

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

May 2, 2007

The Honorable Ike Skelton
Chairman
House Armed Services Committee
2120 Rayburn House Office Building

The Honorable Duncan Hunter
Ranking Member
House Armed Services Committee
2120 Rayburn House Office
Building

The Honorable John P. Murtha
Chairman
Subcommittee on Defense
House Appropriations Committee
H-149
U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable C.W. "Bill" Young
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Defense
House Appropriations Committee
1016 Longworth House Office
Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Skelton, Ranking Member Hunter, Chairman Murtha, and Ranking Member Young:

We write to you today to request that you withhold any funding for the Reliable Replacement Warhead (RRW) in your upcoming marks of the FY08 Defense Authorization and Defense Appropriation Acts.

First, we note that the current U.S. nuclear arsenal is safe, reliable and secure. Annual certifications to that effect come from the directors of the U.S. nuclear weapons laboratories. The RRW program arose, we are told, from concerns about the long-term reliability of the arsenal, about problems that *could* develop.

The principal reliability concern was resolved by the recent JASON study, which concluded that the plutonium pits – the cores of nuclear weapons – will be reliable for at least 85 years and probably longer. Other justifications for the program, including increased safety and security, are less compelling and can, if need be, be addressed in the existing stockpile. There is no justification for pursuing the RRW at this time. Indeed, there are many reasons not to do so.

The RRW is a new nuclear weapon, and will be perceived as such. It conveys to the rest of the world that the United States continues to pursue a hypocritical "do as we say, not as we do" approach to nonproliferation issues. Our pursuit of a new generation of nuclear

weapons will be used by Iran and North Korea to justify their own nuclear weapons programs.

It is also a simple fact that the nuclear warhead is the most reliable component of our nuclear weapon systems. The delivery vehicles failure rate is much greater than that for the warhead. It is economically wasteful to increase the reliability of the most reliable component.

Finally, it will take an enormous investment in time, money, energy and commitment to recreate a Cold War-style capability to produce the RRW. That investment would be better spent on other critical defense needs, especially the reconstitution of our conventional forces, which have been so badly worn down by the campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan.

In a January 4, 2007 op-ed published in the *Wall Street Journal* entitled "A World Free of Nuclear Weapons," former Secretaries of State George Shultz and Henry Kissinger, former Secretary of Defense William Perry, and former Senator Sam Nunn wrote:

Reassertion of the vision of a world free of nuclear weapons and practical measures toward achieving that goal would be, and would be perceived as, a bold initiative consistent with America's moral heritage. The effort could have a profoundly positive impact on the security of future generations.

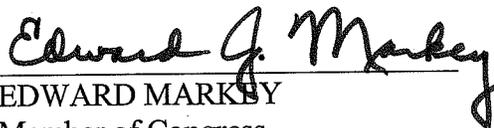
We agree.

The United States needs a new nuclear policy, rather than a new generation of nuclear weapons. For these reasons, we strongly urge you not to fund the RRW program but instead lead the effort that will set us on a path to eliminate these weapons.

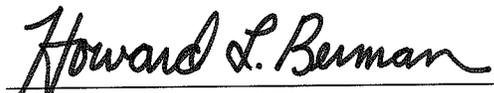
Sincerely,



RUSH HOLT
Member of Congress



EDWARD MARKEY
Member of Congress



HOWARD BERMAN
Member of Congress



PETER DEFAZIO
Member of Congress



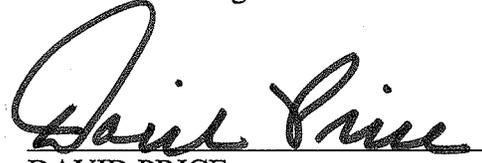
TOM ALLEN
Member of Congress



DENNIS KUCINICH
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HENRY WAXMAN
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CHAKA FATTAH
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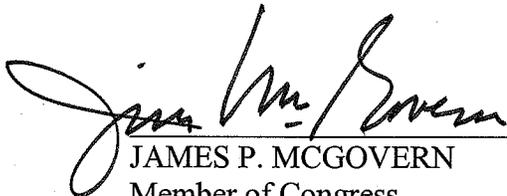
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JAMES P. MCGOVERN
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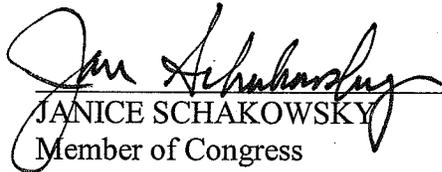
BARNEY FRANK
Member of Congress



EARL BLUMENAUER
Member of Congress



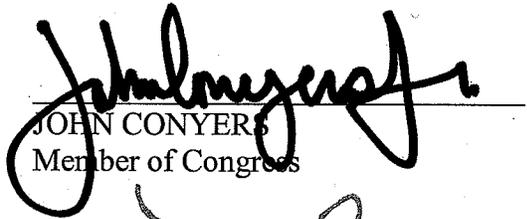
MADELEINE BORDALLO
Member of Congress

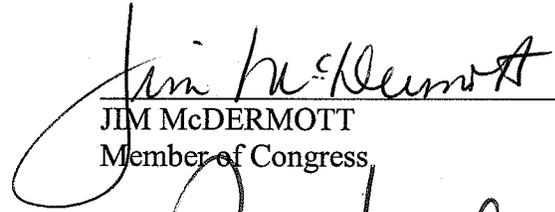

JANICE SCHAKOWSKY
Member of Congress


ROSA DELAURO
Member of Congress

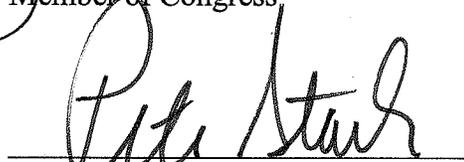

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Member of Congress

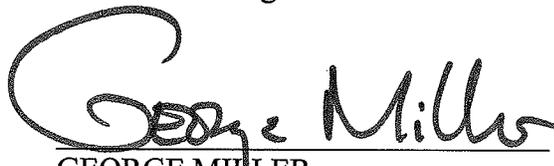

MICHAEL MICHAUD
Member of Congress

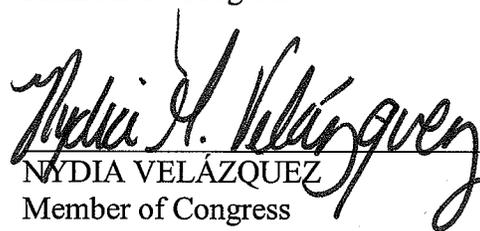

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JIM McDERMOTT
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TAMMY BALDWIN
Member of Congress

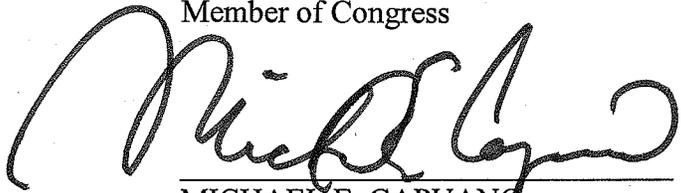

FORTNEY STARK
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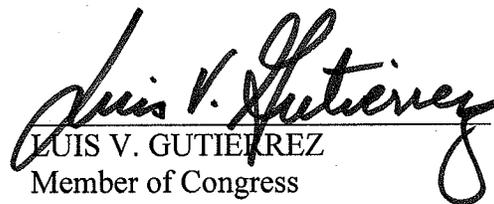

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