

D R A F T

SUMMARY

Urges Congress to lead global effort to reduce threat of nuclear war.

JOINT MEMORIAL

To the President of the United States and the Senate and the House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled:

We, your memorialists, the Eightieth Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon, in legislative session assembled, respectfully represent as follows:

Whereas nearly 14,500 nuclear weapons still exist in the world and pose an intolerable risk to human survival; and

Whereas the United States has roughly 6,450 nuclear weapons, constituting the world's most lethal nuclear weapons capability, and it is the only country to have used nuclear weapons in war; and

Whereas nuclear weapons pose a threat simply by existing, due to the possibility of accidents and miscalculations, many of which have been documented in the past; and

Whereas the United States is currently planning to spend at least \$1.2 trillion rebuilding our entire nuclear weapons arsenal; and

Whereas Oregon taxpayers spend approximately \$188 million on nuclear weapons annually, which takes funding away from necessary programs such as education, health care, infrastructure and the environment; and

Whereas in July 2017, 122 nations called for the elimination of all nuclear weapons by adopting the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons; and

Whereas the United States Constitution gives Congress the sole power to declare war, but the President of the United States currently has de facto

1 sole authority to order nuclear attacks, without any required consultation
2 or any system of checks and balances; and

3 Whereas Oregonians currently benefit from the safety and security pro-
4 vided by existing nuclear arms reduction treaties, including the Treaty on
5 the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons, Intermediate-Range Nuclear
6 Forces (INF) Treaty and New START, and previously benefited from the
7 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action; and

8 Whereas members of Oregon’s Congressional Delegation, including Sen-
9 ators Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley and Representatives Earl Blumenauer,
10 Peter DeFazio and Suzanne Bonamici, are leaders in Congress on nuclear
11 disarmament and have cosponsored legislation to end nuclear first strike
12 capability, reduce spending on nuclear weapons and support the INF treaty;
13 and

14 Whereas plutonium for the bomb the United States dropped on Nagasaki
15 was produced at the Hanford Nuclear Reservation, a site on the banks of the
16 Columbia River in the State of Washington that displaced area residents,
17 affected the health of “downwinders” and caused sacred sites, villages and
18 fishing areas of Native American tribes to be lost; and

19 Whereas the Hanford Site remains the most toxic contamination site in
20 the Western Hemisphere, threatening the health and environment of our re-
21 gion; and

22 Whereas the Marshall Islands were the site of 67 nuclear weapons tests
23 by the United States during the Cold War, and Oregon currently has one of
24 the largest populations of Marshall Islanders in the nation, many of whom
25 continue to suffer health consequences from this testing; and

26 Whereas Oregon has been home to many courageous people who have
27 dedicated their lives to the eradication of nuclear weapons, including
28 Hiroshima survivor Dr. Hideko Tamura Snider of Medford, Nobel Peace
29 Prize recipient Linus Pauling, Hanford “downwinder” Pat Hoover and Carol
30 Urner, who organized the first Hiroshima commemoration in Portland in
31 1962; and

1 Whereas the mining, milling, production, testing, storage and use of nu-
2 clear weapons disproportionately affect communities of color, indigenous
3 peoples and women, and adequate compensation has not been made for the
4 environmental and health consequences of nuclear weapons activities pur-
5 sued by the federal government during the 50 years of the Cold War, most
6 often on Native American land; and

7 Whereas in order to survive climate change, it is crucial that our
8 brightest scientific minds and limited resources no longer be squandered on
9 weapons, because as the climate crisis increases stress on communities
10 around the world and intensifies the likelihood of conflict, the potential for
11 nuclear war will grow; and

12 Whereas a single nuclear detonation in a major city in Oregon could
13 cause hundreds of thousands of immediate fatalities, hundreds of thousands
14 of injuries and illnesses from radiation and devastating effects on agricul-
15 tural land and natural resources for decades; and

16 Whereas the Oregon cities of Ashland, Beaverton, Corvallis, Eugene,
17 Lincoln City, Portland and Tualatin are all “Mayors for Peace” cities that
18 have supported the call from the mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki for the
19 abolition of nuclear weapons; and

20 Whereas Oregonians have the human right to live a life free from nuclear
21 contamination and the threat posed by the reckless use of nuclear weapons;
22 now, therefore,

23 **Be It Resolved by the Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon:**

24 That we, the members of the Eightieth Legislative Assembly, respectfully
25 urge the Congress of the United States to take appropriate steps to lead a
26 global effort to prevent nuclear war by establishing a system of checks and
27 balances to ensure that the President of the United States no longer have
28 the sole and unchecked authority to launch nuclear weapons, renouncing the
29 option of using nuclear weapons first, taking U.S. nuclear weapons off hair-
30 trigger alert, canceling the plan to replace the entire U.S. nuclear arsenal
31 with next-generation nuclear weapons and actively pursuing a verifiable and

1 multilateral agreement among nuclear-armed states to eliminate their nu-
2 clear arsenals; and be it further

3 Resolved, That the State of Oregon supports the Treaty on the Prohibition
4 of Nuclear Weapons and we call upon the federal government to join the
5 treaty; and be it further

6 Resolved, That a copy of this memorial shall be sent to the President of
7 the United States, to the Senate Majority Leader, to the Speaker of the
8 House of Representatives and to each member of the Oregon Congressional
9 Delegation.

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