4, 2020

The Honorable Mike Pompeo Secretary
Department of State
2201 C Street NW Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Pompeo,

For over two hundred years, as many as 30,000 members of the Jewish community from around the world make an annual pilgrimage to the city of Uman, Ukraine to spend the Jewish New Year praying at the gravesite of their revered teacher, Rabbi Nachman of Uman. This year, the Ukrainian government limited the number of people who can safely come to pray due to concerns about the novel coronavirus. This past week, the Ukrainian government closed its borders to most foreigners from August 29 to September 28, 2020, which will make it impossible for those outside the country to participate in the religious pilgrimage this year.

We respectfully write to you to consider advocating on behalf of a group of American citizens whom find this annual pilgrimage extremely important.

The ruling to close the Ukrainian border has at least a dozen published exceptions, including allowing students, diplomats, and cultural figures to arrive by invitation. The Ukrainian government could add a limited religious exception allowing for a small fraction of the regular attendees (not to exceed 2000 people) to enter the country for a total of five days. All members of the group would be tested upon arrival at their own expense and would agree to follow all medical safety and security precautions and protocols at all times. This includes remaining in quarantine apart from the local population.

We respectfully ask that you consider this request given the wonderful relationship between the United States, Ukraine, and our Jewish communities. We believe that this limited exception, with all associated caveats, could make sure that a time-honored religious practice is continued safely.

Sincerely,



Jeff Duncan
Member of Congress



Kevin McCarthy
Member of Congress



William R. Timmons, IV
Member of Congress



Lee Zeldin
Member of Congress



Ralph Norman
Member of Congress



Troy Balderson
Member of Congress



Randy Weber
Member of Congress



Joe Wilson
Member of Congress



Glenn Grothman
Member of Congress



Mark Walker
Member of Congress



Debbie Lesko
Member of Congress



Chuck Fleischmann
Member of Congress



Steve King
Member of Congress



David Kustoff
Member of Congress



Jim Banks
Member of Congress



Doug Lamborn
Member of Congress



Andy Barr
Member of Congress


M.C.

John Shimkus
Member of Congress



Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Member of Congress



Warren Davidson
Member of Congress



H. Morgan Griffith
Member of Congress



Kevin Hern
Member of Congress



Jeff Fortenberry
Member of Congress



Greg Walden
Member of Congress



Dan Bishop
Member of Congress



Mark Amodei
Member of Congress