

WRITTEN TESTIMONY TO RI HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON STATE GOVERNMENT and ELECTIONS

We are testifying in favor of HR 7329

Introduced By: Representatives Donovan, Morales, Henries, Stewart, Batista, Cruz,
Speakman, McGaw, Potter, and Ackerman

ENTITLED, HOUSE RESOLUTION URGING THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO PURSUE A BROAD RANGE OF MEASURES TO REDUCE THE DANGER OF NUCLEAR WAR, TO SIGN AND RATIFY THE TREATY ON THE PROHIBITION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS (TPNW), TO MAKE NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT THE CENTERPIECE OF OUR NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY, AND TO SPEARHEAD A GLOBAL EFFORT TO PREVENT NUCLEAR WAR

As members of a society, we must draw a hard firm line as to what is and what is not acceptable moral behavior. At what point does behavior become so unacceptable that we as members of a representative democracy must tell our government to stop and to reverse directions that they have taken and decisions they have made that are globally considered to be immoral? The maintenance and proliferation of nuclear weapons is clearly such behavior.

You are all surely aware of the costs and consequences of maintaining a nuclear arsenal that is currently capable of destroying the Earth and its population several times over.

The United States is the only country to have used nuclear weapons in war. In the final days of World War II, it detonated two atomic bombs over the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, killing more than 200,000 people instantly or within a few months of the attacks. Many thousands more died in the years following the attacks from illnesses caused by their exposure to radiation from the bombs. Almost all of the victims were civilians. They were ordinary citizens going about their lives. They were children, parents, the elderly, women and men. People just like us!

Perhaps the presence of nuclear weapons will never be totally eliminated for generations to come, but reducing the nuclear budget to being just able to destroy the Earth only once over and reapportioning the money saved toward moral humanitarian efforts would be a good start. Many states and municipalities have taken steps to encourage a significant beginning, including the divestment of public funds from nuclear weapon makers in response to the TPNW's entry into force. An opinion survey published in 2021 found that there is "baseline support" for the TPNW in the United States of around 65 per cent of the public.

The legislatures of many states have already passed resolutions in support of the TPNW, and several members of the US congress have pledged to work for the United States' signature and ratification of the treaty.

Please make Rhode Island one of the leaders in this effort. We cannot imagine any legislators who represent the good people of their constituencies that would vote against this clearly common-sense resolution. It is not in our nature to judge those who don't support this legislation, but their failure will follow them in the record of their legislative history.

Sincerely yours,
Margo Murphy and Charles Rupacz
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Providence, RI
Members Pax Christi Rhode Island