FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Tuesday, August 28th, 2018
CONTACT: Jordan Wilhelmi | jordan@unbendablemedia.com

BREAKING: California Passes First State Resolution Calling on Restrictions of President’s ‘First Use’ of Nuclear Weapons

CA Senate and Assembly Urges Congress to Pass the ‘Restricting First Use of Nuclear Weapons Act of 2017’

In California - and Across the Country - Legislators Are Coming Together to Rein in the President’s Unchecked Power to Start a Nuclear War

SACRAMENTO — Today, the California State Senate passed AJR 30, a resolution urging Congress to speedily take up and pass the Restricting First Use of Nuclear Weapons Act of 2017. The joint resolution, introduced by Assemblymember Cecilia Aguiar-Curry, would limit the president’s sole authority to launch a first strike nuclear attack.

The decision to use nuclear weapons is one of the most important decisions facing a sitting president. While 68% of Americans believe the U.S. should never be the first to use nuclear weapons, only 24% understand that the president’s ability to do so is not subject to congressional approval. A single warhead could kill hundreds of thousands of people. Yet, despite the risks, there is currently no check on the president’s exclusive authority to order a nuclear strike.

Local leaders want to be that check. They understand that President Donald Trump’s rhetoric and intemperate threats underscore the urgent need to create checks and balances on the president’s sole authority to order the use of nuclear weapons in a first strike.

“As the first state to condemn the president’s unchecked power to start a nuclear war, this is a significant milestone toward curbing the Executive Branch’s sole authority to launch nuclear attacks. Californians are sending a powerful message that they will not tolerate one person holding the power to decimate cities and plunge us into a nuclear war that threatens us all,” said Yasmeen Silva, Beyond the Bomb campaigner. “With nuclear tensions higher than they have been in decades, the last thing we need is the person with the sole authority to launch a nuclear weapon threatening other world leaders. This is where misunderstandings happen, and with extremely fatal consequences for hundreds of thousands of innocent people. Our government is based on a system of checks and balances, and today, California made it clear that they won’t tolerate an erosion of that principle.”

The Executive Director of Women’s Action for New Directions, Nancy Parrish, says, “today California is leading the way toward a safer, more sane United States nuclear policy. Americans are terrified that in a moment of unhinged anger, our President can launch a nuclear weapon, and not a single person can stop him. By passing this resolution California is sending a strong message to Congress: revoke the President’s sole authority to start a nuclear war. I am grateful to Assemblymember Aguiar-Curry for working with WAND and our partners to advance this resolution in California.

California is the first, but it will not be the only state to send this message to Congress. Across the country, members of WAND’s Women Legislators’ Lobby have introduced ten resolutions in eight
states taking a stand against sole authority. I look forward to other states joining California and uniting against nuclear war.”

In addition to AJR 30, AJR 33 also passed calling for a wide range of critical nuclear policies, including ending sole authority, and taking nuclear weapons off of hair-trigger alert.

A full list of pending nuclear resolutions around the country include:

- GA: Senator Nan Orrock [SR 897]
- IA: Rep. Marti Anderson [No current bill number; resolution drafting number 5419HH]
- IL: Rep. Carol Ammons [HR0877]
- MA: Senator Barbara L'Italien [SD.2488]
- MD: Delegate Pamela Queen [HJ12]
- VT: Rep. Mary Sullivan [JRH.12]

Beyond the Bomb campaigner Yasmeen Silva is available to discuss the significance of California passing AJR 30 and next steps to advance similar resolution across the country. To arrange an interview with Silva, please contact Jordan Wilhelmi at jordan@unbendablemedia.com.

###
