

ARTICLE 51: HOME RULE PETITION – RESOLUTION TO CALL FOR THE UNITED STATES TO “PULL BACK FROM THE BRINK” AND PREVENT NUCLEAR WAR—AN EXISTENTIAL THREAT TO THE FUTURE OF HUMANITY AND THE PLANET

Moved, that Town Meeting adopt the following Resolution, or take any other action in relation thereto:

RESOLUTION TO CALL FOR THE UNITED STATES TO “PULL BACK FROM THE BRINK” AND PREVENT NUCLEAR WAR—AN EXISTENTIAL THREAT TO THE FUTURE OF HUMANITY AND THE PLANET

WHEREAS, since the height of the Cold War, the United States and Russia have dismantled more than 50,000 nuclear warheads, but approximately 15,000 of these weapons still exist and, thus, still pose an intolerable risk to human survival; and

WHEREAS, approximately 95 percent of these weapons are in the hands of the United States and Russia, while the remainder are held by 7 other countries, namely, China, France, Israel, India, North Korea, Pakistan, and the United Kingdom; and

WHEREAS, nuclear war would directly kill hundreds of millions of people and cause unimaginable environmental damage; and

WHEREAS, there is a high probability that such a nuclear war would lead to catastrophic climate disruption dropping temperatures across the planet to levels not seen since the last ice age, thus resulting in the starvation of the vast majority of the human race, quite possibly leading to our extinction and the extinction of multiple other species; and

WHEREAS, even the use of a tiny fraction of these weapons would cause worldwide climate disruption and global famine; e.g., as few as a 100 Hiroshima-sized bombs (small by modern standards) would put at least 5 million tons of soot into the upper atmosphere and cause climate disruption across the planet, cutting food production and putting 2 billion people at risk of starvation; and

WHEREAS, despite the popular notion that these arsenals exist solely to guarantee they will never be used, on multiple occasions nuclear armed states have proceeded to the brink of using these weapons, and their use was narrowly averted; and

WHEREAS, former Defense Secretary Robert McNamara—speaking about the Cuban Missile Crisis in The Fog of War—said, “It was luck that prevented nuclear war”; and

WHEREAS, our nuclear policy must NOT be subject to the whims of “luck;” and

WHEREAS, the growing climate crisis is stressing communities around the world and intensifying the likelihood of conflict, and, thus, the danger of war and the possibility of escalating to nuclear war; and WHEREAS, the planned expenditure of more than \$1 trillion dollars to enhance the U.S. nuclear arsenal will not only increase the risk of nuclear disaster but also 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, in July 2017, 122 nations called for the elimination of all nuclear weapons by adopting the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Town of Needham, Massachusetts, acting through its elected Representative Town Meeting, calls upon our federal leaders and our nation to make nuclear disarmament the centerpiece of U.S. national security policy and to work toward the goal of signing the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Town Meeting, calls upon our federal leaders and our nation to spearhead a global effort to prevent nuclear war by:

- renouncing the option of using nuclear weapons first;
- ending the president's sole, unchecked authority to launch a nuclear attack;
- taking U.S. nuclear weapons off "hair-trigger" alert;
- cancelling all plans to add weapons to the U.S. nuclear arsenal that would make it more likely that leaders will initiate nuclear war; and
- actively pursuing a verifiable agreement among nuclear armed states to eliminate their nuclear arsenals.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Town Meeting requests that the Town Clerk send a copy of the Resolution adopted by Town Meeting to our U.S. Congressional Representative Joseph P. Kennedy, III, U.S. Senator Elizabeth Warren, U.S. Senator Edward J. Markey, and President Donald J. Trump.

INSERTED BY: Joseph McCabe, et. al.

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS THAT: No Position Taken

Article Information: This article, submitted by citizens' petition, requests a non-binding resolution of Town Meeting in support of proposed actions by the Town's Representatives in Congress and the President of the United States to achieve nuclear disarmament and a reduction in the threat of nuclear war.

ARTICLE 52: OMNIBUS

To see if the Town will vote to raise by taxation, transfer from available funds, by borrowing or otherwise, such sums as may be necessary for all or any of the purposes mentioned in the foregoing articles, especially to act upon all appropriations asked for or proposed by the Selectmen, or any Town officer or committee, to appoint such committees as may be decided upon and to take action upon matters which may properly come before the meeting; or take any other action relative thereto.

INSERTED BY: Select Board
