

SENATE No. 1556

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Joanne M. Comerford

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying resolution:

Resolutions relative to the existential threat posed by nuclear weapons to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	
<i>Joanne M. Comerford</i>	<i>Hampshire, Franklin and Worcester</i>	
<i>Lindsay N. Sabadosa</i>	<i>1st Hampshire</i>	
<i>Patrick M. O'Connor</i>	<i>Plymouth and Norfolk</i>	<i>3/4/2021</i>
<i>Jack Patrick Lewis</i>	<i>7th Middlesex</i>	<i>3/12/2021</i>
<i>Erika Uyterhoeven</i>	<i>27th Middlesex</i>	<i>3/14/2021</i>
<i>Carol A. Doherty</i>	<i>3rd Bristol</i>	<i>3/30/2021</i>
<i>Kay Khan</i>	<i>11th Middlesex</i>	<i>4/9/2021</i>

SENATE No. 1556

By Ms. Comerford, a petition (accompanied by resolutions, Senate, No. 1556) of Joanne M. Comerford, Lindsay N. Sabadosa, Patrick M. O'Connor, Jack Patrick Lewis and other members of the General Court for legislation relative to the existential threat posed by nuclear weapons to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Public Safety and Homeland Security.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Second General Court
(2021-2022)**

Resolutions relative to the existential threat posed by nuclear weapons to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

1 WHEREAS, the continued existence of nearly 14,000 nuclear weapons worldwide poses
2 a grave and existential threat to the citizens of the Commonwealth; and

3 WHEREAS, the citizens of the Commonwealth have expressed their deep concern about
4 this continuing threat over many decades and continue to do so; and

5 WHEREAS, this concern has been expressed through numerous Town Meetings and City
6 Council resolutions throughout the Commonwealth; and

7 WHEREAS, this concern has also been expressed through numerous resolutions and bills
8 brought before this General Court, including at least 5 such bills introduced in the last legislative
9 session on this topic; and

10 WHEREAS, in general it is the federal government and not the state which has
11 jurisdiction over matters relating to nuclear weapons, this does not mean there is no role for the
12 Commonwealth to play in this regard; and

13 WHEREAS, in fact, it has been shown that the policies and actions of states can lead the
14 way to important and necessary changes at the federal level and even internationally; and

15 WHEREAS, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts played a leading role in ending the
16 nuclear arms race with the Soviet Union in the 1980s, by adopting a Nuclear Freeze resolution
17 and encouraging other states to follow our example and

18 WHEREAS, 40 years later it is not a “freeze” of nuclear weapons that is needed to save
19 the Commonwealth, and the world, from the unthinkable catastrophe of a nuclear war or a
20 nuclear accident, but the complete elimination of these weapons, in line with the Treaty on the
21 Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which enters into force as international law on January 22,
22 2021; and

23 THEREFORE, be it resolved that the General Court of the Commonwealth of
24 Massachusetts congratulates the 51 countries that have signed and ratified the Treaty on the
25 Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, and joins the legislatures of California and Oregon, the Maine
26 State Senate, the New Jersey Assembly, and the 15 cities and towns in Massachusetts which
27 have taken action to protect their citizens from the existential threat of nuclear war by embracing
28 this Treaty and endorsing the national Back from the Brink platform, which calls on our federal
29 leaders to embrace the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and to take immediate
30 steps to prevent nuclear war by renouncing the option of using nuclear weapons first, ending the
31 President’s sole, unchecked authority to launch a nuclear attack, taking U.S. nuclear weapons off
32 hair-trigger alert, canceling the plan to replace its entire arsenal with enhanced weapons, and
33 actively pursuing a verifiable agreement among nuclear-armed states to eliminate their nuclear
34 arsenals, and be it further

35 RESOLVED, that it shall henceforth be the policy of the General Court of the
36 Commonwealth of Massachusetts to pursue whatever measures may be found necessary and
37 appropriate to protect the citizens of the Commonwealth from the existential threat posed by
38 nuclear weapons and to contribute in whatever ways it can, as a Commonwealth, towards the
39 total elimination of these weapons from all countries, in line with the Treaty on the Prohibition
40 of Nuclear Weapons; and be it further

41 RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be transmitted forthwith by the clerk of the
42 Senate to the President and Vice President of the United States, the Speaker and Minority Leader
43 of the United States House of Representatives, the Majority and Minority Leaders of the United
44 States Senate, and to each Senator and Representative from the Commonwealth in the Congress
45 of the United States, and to the Governor of the Commonwealth.