

Enrolled

Senate Joint Memorial 5

Sponsored by Senator DEMBROW, Representatives SANCHEZ, KENY-GUYER; Senators FREDERICK, GOLDEN, MANNING JR, MONNES ANDERSON, STEINER HAYWARD, Representatives EVANS, GOMBERG, HELM, LIVELY, MARSH, MCLAIN, NOSSE, POWER, REARDON, WILLIAMS (at the request of Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility)

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

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

Whereas members of Oregon's Congressional Delegation, including Senators Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley and Representatives Earl Blumenauer, Peter DeFazio and Suzanne Bonamici, are leaders in Congress on nuclear disarmament and have cosponsored legislation to end nuclear first strike capability, reduce spending on nuclear weapons and support the INF treaty; and

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

Whereas the Hanford Site, upriver from Oregon, remains the most toxic contamination site in the Western Hemisphere, a nuclear sacrifice zone that threatens the health and environment of our region; and

Whereas the Marshall Islands were the site of 67 nuclear weapons tests by the United States during the Cold War, and Oregon currently has one of the largest populations of Marshall Islanders in the nation, many of whom continue to suffer health consequences from their home being used as a nuclear sacrifice zone; and

Whereas the service and suffering of all atomic veterans was acknowledged by the State of Oregon in 2005 with the designation of July 16 every year as Atomic Veterans Day, and in 2017 with the designation of Interstate 5 between Salem and Albany as Atomic Veterans Memorial Highway; and

Whereas Oregon has been home to many courageous people who have dedicated their lives to the eradication of nuclear weapons, including Hiroshima survivor Dr. Hideko Tamura Snider of Medford, Hanford cleanup advocate and Yakama Nation Elder Russell Jim, Nobel Peace Prize recipient Linus Pauling, Hanford “Downwinder” Pat Hoover of Eugene and Carol Urner, who organized the first Hiroshima commemoration in Portland in 1962; and

Whereas nuclear weapons-related mining, milling, production, testing, storage and use disproportionately affect communities of color, indigenous peoples and women, and adequate compensation has not been made for the environmental and health consequences of nuclear weapons activities pursued by the federal government during the 50 years of the Cold War, most often on Native American land; and

Whereas in order to survive climate change and pursue social justice, we will need our brightest scientific minds and limited resources to no longer be squandered on weapons, because as the climate crisis increases stress on communities around the world and intensifies the likelihood of conflict, the potential for nuclear war will grow; and

Whereas a single nuclear detonation in a major city in Oregon could cause hundreds of thousands of immediate fatalities, hundreds of thousands of injuries and illnesses from radiation and devastating effects on agricultural land and natural resources for decades; and

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

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

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

That we, the members of the Eightieth Legislative Assembly, respectfully urge the Congress of the United States to take appropriate steps and fulfill its ethical obligation to its people to lead a global effort to prevent nuclear war by establishing a system of checks and balances to ensure that the President of the United States no longer has the sole and unchecked authority to launch nuclear weapons, renouncing the option of using nuclear weapons first, taking U.S. nuclear weapons off hair-trigger alert, canceling the plan to replace the entire U.S. nuclear arsenal with next-generation nuclear weapons and actively pursuing a verifiable and multilateral agreement among nuclear-armed states to eliminate their nuclear arsenals; and be it further

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

Resolved, That a copy of this memorial shall be sent to the President of the United States, to the Senate Majority Leader, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and to each member of Congress.

Adopted by Senate May 20, 2019

Lori L. Brocker, Secretary of Senate

Peter Courtney, President of Senate

Adopted by House June 24, 2019

Tina Kotek, Speaker of House