

**Alliance for Nuclear Accountability • Alliance of Baptists  
American Values Network • Arms Control Association  
Center for International Policy • Council for a Livable World  
Federation of American Scientists • Franciscan Action Network  
Friends Committee on National Legislation  
Georgia Women's Action for New Directions • Green Cross International  
Lawyers Committee on Nuclear Policy • Nuclear Watch New Mexico  
Oak Ridge Environmental Peace Alliance • Pax Christi International  
Pax Christi USA • Peace Action • Peace Action New York State  
Peace Action West • PeacePAC • Physicians for Social Responsibility  
Rachel Carson Council • Sisters of Mercy Institute Justice Team  
Tri-Valley CAREs • Union of Concerned Scientists  
United Church of Christ, Justice and Witness Ministries  
Women's Action for New Directions**

May 6, 2014

Re: HASC Markup

Dear Representative,

As you consider the Fiscal Year 2015 National Defense Authorization Act in the House Armed Services Committee, we write to make the following recommendations related to the nuclear weapons and missile defense provisions of the bill.

- **Support additional funding for programs to prevent nuclear terrorism:** Funding for critical nuclear security and nonproliferation programs has been significantly reduced over the last several years. The FY15 budget request provides \$1.56 billion, a decrease of \$399 million from the FY14 enacted level. These reductions in funding have delayed important milestones. For instance, as of FY14, converting or shutting down research reactors fueled by highly enriched uranium (HEU)—material that could readily be used to make a nuclear bomb—has slipped by eight years to 2030. The Global Threat Reduction Initiative (GTRI) supports converting reactors that use HEU to burn low enriched uranium unsuitable for nuclear weapons, the removal and disposition of excess nuclear and radiological materials, and the protection of high-priority nuclear materials from theft. Defense Nuclear Nonproliferation R&D programs improve technical capabilities to detect and verify foreign fuel-cycle activities.

Please support the increase in funding the FY15 NDAA provides above the administration's request for programs to prevent nuclear terrorism, including the Global Threat Reduction Initiative (GTRI) (+\$80 million) and Defense Nuclear Nonproliferation R&D (+\$70 million). (No amendment expected.)

- **Support an amendment to fund nuclear weapons dismantlement:** Thousands of nuclear weapons that have reached the end of their useful lives are awaiting dismantlement at the Pantex Plant in Texas. The goal of the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) is to dismantle weapons retired prior to FY2009 by 2022 could slip if sufficient funding is not provided. Despite this, the FY15 request cut dismantlement by 40 percent (FY14 enacted was \$54.3 million; FY15 request was \$30 million.) Moreover, according to an April 2014 GAO report, NNSA has not scheduled dismantlement of weapons resulting from the implementation of New START. As the report states, “deferred retirement of these weapons could result in a significant dismantlement workload gap during the mid-2020s.” The current backlog requires timely completion so that work to retire additional weapons can continue unabated.

Please support an expected amendment that would return funding for dismantlement to roughly the FY14 level.

- **Oppose limitations on New START implementation:** In the same way that President Reagan agreed to arms control treaties with what he called “the evil empire,” the crisis in Ukraine is not a reason to undermine the New START arms control agreement. Such steps could prevent U.S. troops on Russian soil verifying the size of the Russian nuclear stockpile. As former STRATCOM commander Gen. Robert Kehler testified last year, “Our belief is that we should continue with our preparatory actions and be allowed to continue with sizing the force to get to the New START limits. It’s a signed, ratified treaty, and our concern is always that we don’t find ourselves in a position where we’re the reason for why we don’t meet an implementation date that the nation has signed up to.”

Please oppose an amendment that would withhold the budget request for New START implementation or otherwise limit U.S. actions under the treaty.

- **Support an amendment to reconsider the mandate of an increase in the production of plutonium “pits.”** Pits are the fissile core of the first stage of a modern nuclear weapon. The FY 2015 NDAA mandates an increase in the production of these pits, despite the fact that there is no military requirement for such production and that the United States already has thousands of pits in storage.

Please support an amendment that would strike Section 31 on pit production and/or an alternative amendment that would require a cost assessment of the mandate to increase production capacity.

- **Support an amendment on B61.** The B61-12 life extension program’s cost has grown from an initial estimate of \$4 billion to \$12 billion today. Funding for nuclear weapons activities is increasing significantly, while nuclear nonproliferation is decreasing. The B61 program is an egregious example of how the NNSA’s inability to accurately plan and scope its various activities, such as life extension programs, can adversely impact other areas of its budget and make it more difficult to carry out the rest of its work in a timely and efficient manner.

Please support an amendment that would require the NNSA to justify the program’s cost growth.

We appreciate your consideration of these recommendations and urge you to contact Erica Fein at Women’s Action for New Directions ([efein@wand.org](mailto:efein@wand.org) or [202-544-5055 x 2605](tel:202-544-5055)) with questions.

Sincerely,

### **National Organizations**

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