

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 19, 2017

The Honorable Rex W. Tillerson
U.S. Secretary of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC

The Honorable James N. Mattis
U.S. Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20310

The Honorable Rick Perry
U.S. Secretary of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20585

Dear Secretaries Tillerson, Mattis, and Perry:

As you conduct the administration's Nuclear Posture Review, we write to urge that it include broad interagency input, that it produce a publicly-available document, and that it reaffirms our nation's longstanding commitment to the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons. Furthermore, we encourage you to uphold U.S. obligations under Senate-ratified treaties, maintain the prohibition on new nuclear missions or new nuclear weapons, and preserve the U.S. moratorium on nuclear test explosions.

It is vital for the Nuclear Posture Review to have input from all relevant U.S. government stakeholders. In particular, State Department bureaus with responsibilities for negotiating and verifying compliance with arms control agreements must be equal partners in the review process.

Likewise, the review must ultimately result in a document available to the public. A non-public document would make it difficult for the American people to understand the administration's national security strategy, and it could fuel suspicions about U.S. nuclear intentions among allies and adversaries alike, undermining strategic stability and U.S. extended deterrence guarantees.

In addition to conducting an inclusive, transparent review process, it is important for the review to uphold longstanding, bipartisan principles with respect to nuclear weapons policy. The review must maintain our obligations under existing Senate-ratified arms control treaties. Specifically, U.S. nuclear posture should adhere to the limits on deployed strategic warheads and launchers agreed to under the 2010 New START Treaty with Russia. The review should also maintain U.S. obligations under the 1968 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, particularly Article

VI, which obliges all parties to “pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament.”

Additionally, the review should maintain our efforts to reduce the role of nuclear weapons so that their sole purpose is to deter nuclear attack on the United States and our partners and allies. A move to expand the role of nuclear weapons, such as by developing new nuclear weapons and missions, could lower the threshold for the use of nuclear weapons and could increase the likelihood of an inadvertent nuclear war. As President Reagan said, “A nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought.”


Finally, U.S. nuclear posture should continue to rely on the Stockpile Stewardship Program to ensure the safety, security, and effectiveness of the U.S. nuclear arsenal. As the directors of the U.S. national labs have continuously certified, nuclear test explosions are not needed to maintain the reliability of U.S. nuclear weapons. The international norm against testing nuclear weapons is an important check on the arms race, and it strengthens the U.S. technological edge. Abandoning the U.S. moratorium on nuclear tests first put in place by President George H.W. Bush would shatter that norm and undermine U.S. national security.

As the world’s foremost nuclear power and the only nation to have ever used nuclear weapons in war, the United States has a unique responsibility to reduce the risk of their use. By conducting a transparent and inclusive Nuclear Posture Review process that adheres to longstanding bipartisan principles, you will fulfill that duty while preserving U.S. national security interests. We thank you for your consideration in this vital matter.

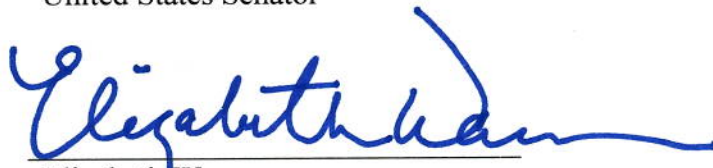
Sincerely,



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator

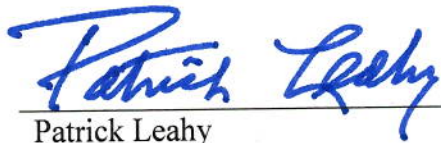

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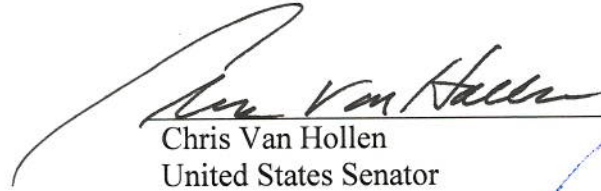
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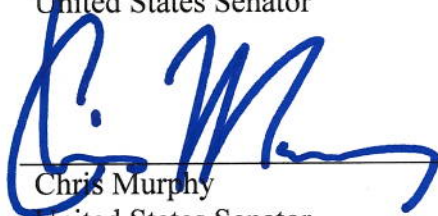
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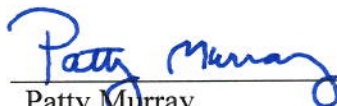
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