

Oregon's Congressional Delegation Takes on Nuclear Weapons Threat

Kelly Campbell, Oregon PSR Executive Director

In this new political era of a Trump presidency, the need for a world without nuclear weapons has never been more urgent. That is why we've been so pleased to see many members of Oregon's congressional delegation stepping up to lead on nuclear weapons issues over the past few months. We've been in communication with their offices, and we know that many of you have also contacted them on these issues. The good news is that it's working, and here are a couple of examples:

Oregon Congressman Earl Blumenauer, along with Senator Jeff Merkley, were among the initial co-sponsors of Congressman Ted Lieu (CA) and Senator Edward Markey's (MA) Restricting First Use of Nuclear Weapons Act, which would prohibit the President from launching a nuclear first strike without a declaration of war by Congress. Oregon's 4th District Congressman Peter DeFazio also co-sponsored this important legislation.



Kelly Campbell speaks about nuclear weapons abolition during our 2016 Hiroshima & Nagasaki memorial.

Both Oregon Senators Merkley and Wyden were among eight senators to join Senator Markey in introducing legislation that would limit funding for a new nuclear-armed air-launched missile called the Long-Range Standoff Weapon. This cruise missile could be launched without warning, putting pressure on other nuclear-armed states to keep their arsenals on high alert and increasing the risk of nuclear war. Cruise missiles come in both nuclear and non-nuclear varieties, so the use of a non-nuclear missile against a nuclear-armed state could be mistaken for a nuclear strike, leading to unintended nuclear war. The missile and its refurbished warhead will reportedly cost between \$20-30 billion over the next twenty years to build, and this legislation would cap funding at 2017 levels until the administration submits a Nuclear Posture Review to Congress.

Both Oregon Senators also signed a recent letter by Senator Feinstein (CA) to the Secretary of Defense in opposition to two nuclear weapons-related recommendations outlined in the Defense Science Board's most recent report, Seven Defense Priorities for the New Administration. The report encourages the Departments of Defense and Energy to build new nuclear weapons and questioned their ability to maintain our nuclear warheads in the absence of testing, which the senators reject.

Take Action! It's important that our elected officials in Washington, DC hear that we, their constituents, want more of this leadership for a nuclear weapons free world. Please call both Senators and your Representative to encourage them to continue to step up for nuclear sanity. If you live in Reps. Bonamici, Schrader or Walden's district, it's even more important that they hear from you. They can all be reached through the Congressional switchboard at 202-224-3121.