

Toolkit for Action: SJM 8006 and HJM 4008

Passing Washington state joint memorials **SJM 8006** (sponsored by Sen. Bob Hasegawa) and **HJM 4008** (sponsored by Rep. Gael Tarleton) requesting that Congress establish more checks and balances to reduce the possibility of nuclear war.



Organization endorsement form:

<http://bit.ly/endorse-nuclear-weapons-memorial>

Process to pass joint memorials in WA Legislature:

- SJM 8006 and HJM 4008 were introduced last legislative session and will be reintroduced by the same Sponsors and cosponsors in January 2020.
- In the Senate, SJM 8006 was assigned to the State Government and Tribal Relations Committee, got a hearing and was assigned to the Rules Committee. It needs to get pulled from the Rules Committee to the full Senate floor for a vote.
- In the House HJM 4008 was assigned to the Senate Government and Tribal Relations Committee but never got a vote. It needs to get a hearing in that committee.
- Once either joint memorial passes the chamber of origin, it will need to be scheduled for a vote in the other house. Once passed out of both chambers, it becomes law.

About the joint memorials:

These joint memorials call on the United States Congress and President to lead a global effort to reduce the likelihood of nuclear war by:

1. Renouncing the option of using nuclear weapons first
2. Ending the President's sole, unchecked authority to launch a nuclear attack
3. Taking United States nuclear weapons off hair-trigger alert
4. Canceling the plan to replace its entire arsenal with next generation nuclear weapons
5. Actively pursuing a verifiable, multilateral agreement among nuclear-armed states to eliminate their nuclear arsenals

The threat and risk of nuclear weapons:

- Nearly 14,500 nuclear weapons still exist in the world and pose an intolerable risk to human survival
- The United States has roughly 6,540 nuclear weapons, constituting the world's most lethal nuclear weapons capability. The United States is currently planning to spend \$1.2 trillion dollars rebuilding our entire nuclear weapons arsenal, which takes funding away from conventional military needs and social programs like education, health care, and infrastructure
- The use and detonation of even a small number of nuclear weapons would have catastrophic human, environmental, and economic consequences globally
- These weapons pose a threat simply by existing, due to the possibility of accidents and miscalculations, many of which have been documented in the past
- In July 2017, one hundred twenty-two nations called for the elimination of all nuclear weapons by adopting the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapon
- The United States Constitution gives Congress the sole power to declare war. Despite this, the President currently has de facto sole authority to launch a nuclear attack on his or her own, without any required consultation or any system of checks and balances
- By any definition of war, a first-use nuclear strike from the United States would constitute a major act of war
- A single nuclear detonation in any major city in Washington could cause hundreds of thousands of immediate fatalities, hundreds of thousands of injuries and illnesses from radiation, and devastating destruction of agricultural land and natural resources for decades

Impact of nuclear weapons on communities in WA State:

- Washington state has the largest collection of deployed nuclear weapons in the Western Hemisphere at Naval Base Kitsap-Bangor on Hood Canal, just twenty miles from Seattle.
- This nuclear weapons installation, added to Washington state's large city centers and many other military installations, makes our state a primary target in the event of a nuclear exchange
- Washington state is home to many other nuclear weapons sites and nuclear reactor facilities, including: The Hanford Nuclear Site, the most contaminated nuclear site in the Western Hemisphere, The Midnite Mine, a former nuclear weapons uranium mine located on the Spokane Tribe of Indians Reservation, and one of the largest communities of Marshall Islanders in the United States, whose home was the site of sixty-seven atmospheric nuclear weapons tests during the Cold War
- These nuclear weapons sites and activities have disproportionately affected communities of color and indigenous people, none of whom have been adequately compensated for the environmental and health consequences of nuclear weapons activities pursued by the United States government during the fifty years of the Cold War
- These nuclear weapons and nuclear-related activities in Washington state make this a uniquely local responsibility for Washington state to lead a national conversation about reducing and eliminating the threat of nuclear war, and changing our federal strategy, which is also known as mutually assured destruction (MAD)
- Washington's citizens, and all Americans have an inalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, and to live a life free from the threat of nuclear weapons

States that have already passed similar memorials:

California State Legislature

Oregon State Legislature

Maine State Senate

New Jersey State Assembly

Endorsing Organizations:

1. Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility
2. Washington Against Nuclear Weapons Coalition
3. United Against Nuclear War Coalition
4. Back from the Brink: The Call to Prevent Nuclear War
5. American Federation of Teachers - Washington Beyond the Bomb
6. Buddhist Peace Fellowship
7. Seattle Church Council of Greater Seattle
8. Earth Care Not Warfare
9. El Centro de la Raza
10. Fire Mountain Fellowship of Reconciliation
11. From Hiroshima to Hope
12. Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action
13. Lewis County Coalition to Abolish Nuclear Weapons
14. Jefferson County Progressives
15. No More Bombs – Fidalgo Island
16. Nuclear Age Peace Foundation
17. Olympia Coalition to Abolish Nuclear Weapons
18. Olympia Fellowship of Reconciliation
19. Olympic Peninsula Progressives
20. Pax Christi Pacific Northwest
21. Pax Christi Spokane
22. Peace Action USA
23. Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane
24. Phinney Neighbors for Peace & Justice
25. Physicians for Social Responsibility
26. Port Townsend Friends Meeting
27. Port Townsend Nuclear Ban Team
28. Rachel Corrie Foundation for Peace & Justice
29. Seattle Fellowship of Reconciliation
30. Sequim Indivisible
31. South Seattle Climate Action Network
32. Tacoma Fellowship of Reconciliation
33. Union of Concerned Scientists
34. Unitarian Universalist Church of Spokane
35. Urban Indians Northwest
36. Veterans for Peace, Bellingham - Chapter # 111
37. Veterans for Peace Rachel Corrie Chapter #109 (Thurston, Lewis, and Mason Counties)
38. Veterans for Peace, Seattle – Chapter #92
39. Veterans for Peace, Spokane - Chapter #35
40. West Seattle Neighbors for Peace Justice
41. Whatcom Peace & Justice Center
42. Women's Action for New Directions
43. World Citizens for Peace – Tri-Cities

Please use the tools below to organize your community to pass these joint memorials:

Sample call to action letter for your community members:

Tell Your WA Legislator to Help Prevent Nuclear War

Washington may soon follow Oregon and California's lead and pass joint memorials supporting federal legislation to reduce the risk of nuclear war. Call your WA Legislator today to support SJM 8006/HJM 4008

On XX,XX, the Washington [insert committee] will vote on [SJM 8006/HJM 4008], two joint memorials that could help prevent nuclear war. This vote comes at a time when treaties that prevent nuclear war are crumbling and major nuclear weapons countries like the United States and Russia are engaging in a new nuclear arms race that would bring new and dangerous weapons to WA state. This joint memorial names the many impacted communities in WA state: the Spokane Tribe, Marshall Islanders, workers at Hanford and all of us living close to the Kitsap Bangor base - home to 1/3 of the U.S. nuclear arsenal. This memorial would add a significant victory to a grassroots movement that is growing throughout the nation.

[Insert information about your organization]

We understand that nuclear weapons pose a lethal threat to health and survival, contaminate the environment, and squander financial resources better spent on making our communities healthy and whole.

Today, nuclear threats loom large and we need all hands on deck to move back from the brink of nuclear war. Call your WA legislators today and urge them to vote yes on:

- SJM 8006 (Lead Sponsor: Sen. Bob Hasegawa)
- HJM 4008 (Lead Sponsor: Rep Gael Tarleton)

Find out who your state senator is and contact information by typing in your address here <https://app.leg.wa.gov/DistrictFinder/>

Together, we have a chance to make history and help WA lead the nation in securing a safer, healthier future for current and future generations.

Sample call/email script:

Hello,

My name is _____ and I am a constituent in District ____.

On **XX,XX**, the Washington **[insert committee]** will vote on **[SJM 8006/HJM 4008]**, two joint memorials that could help prevent nuclear war. This vote comes at a time when treaties that prevent nuclear war are crumbling and major nuclear weapons countries like the United States and Russia are engaging in a new nuclear arms race that would bring new and dangerous weapons to WA state. This joint memorial names the many impacted communities in WA state: the Spokane Tribe, Marshall Islanders, workers at Hanford and all of us living close to the Kitsap-Bangor submarine base. This memorial would add a significant victory to a grassroots movement that is growing throughout the nation.

Will you support SJM 8006/HJM 4008?

Thank you!

Sincerely,

[Your organization]

Sample Op-ed:

Below is an example of the kind of op-ed we are able to ghost write for you to highlight the resolution. Combining your personal experience and current events, we can compose a draft that will be edited and approved by you before being pitched to the best suited media source at a relevant time.

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Address Washington's Nuclear Legacy by Calling to Eliminate Nuclear Weapons

By Carly Brook, Washington Against Nuclear Weapons Coalition

As a young person, living 20 miles from the single largest concentration of deployed nuclear weapons in the Western Hemisphere, I am scared for my future. We live in a beautiful place, and it's tragic to think of the harm that could be caused by a nuclear accident or attack.

I have reflected on this frequently this past year. We have seen rising fears of nuclear war, inflammatory tweets about nuclear buttons, fire and fury, and seemingly erratic decision making that led to the violation of a working nuclear nonproliferation agreement (the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, also known as the JCPOA or Iran Deal).

Compounding these fears, what is most concerning is that a president alone has the sole, absolute, and unchecked ability to launch America's nuclear weapons. If he or she decides to launch nukes for any reason, there is no way to stop the action.



You read that right.

Any U.S. president can order a nuclear strike without input from anyone - including the Secretary of Defense, military generals, members of the Cabinet, or high-level intelligence officials. If the order is refused, the president is allowed to relieve individuals from duty and immediately replace them. They could also be charged with treason. In short, the president can have nuclear missiles in the air within a span of five minutes. Once they are deployed, there is no way to call them back.

And the reality is that today, most Americans don't trust the president to handle a nuclear crisis.

As someone who was born and raised in WA State, I am hopeful that we will live up to our highest values as a progressive state. I know my community faces serious challenges: homelessness, climate change, gentrification, healthcare and a changing economy. Knowing that the US Government plans to spend over \$1.2 Trillion dollars on replacing our entire nuclear weapons arsenal and building new weapons, instead of on services that help people meet their basic needs, makes me so angry. It's time for us to take the lead in solving this larger-than-life problem: the undemocratic imbalance of power that could start a nuclear war.

That's why Senator Hasegawa and Representative Tarleton introduced joint memorials SJM 8006 and HJM 4008 calling on congress to prevent nuclear war by:

1. Renouncing the option of using nuclear weapons first
2. Ending the President's sole, unchecked authority to launch a nuclear attack
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Our system of government, enshrined in the Constitution, explicitly puts the power to declare war in the hands of Congress in order to prevent abuse or mistakes. While a state joint memorial may seem a long way from decision-making and nuclear war, it's time we exercised our democratic rights to insist that this most fundamental life-and-death question be subject to the types of checks and balances of Congress.

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Sample organization endorsement letter:

Logo here

[Date]

[Name of organization] Endorses SJM8006/HJM4008 to Stand Against Nuclear Weapons and Acknowledge Washington's Nuclear Legacy

Dear Washington Legislators,

We write to express our strong endorsement for SJM 8006/HJM 4008, which **requests that Congress establish more checks and balances to reduce the likelihood of a nuclear war.**

Our organization values [] and we are deeply concerned with the Trump Administration's plans to rebuild the nation's nuclear arsenal and delivery systems. Building new



nuclear weapons will add to the health burden in low-income communities of color who already have been disproportionately impacted by nuclear weapons. Uranium mining on Spokane tribal land and on other Native American land continues to cause cancer and death due to radiation exposure. We stand with those who have been and would be impacted.

These plans are estimated to cost over \$1.2 trillion over the next 30 years - that's \$4.5 million dollars for every hour of those decades. Our tax dollars would be much better spent on funding a just transition to clean energy, insuring good-paying jobs for people now working in the extraction economy, providing financing for urgent human needs that improve the health and well-being of communities, rather than on weapons of mass destruction.

Over 500,000 workers in U.S. weapons complex sites were exposed to radiation or harmful chemicals during the Cold War. Only 21% of those seeking help from a federal compensation program have received compensation. Workers and communities near nuclear weapons production and waste disposal sites remain at risk today from dangerous contamination.

Plans to build new nuclear weapons have resulted in calls for the resumption of nuclear testing, which will also threaten communities and the environment. Very simply, more nuclear weapons will result in more harm.

Leadership from state governments is critical to building public awareness and the political will needed for the U.S. to implement protective and just nuclear policies such as those recommended in joint memorials SJM8006/HJM4008.

We thank Senator Hasegawa and Representative Tarleton for introducing these joint memorials and urge all legislators to vote for these memorials.

For a healthy and livable future,

[Name of your organization]

Sample social media posts:

Join @psr_washington in calling for nuclear justice. From the uranium mine on the land of the @SpokaneTribe, to Marshallese communities displaced from nuclear testing, to contamination at Hanford, to the nuclear weapons hosted at the Kitsap Bangor Base, stand together to demand WA Legislators to take action. #NoMoreNukes. #NuclearJustice. #nuclearweapons

[insert handle] endorses SJM 8006 and HJM 4008 because we know that nuclear weapons have harmed communities in WA and more nuclear weapons would cause further harm. We stand against the nuclear weapons modernization and call on our legislators to demand action from Congress. #Vote4NuclearJustice. #nuclearweapons

We thank [insert handle of Senator or Representative] for their support of SJM 8006 and HJM 4008. It's this kind of courageous leadership that will keep our communities safe from nuclear weapons. #Vote4NuclearJustice. #nuclearweapons

@psr_washington knows that nuclear weapons are a health issue. Stand up for the health of our communities and call your legislator and urge them to



#Vote4NuclearJustice. #nuclearweapons . Find your legislator's contact information here: <https://app.leg.wa.gov/DistrictFinder/>

Sample graphics:



Frequently Asked Questions:

What is a nuclear weapon?

A nuclear weapon is a device which rapidly releases nuclear energy, either through fission (as in the bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki) or a combination of fission and fusion (as in a thermonuclear or hydrogen bomb). Some of the nuclear weapons today are more than 3,000 times as powerful as the bomb dropped on Hiroshima. Recent studies estimate that over 100 million people would die in a limited nuclear exchange between India and Pakistan.^[1]

What is a joint memorial?

A message or petition addressed to the President and/or the Congress of the United States, or the head of any other agency of the federal or state government, asking for consideration of some matter of concern to the state or region. In Washington state, a joint memorial must be passed by both chambers of the legislature, but does not require the signature of the Governor to pass.

Who supports a no first use policy?

Adopting a policy of “no first use” of nuclear weapons has bipartisan support from Americans (66% support overall, 78% support among Democrats, 53% support among Republicans, 65% support among independents).^[2]

What is Washington state’s nuclear legacy?

If Washington state were a country, it would be the third largest nuclear weapons country in the world. The Naval Base Kitsap/Bangor became a port for eight of the US’s nuclear armed submarines since 1977. Bangor’s eight submarines have 20 Trident II missiles per boat with eight warheads per missile, for a total capacity of 1,280. This makes Washington ground zero in case of a nuclear attack or accident. Hanford is a former nuclear weapons production site located in the Tri-Cities, where plutonium was produced for the bomb dropped on Nagasaki. The Midnite Mine, built on the land of the Spokane Tribe, provided uranium for the production of nuclear bombs, and remains a superfund clean-up site. The Pacific National Northwest Laboratory is managed by the Department of Energy and carries out work for the National Nuclear Security Administration, including designing weapons grade nuclear fuels during the 1980s. Boeing, one of the largest producers of nuclear weapons systems worldwide, has contracts for key components for US and UK Trident II nuclear missiles.

Have other states passed these resolutions?

Yes! California and Oregon passed resolutions against nuclear weapons in 2019. Washington could pass this resolution and send a strong message as a united West Coast that the U.S. Congress should pass legislation to address nuclear weapons policies.

[1] <https://advances.sciencemag.org/content/5/10/eaay5478>

[2] <http://filesforprogress.org/memos/progressive-foreign-policy.pdf>