

SENATE/HOUSE DOCKET, NO. FILED ON:

**SENATE/HOUSE . . . . . No.**

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*The Commonwealth of Massachusetts*

\_\_\_\_\_  
PRESENTED BY:  
\_\_\_\_\_

*To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:*

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying resolve:

Resolutions and a resolve relative to the existential threat posed by nuclear weapons to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

\_\_\_\_\_  
PETITION OF:  
\_\_\_\_\_

NAME:

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

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**SENATE/HOUSE . . . . . No.**

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*The Commonwealth of Massachusetts*

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**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Second General Court  
(2021-2022)**

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Resolutions and a resolve relative to the existential threat posed by nuclear weapons to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

1 SECTION 1.

2 WHEREAS, the continued existence of nearly 14,000 nuclear weapons worldwide poses  
3 a grave and existential threat to the citizens of the Commonwealth;

4 WHEREAS, the citizens of the Commonwealth have expressed their deep concern about  
5 this continuing threat over many decades and continue to do so;

6 WHEREAS, this concern has been expressed through numerous Town Meetings and City  
7 Council resolutions throughout the Commonwealth;

8 WHEREAS, this concern has also been expressed through numerous resolutions and bills  
9 brought before this General Court, including at least five such bills introduced in the last  
10 legislative session on this topic;

11 WHEREAS, in general it is the federal government and not the state which has  
12 jurisdiction over matters relating to nuclear weapons, this does not mean there is no role for the  
13 Commonwealth to play in this regard;

14           WHEREAS, in fact, it has been shown that the policies and actions of states can lead the  
15 way to important and necessary changes at the federal level and even internationally;

16           WHEREAS, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts played a leading role in ending the  
17 nuclear arms race with the Soviet Union in the 1980s, by adopting a Nuclear Freeze resolution  
18 and encouraging other states to follow our example;

19           WHEREAS, 40 years later it is not a “freeze” of nuclear weapons that is needed to save  
20 the Commonwealth, and the world, from the unthinkable catastrophe of a nuclear war or a  
21 nuclear accident, but the complete elimination of these weapons, in line with the Treaty on the  
22 Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which enters into force as international law on January 22,  
23 2021;

24           THEREFORE, be it resolved that it shall henceforth be the policy of the General Court of  
25 the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to pursue whatever measures may be found necessary and  
26 appropriate to protect the citizens of the Commonwealth from the existential threat posed by  
27 nuclear weapons and to contribute in whatever ways it can, as a Commonwealth, towards the  
28 total elimination of these weapons from all countries, in line with the Treaty on the Prohibition  
29 of Nuclear Weapons; and be it further

30           RESOLVED, that the General Court endorses the national Back from the Brink platform  
31 which calls on our federal leaders to embrace the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons  
32 and to take immediate steps to prevent nuclear war by renouncing the option of using nuclear  
33 weapons first, ending the President’s sole, unchecked authority to launch a nuclear attack, taking  
34 U.S. nuclear weapons off hair-trigger alert, canceling the plan to replace its entire arsenal with  
35 enhanced weapons, and actively pursuing a verifiable agreement among nuclear-armed states to  
36 eliminate their nuclear arsenals; and be it further

37           RESOLVED. That the clerk of the Senate transmit copies of this resolution to the  
38 President and Vice President of the United States, the Speaker and Minority Leader of the United  
39 States House of Representatives, the Majority and Minority Leaders of the United States Senate,  
40 and to each Senator and Representative from the Commonwealth in the Congress of the United  
41 States, and to the Governor of the Commonwealth.

42 SECTION 2. In order to advance the steps that the Commonwealth itself can take to address the  
43 dangers posed by nuclear weapons to the citizens of this Commonwealth;

44           RESOLVED, There shall be a Citizens Commission to advance the intention of the  
45 Commonwealth of Massachusetts to pursue whatever measures may be found necessary and  
46 appropriate to protect the citizens of the Commonwealth from the existential threat posed by  
47 nuclear weapons and to contribute towards the total elimination of these weapons from all  
48 countries, in line with the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons;

49           The Citizens Commission shall investigate measures and make recommendations to the  
50 General Court that may include, but are not limited to, the divestment of state pension funds and  
51 other funds under the control of the Commonwealth from companies involved in the  
52 development, production or maintenance of nuclear weapons; the disqualification from an award  
53 of a state contract a bidder or vendor involved in the development, production or maintenance of  
54 nuclear weapons; other financial or legal measures that may assist or encourage the transition  
55 from nuclear weapons-related jobs and activities taking place within the Commonwealth to jobs  
56 and activities that instead address the climate crisis and other pressing social needs.

57 SECTION 3. The Citizens Commission shall be comprised of 11 United States citizens who are  
58 residents of Massachusetts, one member who shall be appointed by the governor, one member  
59 who shall be appointed by the secretary of the Commonwealth, one member who shall be  
60 appointed by the attorney general, one member who shall be appointed by the speaker of the

61 house, one member who shall be appointed by the senate president, and six members who shall  
62 additionally be appointed by the governor, from a group of ten individuals nominated by the not  
63 for profit state-wide grassroots organization Massachusetts Peace Action. No person shall be  
64 appointed to the Commission who has not publicly applied for such appointment, which  
65 applications the governor shall cause to be posted on a page established for the public knowledge  
66 and oversight of the appointment and operation of the Commission on the official website of the  
67 Commonwealth. No person shall be appointed to the Commission that is a current or former  
68 employee of any company or military installation involved in the development, production or  
69 maintenance of nuclear weapons.

70 An application by any citizen who seeks to serve on this Commission shall state the  
71 intent of the applicant to comply with and advance the policy established by this act; the  
72 applicant's qualifications and interest in serving on the Commission; the city or town in which  
73 the applicant resides; and the employment of the applicant, if employed. All applications for  
74 service on the Commission shall be submitted within 30 days of the posting of the appointment  
75 opportunity on the official website of the Commonwealth, which posting the governor shall  
76 cause to be made within 30 days of the effective date of this Act.

77 All appointments shall be made no sooner than 90 days and no later than 120 days  
78 following the effective date of this act. In making appointments to the Commission, the  
79 governor, secretary of the Commonwealth, attorney general, president of the senate and speaker  
80 of the house shall consider the range of expertise needed on the commission, and shall seek to  
81 ensure that the Commission reflects a range of geographical and demographic backgrounds.

82 Appointees to the Commission shall serve without compensation.

83 The governor's initial appointee shall convene the first meeting of the commission within  
84 30 days of the final member of the Commission being appointed. Members of the Commission

85 shall, at their first meeting, elect a chair or co-chairs, in the manner as the members of the  
86 commission may decide by majority vote. The Commission shall meet on a regular basis to do  
87 research and to gather evidence, testimony and advice in the manner that the members of the  
88 commission determine is most conducive to achieving the objectives of this act, provided,  
89 however, that the Commission proceedings and activities shall be subject to the Open Meeting  
90 Law and the Public Records Law, and that all residents of Massachusetts have a reasonable  
91 opportunity to offer their views and ideas related to the policies herein to the commission.

92         The Commission shall hold at least five public hearings in different parts of the  
93 Commonwealth to inform citizens and legislators about the humanitarian consequences to the  
94 Commonwealth of Massachusetts of any conceivable use of nuclear weapons and the  
95 implications of the entry into force of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons,  
96 including but not limited to a full appraisal of how jobs, technologies and industries currently  
97 devoted to nuclear weapons within the commonwealth will be affected.

98         The commission shall file a report with the clerks of the house and senate, and with the  
99 governor, the lieutenant governor, the attorney general, and all Massachusetts members of the  
100 Massachusetts federal congressional delegation no later than July 31, 2024. The report may  
101 include recommendations for specific legislation aimed at reducing the involvement of private  
102 companies and public institutions within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in the design,  
103 manufacture or maintenance of nuclear weapons, and increasing their involvement in the global  
104 effort to address the climate emergency and to meet other pressing social needs.