Sponsored by:
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Assemblyman McKeon

SYNOPSIS
Urge federal government to ratify Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and pursue other measures to reduce danger of nuclear war.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT
As introduced.
AN ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION urging the federal government to pursue a broad range of measures to reduce the danger of nuclear war and to ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

WHEREAS, Nuclear weapons are the most destructive weapons ever created by mankind, with immense destructive capacity and lingering radiation effects after detonation; and

WHEREAS, More than ninety percent of these weapons are in the hands of the United States and Russia, and the rest are held by seven other countries: China, France, Israel, India, Pakistan, North Korea, and the United Kingdom; and

WHEREAS, Since the height of the Cold War, the United States has reduced its active weapons by more than 25,000 nuclear warheads, but about 4,000 still exist, almost 2,000 of which are on alert for use at short notice; and

WHEREAS, A large-scale nuclear war would cause hundreds of millions of casualties and cause unimaginable environmental damage, and create catastrophic climate disruption by dropping temperatures across the planet to levels that would cause crop failures and mass starvation; and

WHEREAS, Under current U.S. law, the President has the authority to unilaterally initiate the use of a nuclear weapon; and

WHEREAS, The power of the United States’ stockpile of nuclear weapons is too devastating and the result of their use to irrevocable to be left to the sole authority of the President; and

WHEREAS, Renouncing the option of launching a first strike with nuclear weapons would reduce tension and make a nuclear exchange between the United States and another country less likely; and

WHEREAS, These weapons are placed on hair-trigger alert, meaning that the likelihood of an accidental launch or a launch as a result of an international misunderstanding is highly possible; and

WHEREAS, The planned expenditure of about $500 billion over the next decade to maintain and enhance our nuclear arsenal, including by developing and deploying new nuclear weapons and broadening the conditions for use, will not only increase the risk of nuclear disaster, but fuel a global arms race and divert crucial resources needed to assure the well-being of the American people and people all over the world; and

WHEREAS, The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons was adopted by the United Nations in July of 2017 and, to date, has been signed by 70 countries, and prohibits the development, testing, production, stockpiling, transfer, use, and threat of use of nuclear weapons, and sets out procedures for nuclear-armed signatories to destroy their existing nuclear stockpile; and

WHEREAS, The United States, as well as the other nuclear weapon states, are not yet signatories to this treaty; and
WHEREAS, These actions would be a major step toward eliminating
the existence of nuclear weapons, which pose an intolerable risk to
human survival, especially if the United States pursues an
agreement among nuclear-armed states to eliminate their arsenals;
now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the General Assembly of the State of New
Jersey:

1. The General Assembly of the State of New Jersey urges the
federal government to spearhead a global effort to prevent nuclear
war by renouncing the option of using nuclear weapons first, ending
the President’s sole authority to launch a nuclear attack, taking U.S.
nuclear weapons off hair-trigger alert, and canceling the plan to
replace its entire nuclear arsenal with enhanced weapons, and
actively pursue a verifiable agreement among nuclear-armed states
to eliminate their nuclear arsenals.

2. The General Assembly of the State of New Jersey urges the
President and the Senate of the United States to ratify the Treaty on
the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

3. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State,
shall be transmitted by the Clerk of the General Assembly to the
President of the United States, the Majority and Minority Leaders of
the United States Senate, the Speaker and Minority Leader of the
United States House of Representatives, and each member of
Congress elected thereto from New Jersey.

STATEMENT

This resolution urges the federal government to pursue a broad
range of measures to reduce the danger of nuclear war and to ratify
the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. The treaty would
prohibit signatories from developing, arming themselves with, or
using nuclear weapons. The resolution also calls on the federal
government to renounce the option of using nuclear weapons first,
end the President’s sole authority to launch a nuclear attack, take
their nuclear arsenal off hair-trigger alert, and cancel their plan to
replace the entire arsenal with enhanced weapons.

The effects of nuclear war would be catastrophic for the world,
and would include massive numbers of casualties, environmental
devastation and destruction of the food supply through a nuclear
winter effect. By taking these steps, the United States would
commit to a process of dismantling its stockpile of nuclear
weapons.