

From: Yulia Brockdorf, RD, LD, CDCES, CST, NCC, LPC, BC-BC-ADM, BC-TMH, LMHC, FAIHM, LN, CD;
President, Nutrition For Success, LLC; President & Founding Board Member, DAWN, Inc.
To: House Committee on Rules
Re: In Support SB583 – Holodomor Remembrance Day

Dear Representative Fahey, Representative Breese-Iverson, Representative Kropf, Representative Nosse,
Representative Scharf, Representative Valderrama, and Representative Wallan,

On behalf of Ukrainian community of Oregon, I urge you to vote in favor of Senate Bill 583 recognizing
Holodomor Remembrance Day.

Holodomor is the genocide of the Ukrainian people through a Soviet Union manufactured famine. This trauma is all too recent in Ukrainian history. The history and reality of Holodomor has been documented by the journalists and historians despite Russia's attempts to hide the truth of the famine. Gareth Jones was the first journalist who unabashedly reported to western countries the horror and suffering he witnessed in Ukraine at the hands of the Soviet Union regime. He was afterwards banned from re-entering the Soviet Union for doing so. At the time of his report many dismissed him and echoed the narrative perpetuated by the Soviet Union that the famine was not occurring at all. Today there continue to be attempts to cover up the history of Holodomor, the extent of its impact, and the reality that the Soviet Union was the perpetrator of using starvation as attempts to annihilate Ukrainian identity and sovereignty. Timothy Snyder, Yale University Professor and Historian who has studied the Holocaust and Ukrainian history extensively, has spoken out about Holodomor and helped bring awareness to the facts surrounding these horrors. He wrote on it extensively in his book Bloodlands: "The wheat had all been taken away, in a heartless campaign of requisitions that began Europe's era of mass killing. It was 1933, and Joseph Stalin was deliberately starving Soviet Ukraine."

There is no history without truth. It is critical we do not allow history to be over-written. As Oregon representatives you have demonstrated your commitment to acknowledging an inconvenient history and advocating for the recognition of American history and the history of our world. This dedication to the recognition and honor of history was celebrated state-wide in 2022 when Oregon joined 24 other states in officially recognizing Juneteenth as a holiday.

Today is an opportunity to take a stand and own the truth about Holodomor. A day of remembrance is significant and brings awareness and education as well as ensures a significant part of history and will not be erased or forgotten. **The truth unacknowledged is history repeated.** There is power in speaking out and speaking the truth and it is empowering to communities of people whose suffering has been dismissed when their history is officially acknowledged.

I remember shivers running through my body the moment I read the names of my family members in the Holodomor Memorial Museums' Memory Book which documents those identified and named who died in the famine. I am honored to have spent a lot of time with my great-grandfather and great-grandmother throughout my childhood, and they shared with me many memories from their lives. It is their memories of Holodomor that I will never forget. In a year of great harvest, they were starving. Soviet soldiers had come and meticulously mass collected and removed their food; Ukraine's food. There was nothing left. They told me how they saw people dying, slowly starving to death. There is nothing that will ever bring back the lives lost; the void left in the hearts and souls of a nation of people. There is nothing that will ever remedy the hurt of Holodomor.

Holodomor cannot be undone. The pain and trauma cannot be assuaged. However, as we continue our collective and world-wide fight for justice, freedom, and equality, we can help ensure horror like Holodomor does not happen again by leading with the precedent of recognizing times of injustice, oppression, and genocide in history. As Ukraine once again faces the death of her people at the hands of Russia, I humbly implore you to join Ukraine on the fourth Saturday of November in remembering Holodomor, the genocide of Ukrainians by famine at the hands of the Soviet Union, by voting yes on Senate Bill 583. On behalf of Ukrainians, many of whom have sought refuge in Oregon, I thank you for your compassion and bravery.

Respectfully,
Yulia Brockdorf