

Testimony in Support of California Assembly Joint Resolution 33, regarding the “Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons,” Hearing Rm. 126

Rick Wayman, Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, August 14, 2018

I'd like to begin by thanking my Assemblymember, Monique Limon, for introducing this important resolution.

My name is Rick Wayman. I'm the Deputy Director of the [Nuclear Age Peace Foundation](#), a non-profit organization headquartered in Santa Barbara. On behalf of our 80,000 members worldwide, including over 10,000 here in California, I thank you for the opportunity to speak here today.

Last year, I had the privilege of participating in the negotiations at the United Nations for the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. As a partner organization of the [International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons](#), we share in the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize that was awarded for our work on this groundbreaking treaty.

Right now, we have a federal government that is choosing to spend over \$100,000 per minute for the next 30 years on nuclear weapons upgrades. But it's not just dollars that we're squandering. Nuclear weapons are, simply put, indiscriminate mass killing devices. Any use would be illegitimate and wholly unacceptable.

California has a long and proud history of setting positive legislative trends and kick-starting the process of change nationwide. That is why AJR 33 is so important today.

This resolution lays out some of the catastrophic humanitarian consequences that could occur should nuclear weapons be used again. I have worked closely with people around the world deeply impacted by nuclear weapons development, testing, and use. Every one of them tells me the same thing: we must put an end to nuclear weapons so that no one ever suffers this same fate.

The Assembly and Senate of the State of California now have a unique opportunity to contribute to this noble goal.

For 50 years, the United States has been a part of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. This treaty has been remarkably successful at preventing the spread of nuclear weapons to additional countries. But it has failed to compel the nuclear-armed nations to fulfill their obligation to negotiate in good faith for an end to the nuclear arms race and for nuclear disarmament.

The 122 nations that voted in favor of adopting the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons last year at the United Nations were complying with their obligation to act. The US was shamefully hostile to this process. The vast majority of the world's countries are moving forward to outlaw and stigmatize nuclear weapons possession, and the US is being left behind. This emerging legal norm against nuclear weapons will only get stronger. California, followed by the entire United States, must get on the right side of history. But more importantly, we must do everything in our power to eliminate nuclear weapons before they eliminate us. Thank you.