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## HJ 7 – Back from the Brink Hearing in House Rules Committee - MARCH 9, 2025 Position: SUPPORT (FAV)

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Chair Healey, Vice-chair Holmes, and members of the Rules Committee.

Thank you for your time and your attention.

I am Dr Terry Fitzgerald - a physician, a member of Chesapeake Physicians for Social Responsibility, and a grandfather. **I urge you to approve HJ 7**, a resolution that calls on the federal government to take actions to reduce the risk of nuclear war.

My grandfather was born in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. When my youngest grandchild is my age we will about to enter the 22<sup>nd</sup> century.

My grandfather could tell me about his father who had come to the US because of the desperate situation in Ireland after the potato famine. All of my ancestors were Irish. But my brothers and I married women whose ancestors were German, Czech, and Ashkenazi Jews. Our own children are married to people whose parents and grandparents were Welsh, Italian, Norwegian, and Haitian. I like to talk about this classic American family story and how this diversity brings together the strengths of so many traditions, making the US the unique nation that it is.

I like to tell this story. But I fear that my grandchild, on the eve of the 22<sup>nd</sup> century, will not be able to tell his story and certainly that his grandchild will not be able to – because I have a very real fear that our civilization will not exist at that time – unless we make changes in the way we behave now.

Global thermonuclear war would certainly end civilization as we know it. Even a “limited” regional nuclear war could have devastating effects on the climate and destabilize societies around the world. Even if the risk of nuclear war at any one time is quite small, the risk over the next 73 years becomes very real.

We look upon you delegates as our representatives, our spokespeople. Through HJ 7 we ask you, as our representatives, to speak to the federal government, calling on it to take certain common-sense steps to reduce the risk of nuclear war without reducing our defensive capabilities one bit. We ask you to do this now because now is the only time that there is. In addition, turning this ship of destiny to a new direction will take years, as have all arms control negotiations. We should begin this task now, before we travel further in this risky direction.

Speaking as a physician I remind you that a principle of public health is: **We must prevent what we cannot cure.**

Speaking as a grandparent I can tell you this: I have looked into the eyes of a 1 year old child and seen the terror of nuclear war. I plead with you to take this action to prove my vision wrong.

Please give a **FAVORABLE REPORT** on HJ 7.