



Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Metro Bus Ad to inform citizens of costs for nuclear weapons, both nationally and in the Puget Sound area

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On July 17, and continuing for eleven weeks, 26 King County Metro buses will display the following paid advertisement: **CONGRESS WANTS \$1 TRILLION FOR NUKES. What will be left for our children?** The ad includes a photo of a Trident nuclear submarine in Hood Canal and the eyes of a child.



The statement in the ad refers to the planned expenditure of [\\$1 trillion](#) for the next 30 years for upgrading the nation's nuclear facilities and modernizing nuclear weapons. The nuclear weapons modernization plan was initially planned and evolved under the Obama administration. President Trump has given his support to this plan and stated in December 2016 that the *“United States must greatly strengthen and expand its [nuclear capability](#)...”*

The bus ads are an effort by [Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action](#), a grass roots organization in Poulsbo, Washington, to reawaken public awareness of the dangers of nuclear weapons in the Puget Sound region. The [Bangor submarine base](#), just 20 miles from Seattle, has the largest concentration of deployed nuclear weapons in the U.S. If [Washington state](#) were a sovereign nation, it would be the third-largest nuclear-weapons state in the world.

Ground Zero member, Rodney Brunelle, said of the bus ad campaign, *“We hope to generate a measure of citizen interest, and to begin a public discussion of nuclear weapons in the Puget Sound region. The submarine base at Bangor has the largest concentration of deployed nuclear weapons in the U.S. The discussion needs to begin here.”*

The issues

- * The U.S. is currently spending more on [nuclear weapons](#) programs than during the height of the Cold War.
- * The U.S. currently plans to spend an estimated [\\$1 trillion dollars](#) over 30 years for rebuilding the nation's nuclear facilities and modernizing nuclear weapons.

* The New York Times reported that the U. S., Russia and China are aggressively pursuing a new generation of smaller and less destructive nuclear weapons. The buildups threaten to revive a [Cold War-era arms race](#) and unsettle the balance of power among nations.

* The U.S. Navy states that [SSBN](#) submarines on patrol provide the U.S. with its “most survivable and enduring nuclear strike capability.” However, **SSBNs in port and nuclear warheads stored at SWFPAC are likely a first target in a nuclear war.** The latest Google [imagery](#) shows three SSBN submarines on the Hood Canal waterfront.

* An accident involving nuclear weapons occurred on [November 2003](#) when a ladder penetrated a nuclear nosecone during a routine missile offloading at the Explosives Handling Wharf at Bangor. All missile-handling operations at SWFPAC were stopped for nine weeks until Bangor could be recertified for handling nuclear weapons. [Three top commanders](#) were fired but the public was never informed until information was leaked to the media in March 2004.

* Public responses from governmental officials to the 2003 missile accident were generally in the form of [surprise](#) and [disappointment](#).

* Due to ongoing modernization and maintenance programs for warheads at Bangor, [nuclear warheads](#) are routinely shipped in unmarked trucks between the Department of Energy Pantex Plant near Amarillo, Texas and the Bangor base. Unlike the Navy at Bangor, the [DOE](#) actively promotes emergency preparedness.

* The award-winning [documentary, *Command and Control*](#), and the critically-acclaimed [book, *Command and Control*](#), by Eric Schlosser, address a dangerous nuclear weapons accident in Arkansas in 1980, and raise important issues for this region.

The bus ad

The bus ads measure **30 inches tall and 144 inches in length and are posted on the sides of 26 King County Metro buses that run through downtown Seattle.** An interactive map of the bus routes may be viewed at <http://mapping.titan360.com/atlas.aspx?mapId=49878> The bus ads will run on buses traveling as far south as Federal Way and as far north as Edmonds.

Two bus companies in the Puget Sound area refused to run the ad.

On June 22, **Sound Transit** in Seattle told Ground Zero: “*Sound Transit’s [advertising policy](#) prohibits advertisements that Sound Transit reasonably believes promotes or implies a position on any proposed or existing laws or advocacy on disputed or controversial issues.*”

Community Transit in Snohomish County also refused to run the ad. On June 23, Community Transit declared that the ad was a “**political advertisement**” which is defined under [Community Transit policy](#) as “*advertisements that contain political speech referring to a particular ballot question, initiative, petition, referendum, law, candidate, political party or social issue or expresses or advocates opinions or positions upon any of the foregoing. This prohibition includes any advertisement referring to or depicting a candidate for public office in any context.*”

Nuclear weapons and resistance

In the 1970s and 1980s, [thousands demonstrated](#) against nuclear weapons at the Bangor base and [hundreds](#) were arrested. Seattle [Archbishop Hunthausen](#) had proclaimed the Bangor submarine base the “Auschwitz of Puget Sound” and in 1982 began to withhold half of his federal taxes in protest of “our nation's continuing involvement in the race for nuclear arms supremacy.”

More than 1,300 nuclear warheads are deployed 20 miles west of Seattle on Trident [D-5 missiles](#) on [SSBN submarines](#) based at Bangor and nuclear warheads stored at Strategic Weapons Facility Pacific (SWFPAC).

One Trident SSBN submarine at Bangor is estimated to carry about 108 nuclear warheads. The [W76 and W88 warheads](#) at Bangor are equal respectively to 100 kilotons and 455 kilotons of TNT in destructive force. One submarine deployed at Bangor is equal to more than 1,400 Hiroshima sized nuclear bombs.

On May 27, 2016, [President Obama](#) spoke in Hiroshima and called for an end to nuclear weapons. He said that the nuclear powers “...*must have the courage to escape the logic of fear, and pursue a world without them.*” Obama added, “*We must change our mindset about war itself.*”

On December 22, 16 President Trump endorsed a growing arms race and [posted to Twitter](#), “*The United States must greatly strengthen and expand its nuclear capability until such time as the world comes to its senses regarding nukes.*”

The Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action was founded in 1977. The center is on 3.8 acres adjoining the Trident submarine base at Bangor, Washington. The Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action offers the opportunity to explore the roots of violence and injustice in our world and to experience the transforming power of love through nonviolent direct action. We resist all nuclear weapons, especially the Trident ballistic missile system.

Upcoming Ground Zero events:

- * The annual Interfaith Peace Walk led by Bainbridge Island Nipponzan Myohoji Buddhist Temple starts in Corvallis, Oregon on July 30 and ends at the Bangor submarine base on August 14.
- * Ground Zero Peace Fleet in Elliott Bay to meet the Navy fleet on August 2.
- * *From Hiroshima to Hope* event at Green Lake on August 6 commemorating the victims of the Hiroshima bombing 72 years ago.
- * *Boats by Bangor* on August 12, will be a flotilla of small boats in the waters of Hood Canal out past the perimeter of Naval Base Kitsap Bangor.
- * The Annual Ground Zero Hiroshima/Nagasaki Commemoration on August 12 through August 14 at Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action with a vigil and nonviolent civil resistance at the entrance to Bangor.

Please check our website at www.gzcenter.org for updates.