

## SUPPORT FOR SJ2 AND HJ3

Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee Chair Feldman; Vice-Chair Kagan; and members:

House Rules and Executive Nominations Committee Chair Healy; Vice-Chair Holmes; and members:

I am writing to ask you to support SJ2 and HJ3. This matters to me, my family, our community, our state, our nation, and ultimately to every country and every person on Earth.

Today, nine nations possess approximately 13,100 nuclear weapons, each far more destructive than those detonated over Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan in 1945. The detonation of even a small number of these weapons would have catastrophic global consequences. There are the additional risks of terrorists obtaining nuclear weapons and using them, or that a misunderstanding, miscommunication, or computer error would trigger a nuclear war.

Let me be clear that I am for a strong US defense. Nuclear weapons, however, don't add to our safety. Contrary to conventional thinking, they make us less safe because, in the final analysis, if nuclear weapons are used, we all lose because of their vast and long-lasting destructive power including radiation fallout that does not respect national boundaries. A stronger defense comes from strategic spending (e.g. cybersecurity, mitigation of climate change, anti-terrorism actions, increased protection for infrastructure) as well addressing core social issues (racism, sexism, poverty, hunger), while promoting and strengthening democracies with free press, religion, assembly, and elections.

There are plans to rebuild the U.S. nuclear arsenal at the staggering cost of \$1.7 trillion over the next three decades. This includes plans to build more "usable" nuclear weapons for nuclear war fighting, increasing the chance that these weapons could be used. U.S taxpayers already spend some \$2 million every hour of every day maintaining the U.S. nuclear arsenal. Marylanders paid over \$2 billion this past tax year in support of the nuclear weapons complex. There are better ways to invest these enormous sums to make America safer than buying more nuclear weapons. While even maintaining a small number of nuclear weapons has risks, it would still serve as a deterrent to any enemy. There is no good reason to invest in more.

This resolution calls for a 5-point set of practical policy solutions that would greatly reduce the risks posed by nuclear weapons and the chances that they will ever be used. Similar resolutions have passed in over 70 cities (including Baltimore and Frederick) and counties (such as Montgomery and Prince George's County) along with seven state legislatures. MedChi, our state medical society, has endorsed this legislation.

Maryland should add its voice to this effort by passing SJ2 and HJ3.

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