

United States Senate  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 15, 2022

The Honorable Antony J. Blinken  
Secretary of State  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street NW  
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Blinken,

As the Russian courts proceed with the criminal trial of Brittney Griner, I am writing to request additional information regarding the Department of State's plan to secure her expeditious release.

Ms. Griner has been wrongfully detained in Russia since mid-February, the week before Russia expanded its war in Ukraine. Her criminal trial began on July 1, 2022, and her detainment is thus extended six months pending the outcome of the trial. She could face up to 10 years in Russian prison if convicted.

I am glad that on May 3, the State Department recognized Ms. Griner's current situation as a wrongful detainment. I am also grateful for your statements indicating that securing the release of illegally detained Americans is your top priority, the presence of Embassy staff at Ms. Griner's trial proceedings, and President Biden's and Vice President Harris's call with Brittney's wife, Cherelle, on July 6.

I ask now that you commit all possible resources and consider all reasonable options to secure Ms. Griner's swift release, including negotiations with the Russian Federation. I also ask that you provide answers to the following questions in a written or oral briefing to me and my staff:

- What options are you considering in ongoing negotiations?
- Are you able to ensure Brittney does not remain in custody during the trial?
- Do you have an indication of what the Russian government would accept in return for her release?

I recognize the complexity of the current situation, but Brittney Griner cannot become a victim of geopolitical events and autocratic war. I urge you to pursue swift negotiations to secure her immediate release.

Sincerely,



Raphael Warnock  
U.S. Senator