



Керівник Офісу Президента України

ON THE CONFERRAL OF THE ORDER OF MERIT

*Representative Jared F. Golden
(Third Class) Representative
Brian K. Fitzpatrick (First Class)*

Ukraine confers the Order of Merit upon citizens of foreign states whose personal service has strengthened Ukraine's sovereignty, its democratic institutions, and the friendship between our peoples. In recognizing Representatives Jared Golden and Brian Fitzpatrick, Ukraine honors two Americans whose commitment to our country is measured not in a single moment but in more than a decade of consistent personal engagement — and, in one case, in service rendered to Ukraine long before either man's name was widely known here.

Representative Jared F. Golden

Congressman Golden served as an infantryman in the United States Marine Corps, with combat deployments to Afghanistan and Iraq. He understands, from his own experience, what is asked of the soldier holding a position, and what it costs when that soldier is left to hold it alone.

He carried that understanding into public life. As a former co-chair of the For Country Caucus, the bipartisan body of military veterans serving in the House of Representatives, he led his fellow veterans of both parties in the conviction that those who have worn the uniform bear a particular duty to put country before party. It is a conviction Ukrainians recognize immediately, because it is the one by which our own soldiers live.

He has worked alongside Congressman Fitzpatrick in the Congressional Ukraine Caucus, where the two men have made common cause across the party line on the

questions most vital to our country's survival. Ukraine has rarely had to ask either of them twice.

Since the first days of the full-scale invasion he has been among the steadiest friends Ukraine has had in the United States Congress, at times when that friendship was neither easy nor popular. His door has remained open throughout — to the Ukrainian American families of Maine who came to him frightened for relatives under bombardment, and to the Ukrainian soldiers, veterans and civic leaders who have traveled to Washington to make their country's case. He has given them his time when others would not, and he has listened to them as one soldier listens to another.

In public he has spoken for Ukraine with force and without hedging, describing this war plainly as a fight for freedom and for the security of the democratic world. He has accepted personal and political cost for that clarity. Ukraine does not take such courage for granted. We have learned during this war to recognize it.

Representative Brian K. Fitzpatrick

Congressman Fitzpatrick's service to Ukraine began before he held elected office. In 2015, in the period following the Revolution of Dignity, he was deployed to Kyiv as a Supervisory Special Agent of the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation. There he worked directly with Ukrainian counterparts to help establish the National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine — an institution created from nothing, which remains a foundation of Ukraine's reform, its European path, and the confidence of its partners. He brought to that work a career devoted to the investigation of public corruption, and he gave Ukraine the benefit of it at the moment Ukraine most needed it.

That early service has never ended. As co-chair of the Congressional Ukraine Caucus, he has built and sustained a bipartisan community of American legislators committed to Ukraine's defense. As a designated Congressional Representative to NATO, he has carried Ukraine's case to the Alliance. He has returned to Ukraine during the full-scale war — to Kyiv, where he met President Zelenskyy, and to Kharkiv, a city under daily Russian fire, where he met the units and the civilians who hold Ukraine's northeast. He came not for a photograph but to see the war where it is fought, and to carry back what he saw.

Like Congressman Golden, he has made himself available without exception to Ukrainians who seek him out — to constituents, to diaspora organizations, and to the fighters and volunteers who arrive in Washington with little but their testimony. He has used his own voice, repeatedly and publicly, to argue that the defense of Ukraine is the defense of freedom itself.

Ukraine has recognized Congressman Fitzpatrick with this Order on two previous occasions. In conferring its First Class today, Ukraine marks not a new acquaintance

but an unbroken decade of service to our country, and extends the highest class this Order allows.

Conclusion

Ukraine honors these two men — one Republican, one Democrat — together and deliberately. In Washington they are partners of long standing. Congressman Fitzpatrick co-chairs the Problem Solvers Caucus, the bipartisan bloc in the House of Representatives dedicated to governing across party lines. Congressman Golden, who led the For Country Caucus of military veterans, has long served in the Problem Solvers Caucus and among its leadership, and helped forge the enduring partnership between those two bodies — the veterans and the bridge-builders — that has held ever since.

Through that partnership they have insisted that the defense of democratic freedom remain a shared American cause rather than one more contest between parties. In a divided Washington, they have kept Ukraine on the ground where it belongs: above the quarrel. Ukraine owes a great deal to that insistence.

Their conduct is recorded in *Courage Can Save US*, in which both men are profiled as examples of political courage exercised at personal cost. Through that account and through their own words, they have become known to Ukrainian Americans and to Ukrainians far beyond the United States — proof, at a moment when it was badly needed, that Ukraine's cause still commands conviction across the American political divide.

Their friendship to our country has never depended on which party holds power in Washington or in Kyiv. Ukraine's survival has depended on Americans like them.

*За нашу і вашу свободу.
For our freedom and yours.*

Lieutenant General Kyrylo Budanov
Head of the Office of the President of Ukraine

