

# SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 4

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By: **Senators Lam, Brooks, Benson, Lewis Young, and Muse**

Introduced and read first time: January 27, 2025

Assigned to: Education, Energy, and the Environment

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## SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

1 A Senate Joint Resolution concerning

2 **Use of Nuclear Weapons**

3 FOR the purpose of stating that the General Assembly joins certain other state legislative  
4 bodies, counties, and municipalities in passing a Back from the Brink resolution on  
5 reducing the possibility of the use of nuclear weapons; urging members of the State’s  
6 Congressional Delegation to cosponsor a certain federal resolution related to the use  
7 of nuclear weapons; and urging the U.S. President and the U.S. Senate to endorse  
8 the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

9 WHEREAS, Nuclear weapons are the most destructive weapons ever created by  
10 mankind; and

11 WHEREAS, 90% of nuclear weapons are controlled by the U.S. and Russia, with the  
12 rest being controlled by seven other countries: China, France, Israel, India, North Korea,  
13 Pakistan, and the United Kingdom; and

14 WHEREAS, The use of even a small fraction of nuclear weapons, such as 100  
15 Hiroshima-sized bombs, which are small bombs by modern standards, could put at least  
16 5.5 million tons of soot into the atmosphere and cause climate disruption across the planet,  
17 cutting food production and putting 250 million people at risk of starvation; and

18 WHEREAS, A large-scale nuclear war would kill hundreds of millions of people  
19 directly, risk starvation for 5 billion people worldwide including in the U.S., and cause  
20 unimaginable environmental damage and catastrophic climate disruption by dropping  
21 temperatures across the planet to levels not seen since the Ice Age, causing the vast  
22 majority of the human race to starve and possibly cause humans to become extinct as a  
23 species; and

24 WHEREAS, The U.S. and Russia rely on the assurances of deterrence, that nuclear  
25 arsenals are never used, and yet there have been many close calls due to human or  
26 mechanical error; and



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1 WHEREAS, The U.S. President has the authority to unilaterally initiate the use of  
2 nuclear weapons, and during times of crisis, individuals lower in the chain of command  
3 might mistakenly do so; and

4 WHEREAS, The U.S. maintains nuclear missiles on hair-trigger alert, making them  
5 capable of being launched within minutes and greatly increasing the risk of an unintended  
6 or unauthorized launch, especially in current times when tensions are mounting between  
7 nuclear powers and the U.S. maintains the right to initiate a nuclear launch; and

8 WHEREAS, The ongoing expenditure of \$1.7 trillion over 30 years to enhance the  
9 U.S. nuclear arsenal is fueling a global arms race; and

10 WHEREAS, Despite the incredible expenditure on nuclear weapons, one in six  
11 military families are food insecure; and

12 WHEREAS, Marylanders paid an estimated \$2.1 billion in taxes in fiscal year 2024  
13 for the nuclear weapons complex; and

14 WHEREAS, Living in the shadow of Washington, D.C., Marylanders are especially  
15 at risk if there is nuclear war, making it appropriate that the General Assembly of  
16 Maryland urge the federal government to do everything possible to reduce the risk of  
17 nuclear war starting by error or by intent; and

18 WHEREAS, Two major conflicts in 2024 involving nations that possess nuclear  
19 weapons make multilateral negotiations between nuclear nations more important now than  
20 ever; and

21 WHEREAS, In July 2017, the United Nations adopted the Treaty on the Prohibition  
22 of Nuclear Weapons which makes it illegal for ratifying nations to develop, test, produce,  
23 manufacture or otherwise acquire, possess or stockpile, transfer, use, or threaten the use  
24 of nuclear weapons; and

25 WHEREAS, As of September 24, 2024, 73 nations have ratified or acceded to the  
26 Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons; and

27 WHEREAS, House Resolution 77 introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives  
28 in the 118th Congress embraced the goals and provisions of the Treaty on the Prohibition  
29 of Nuclear Weapons, as well as the five policies of Back from the Brink to: (1) actively  
30 pursue a multilateral verifiable agreement among nuclear armed states to eliminate their  
31 nuclear arsenals; (2) renounce the option of using nuclear weapons first; (3) end the  
32 President's sole authority to launch a nuclear attack; (4) take nuclear weapons off  
33 hair-trigger alert; and (5) cancel current plans to replace or modernize its nuclear arsenal;  
34 now, therefore, be it

35 RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the General  
36 Assembly of Maryland joins the seven state legislative bodies in Rhode Island, Maine,  
37 Oregon, California, and over 75 municipalities and counties, including Baltimore County,

1 Frederick County, Washington, D.C., Montgomery County, and Prince George's County, in  
2 passing a Back from the Brink resolution; and be it further

3       RESOLVED, That the General Assembly of Maryland urges members of the  
4 Maryland Congressional Delegation to cosponsor a new resolution in the 119th Congress  
5 that embraces the goals and provisions of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons  
6 and the Back from the Brink resolution; and be it further

7       RESOLVED, That the General Assembly of Maryland urges the U.S. President and  
8 the U.S. Senate to endorse the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons; and be it  
9 further

10       RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded by the Department of  
11 Legislative Services to the Honorable Wes Moore, Governor of Maryland; the Honorable  
12 William C. Ferguson, IV, President of the Senate of Maryland; the Honorable Adrienne A.  
13 Jones, Speaker of the House of Delegates; and the Maryland Congressional Delegation; and  
14 be it further

15       RESOLVED, That certified copies of this Joint Resolution be sent by the Secretary  
16 of State to: the Honorable Donald J. Trump, President of the United States of America,  
17 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, D.C. 20500; the Honorable JD Vance, Vice  
18 President of the United States, President of the United States Senate, Suite S-212, United  
19 States Capitol Building, Washington, D.C. 20510; the Honorable Charles E. Grassley,  
20 President Pro Tempore of the United States Senate, 135 Hart Senate Office Building,  
21 Washington, D.C. 20510; the Honorable John R. Thune, United States Senate Majority  
22 Leader, 511 Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510; the Honorable Chuck  
23 Schumer, United States Senate Minority Leader, 322 Hart Senate Office Building,  
24 Washington, D.C. 20510; the Honorable James Michael Johnson, Speaker of the United  
25 States House of Representatives, Suite H-232, United States Capitol Building,  
26 Washington, D.C. 20510; and the Honorable Hakeem Jeffries, United States House of  
27 Representatives Minority Leader, 2433 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C.  
28 20515.