

500,000 People Sign Petition Barring Trump's Nuclear Weapons Use



Washington, May 6 (RHC)-- Nearly half a million people have signed a petition supporting the "Restricting First Use of Nuclear Weapons Act of 2017," a legislative proposal submitted to the U.S. Congress on Wednesday. The legislation, introduced by Rep. Ted Lieu of California and Sen. Ed Markey of Massachusetts, is aimed at keeping U.S. President Donald Trump from launching a nuclear weapon without Congress' approval of declaring a war.

Calling out Trump's rhetoric on North Korea and Russia, Markey called the action "absolutely critical during the Trump administration," adding that the petition is "a reflection of concern across our country of the use of nuclear weapons by the president." Just recently, the president tweeted that there's a possibility of a "major, major" conflict with North Korea over the ongoing tension between the U.S. and Pyongyang's nuclear program.

"A nuclear first strike, which can kill hundreds of millions of people and invite a retaliatory strike that can destroy America, is war," Lieu said.

“The current nuclear launch approval process, which gives the decision to potentially end civilization as we know it to a single individual, is flatly unconstitutional. Furthermore, the single individual currently possessing the sole power to start World War Three is Donald J. Trump.”

Petition organizers have even handed out red buttons with the word “easy” on them at the press conference, The Hill reported, showing how simple it is for Trump to order a nuclear strike.

According to the bill, the President will be prohibited from using the U.S. Armed Forces to conduct a “first-use nuclear strike” until a congressional declaration of war expressly authorized such a strike. “First-use nuclear strike” means a nuclear weapons attack against an enemy conducted without the President determining that the enemy first launched a nuclear strike against the United States or a U.S. ally.

Several advocacy groups helped spread the word about the petition, which was first introduced in September of last year. Several months later, Trump tweeted saying the U.S. should “greatly strengthen and expand its nuclear capability” and didn’t rule out the first strike during a September presidential debate.

The advocacy group, CREDO, known for launching several campaigns against Trump, also endorsed the petition. Tessa Levine, campaign manager of CREDO, told Common Dreams, “It’s terrifying that Trump currently has unchecked authority to press the button to launch thousands of nuclear weapons at his command in a matter of moments.”

“Trump’s first 100 days have been marked by series of horrifying demonstrations of his recklessness and incompetence, we cannot trust Trump to make rational or informed decisions about the safety of our country and the world,” Levine added.

The urgency of the petition was attributed to Trump’s “temper” and “a shaky grasp of geopolitics” Lillyanne Daigle, the network campaigner for Global Zero, told the Common Dreams.

“One modern nuclear weapon is more destructive than all of the bombs detonated in World War Two combined, yet there is no check on Trump’s ability to use the thousands of nuclear weapons at his command,” Daigle said. “The proposed legislation is an important first step to reining in this autocratic system and making the world safer from nuclear catastrophe.”

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