SENATE DOCKET, NO. 266 FILED ON: 1/12/2023

SENATE . . . . . No. 1487

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 to embrace the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and move the US back from the brink of nuclear war.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	
Joanne M. Comerford	*Hampshire, Franklin and Worcester*	
Lindsay N. Sabadosa	*1st Hampshire*	*1/20/2023*
Tackey Chan	*2nd Norfolk*	*2/15/2023*
Erika Uyterhoeven	*27th Middlesex*	*2/22/2023*
Natalie M. Higgins	*4th Worcester*	*2/23/2023*
David Henry Argosky LeBoeuf	*17th Worcester*	*2/23/2023*
Patrick M. O'Connor	*First Plymouth and Norfolk*	*4/14/2023*
Mike Connolly	*26th Middlesex*	*6/12/2023*

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By Ms. Comerford, a petition (accompanied by resolutions, Senate, No. 1487) of Joanne M. Comerford, Lindsay N. Sabadosa, Tackey Chan, Erika Uyterhoeven and other members of the General Court for the adoption of resolutions to embrace the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and move the US back from the brink of nuclear war. Public Safety and Homeland Security.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE SENATE, NO. *1555* OF 2021-2022.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the One Hundred and Ninety-Third General Court
(2023-2024)

Resolutions to embrace the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and move the US back from the brink of nuclear war.

WHEREAS, the continued existence of more than 12,000 nuclear weapons worldwide poses a grave and existential threat to the citizens of the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, the Russian invasion of Ukraine and repeated threats to use nuclear weapons has dramatically increased the danger of nuclear war; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

THEREFORE, be it resolved that the General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts congratulates the 68 countries that have signed and ratified the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, and joins the legislatures of California and Oregon, the Maine State Senate, the New Jersey Assembly, Rhode Island Senate and the 20 cities and towns in Massachusetts which have taken action to protect their citizens from the existential threat of nuclear war by embracing this Treaty and endorsing the national Back from the Brink platform,

which calls on our federal leaders to embrace the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and to take immediate steps to prevent nuclear war by actively pursuing a verifiable agreement among nuclear-armed states to eliminate their nuclear arsenals, 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, and canceling the plan to replace its entire arsenal with enhanced weapons, and be it further

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

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