The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Patricia D. Jehlen

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 resolve:

Resolve to prevent the first use of nuclear weapons by the United States.

PETITION OF:

NAME: Patricia D. Jehlen
DISTRICT/ADDRESS: Second Middlesex
Resolve to prevent the first use of nuclear weapons by the United States.

Resolved, WHEREAS the use of even a small number of nuclear weapons could have catastrophic human, environmental, health, and economic consequences globally; and

WHEREAS some 14,000 nuclear weapons still exist in the world and pose an intolerable risk to humanity; and

WHEREAS the United States has over 6,000 nuclear weapons, which combined are more than 100 times more powerful than all the weapons used during World War II; and

WHEREAS the United States is currently planning to spend nearly $2 trillion over the next 30 years rebuilding its entire nuclear weapons arsenal—a gross misuse of funds that could be devoted instead to improving security, health, and education; and

WHEREAS the United States maintains nearly 1,000 nuclear weapons on high alert so they are ready for launch within minutes of a presidential decision to do so, making them vulnerable to accidents, unauthorized use, cyberattacks and miscalculations, and increasing the risk of nuclear use;
WHEREAS the United States currently reserves the right to use nuclear weapons in response to non-nuclear attacks by Russia, China or North Korea, which could respond by using their own nuclear weapons, resulting in a nuclear war that could have devastating consequences; and

WHEREAS the U.S. president has sole authority to order a nuclear attack without any consultation or input, which increases the chance of nuclear use; and

WHEREAS a policy renouncing the first use of nuclear weapons would severely constrain the ability of the president to order a nuclear attack, allowing only attacks in response to a nuclear attack; and

WHEREAS Americans and all people on the planet should have the right to live a life free from the threat of nuclear weapons use; and

WHEREAS the United States should take urgent steps to change its policies as well as actively pursue verifiable agreements with other nuclear-armed nations to reduce the number of nuclear weapons and eliminate them from the planet;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that as an important first step the Legislature calls on the president to make it the policy of the United States that it will not start a nuclear war and will therefore not use nuclear weapons first, and calls on the Congress to pass legislation supporting this policy; and

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Legislature transmit copies of this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United States, to the Speaker of the
House of Representatives, to the Majority Leader of the Senate, and to each Senator and Representative from Massachusetts in the Congress of the United States.

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Legislature calls upon each Senator and Representative from Massachusetts in the Congress of the United States to attach such language to other legislation wherever appropriate.