



Georgian Association

IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, INC

July 30, 2024

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
568 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Leader Schumer and Speaker Johnson,

We, the undersigned leaders of the Georgian-American Diaspora, are writing to respectfully request an invitation for President Salome Zourabichvili to address a joint session of the U.S. Congress in September 2024.

We are profoundly grateful for your unwavering support of Georgia's sovereignty, territorial integrity, and democratic development. The strategic partnership between the United States and Georgia has been a cornerstone of Georgia's progress. U.S. support is even more crucial now as Georgia approaches pivotal parliamentary elections on October 26th.

The institution of the presidency, under President Zourabichvili, has been a key guardian of democracy in Georgia at this crucial juncture. It plays a vital role in preserving the democratic framework and ensuring adherence to Western democratic norms and values. The role of the presidential institution in ensuring the fairness and integrity of the upcoming elections cannot be overstated.

President Zourabichvili's insights will be invaluable in highlighting Russia, China and Iran's malign influences in Georgia, Eurasia and the Middle East. It is vital to keep these anti-democratic and autocratic influences in check in order to advance the U.S. national security objectives across the Black Sea basin and beyond.

We believe President Zourabichvili's perspective is essential for informed deliberations on U.S. policy toward Georgia, which have been aptly articulated in the MEGOBARI Act (H.R.8566) and the Georgian People's Act (S.4425).

We are confident President Zourabichvili's address will strongly echo the Georgian citizens' robust support of Georgia's membership in the European Union and NATO. Reputable public opinion polls show nearly 80 percent of Georgian voters support NATO membership, with an even higher approval rate of 88 percent among those under 35. The desire to see Georgia as part of Europe is equally impressive, with 93 percent of voters under 35 and 86 percent of all Georgian voters favoring EU membership.

President Zourabichvili's address at a joint session of the U.S. Congress in September 2024 will have tremendous meaning for all those citizens of Georgia who are ignited with the desire for a democratic, prosperous, and independent Georgia. It will inspire citizens to exercise their constitutional right to vote during Georgia's 2024 parliamentary elections.

We look forward to your favorable consideration of this request.

With great appreciation,

Salome Tsereteli-Stephens
Georgian Association in the USA
President

Nino Japaridze, DPhil
Georgian Association in the USA
Past President (2001-2006)
Georgian-American Committee for
Free & Fair Elections Founder

Veronika Metonidze, Esq.
Georgian Association in the USA
Past President (2020-2024)

Elizabeth Zaldastani Napier
Georgian Association in the USA
Past President (1995-2001)
Harvard University Georgian Studies
Program Advisory Board
American Academy in Tbilisi Trustee

Cc: U.S. Senate and House Leadership, U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, The House Foreign Affairs Committee members, and Co-chairs of the House Select Committee on Strategic Competition with the Chinese Communist Party

President of the Senate Kamala Harris

Senator Patty Murray

Senator Chuck Schumer

Senator Mitch McConnell

Senator Dick Durbin

Senator John Thune

Senator Ben Cardin

Senator James Risch

Senator Robert Menendez

Senator Marco Rubio

Senator Jeanne Shaheen

Senator Mitt Romney

Senator Christopher Coons

Senator Pete Ricketts

Senator Christopher Murphy

Senator Rand Paul

Senator Tim Kaine

Senator Todd Young

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Senator Jeff Merkley

Senator John Barrasso

Senator Cory Booker

Senator Ted Cruz

Senator Brian Schatz

Senator Bill Hagerty

Senator Chris Van Hollen

Senator Tim Scott

Senator Tammy Duckworth

Representative Michael McCaul

Representative Gregory Meeks

Representative Chris Smith

Representative Brad Sherman

Representative Joe Wilson

Representative Gregory Meeks

Representative Scott Perry

Representative Brad Sherman

Representative Darrell Issa

Representative Gerry Connolly

Representative Ann Wagner

Representative Bill Keating

Representative Brian Mast

Representative David Cicilline

Representative Ken Buck

Representative Ami Bera

Representative Tim Burchett

Representative Joaquin Castro

Representative Mark Green

Representative Dina Titus

Representative Andy Barr

Representative Ted Lieu

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Representative Young Kim

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Representative Maria Elvira Salazar

Representative Colin Allred

Representative Bill Huizenga

Representative Andy Kim

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Representative Greg Stanton

Representative Madeleine Dean

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Representative Jim Costa

Representative Jason Crow

Representative Gabe Amo

Representative Brad Schneider

Representative Raja Krishnamoorthi