January 29, 2020

To all U.S. Senators and Representatives:

As state legislators, we are gravely concerned that the recent escalation with Iran is leading our country to the brink of another needless and costly war. We call on you to ensure that the United States de-escalates tensions in Iran and prevents further hostilities.

Only Congress can decide whether American forces should be put in harm’s way. Bipartisan majorities in both chambers, backed by vast grassroots support, sought to block this type of offensive executive military action against Iran in the fiscal year 2020 National Defense Authorization Act. But the language was stripped out of the bill during negotiations. Every American citizen now sees the results of that dereliction of duty.

The costs of war run high: human costs, environmental costs, and financial costs.

Since 2001 more than 7,000 American soldiers died in the Middle East, as well as 244,000 civilians in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. An entire generation, here and abroad, has grown up knowing nothing but war and conflict.

The U.S. military is a bigger polluter than 100 nations combined. As we face a mounting climate crisis our resources should be directed to solving, not exacerbating, this issue which will impact everyone for decades to come.

As a nation, we have already spent $4.9 trillion on endless wars since 2001. We cannot afford to add another decades-long war to our nation’s conscience and credit card. With the federal debt hitting a record high of $22 trillion this past February, government spending should reflect efforts to reduce costs—not prepare for more unnecessary wars.

If we don’t stop this cycle of aggression now, the unfortunate conclusion will be the total destruction of our standing in the world, a dramatic increase in our national debt, and a tragic loss of life. Congress must uphold its constitutional duty and enact legislation that prevents any further escalation of conflict with Iran. The United States cannot afford the costs of another disastrous war in the Middle East.

Sincerely, The Undersigned State Legislators
Alabama State Representative Merika Coleman
Alaska State Representative Harriett Drummond
Arizona State Senator Lela Alston
Connecticut State Representative Christine Palm
Georgia State Senator Nan Grogan Orrock
Georgia State Representative Park Cannon
Georgia State Representative Michele Henson
Illinois State Representative Carol Ammons
Illinois State Representative Rita Mayfield
Iowa State Representative Marti Anderson
Kansas State Representative Sydney Carlin
Maine State Senator Rebecca Millett
Maryland State Delegate Pamela Queen
Massachusetts State Senator Jo Comerford
Massachusetts State Senator Pat Jehlen
Massachusetts State Representative Natalie Higgins
Massachusetts State Representative Kay Khan
Minnesota State Representative Tina Liebling
Minnesota State Representative Mary Kunesh-Podein
Minnesota State Representative Connie Bernardy
Mississippi Former Representative Kathy Sykes
Missouri State Representative Ingrid Burnett
Missouri State Representative LaDonna Appelbaum
Montana State Representative Mary Ann Dunwell
Montana State Representative Jasmine Krotkov
Nebraska State Senator Megan Hunt
North Carolina State Representative Evelyn A Terry
New Hampshire State Representative Kathryn Stack
New Hampshire State Representative Lee Oxenham
New Hampshire State Representative Judith T Spang
New Hampshire State Representative Julie Radhakrishnan
New Hampshire Majority Floor Leader Mary Heath
New Hampshire State Representative Francesca G. Diggs
New Mexico State Representative Liz Thomson
Ohio State Senator Nickie J. Antonio
Oregon State Representative Tiffany Mitchell
Oregon State Representative Alissa Keny-Guyer
Oregon State Representative Andrea Salinas
Pennsylvania Representative Wendy Ullman
Pennsylvania State Senator Katie Muth
Rhode Island State Senator Dawn Euer
South Dakota State Senator Susan Wismer
Tennessee State Representative London Lamar
Texas State Representative Toni Rose
Utah State Representative Elizabeth Weight
Utah State Representative Marsha Judkins
Vermont State Representative Mary Sullivan
Vermont State Representative Kimberly Jessup
Vermont State Representative Sara Coffey
Washington State Senator Patty Kuderer