



Cambridge City MA

Policy Order POR 2021 #195

That the City Council urges the US Congress to fulfill its obligation to prevent nuclear war, as outlined in the Back from the Brink campaign

Information

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| Department: | City Clerk's Office, JW | Sponsors: | Councillor Jivan Sobrinho-Wheeler, Councillor Patricia Nolan |
| Category: | Policy Order | | |

Attachments

[Printout](#)

Body

- WHEREAS: [Approximately 13,100 nuclear warheads](#) exist in the world today, with 91 percent of these weapons owned by the United States and Russia, and pose a significant risk to human survival; and
- WHEREAS: The United States was the [first country to develop and use nuclear weapons](#) in war; and
- WHEREAS: The United States is currently planning to spend [at least \\$1.7 trillion](#) to rebuild the US nuclear weapons arsenal, funds that could be used for necessary programs such as [education, healthcare, infrastructure, and a climate change mitigation](#); and
- WHEREAS: On January 22, 2021, the [UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons](#) entered into force with a current 55 ratifications and 86 signatures, and support from the majority of the world's nations; 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: Massachusetts and Cambridge have been home to many courageous people who have dedicated their lives to the eradication of nuclear weapons, and is the birthplace of the historic Nuclear Freeze movement in the 1980s, which helped break the impasse between the US and Soviet Union and bring an end to the Cold War, and the Massachusetts-based International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War which received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1985; and
- WHEREAS: Any city across the globe could be targeted for hostile action, and hundreds of cities in Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, the United Kingdom, and the United States—including Baltimore, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Portland (OR), Salt Lake City, San Francisco, Tucson, and Washington DC, and the states of California, Maine, New Jersey, and Oregon—are speaking up and calling on their governments to support the 2017 UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons; now therefore be it

RESOLVED: That the City Council of Cambridge respectfully urges the Congress of the United States

to take appropriate steps to fulfill its ethical obligation to its people and join the global effort to prevent nuclear war, as outlined in the [Back from the Brink campaign](#), by:

1. renouncing the option of using nuclear weapons first;
2. establishing a system of checks and balances ensuring that the President of the United States no longer has the sole and unchecked authority to launch nuclear weapons;
3. taking US nuclear weapons off hair-trigger alert;
4. cancelling the plan to replace the entire US nuclear arsenal with next-generation nuclear weapons; and
5. actively pursuing a verifiable and multilateral agreement among nuclear-armed states to eliminate nuclear arsenals; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the City of Cambridge supports the United Nations' Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and calls upon the US federal government to join the treaty; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the City of Cambridge authorizes that the passage of this resolution be considered by the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) for the [ICAN Save Cities Campaign](#), joining cities from around the world in formally supporting the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons; and be it further

RESOLVED: That a digital copy of this resolution will be sent to the President Biden; Vice President Harris; Defense Secretary Austin; Secretary of State Blinken; Senate Majority Leader Schumer; Speaker of the House Pelosi; Governor Baker; US Senators Warren and Markey; and US Representatives Pressley, Clark, McGovern, Trahan, Keating, Lynch, Auchincloss, Moulton, and Neal.

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