

## RESOLUTION NO. 2022-10

### A RESOLUTION URGING CONGRESS TO LEAD THE GLOBAL EFFORT TO REDUCE THE THREAT OF NUCLEAR WAR

**Whereas**, nearly 13,355 nuclear weapons still exist in the world and pose an intolerable risk to human survival; and

**Whereas**, the United States has roughly 5,550 nuclear weapons, constituting the world's most lethal nuclear weapons capability, and it is the only country to have used nuclear weapons in war; and

**Whereas**, nuclear weapons pose a threat simply by existing, due to the possibility of accidents and miscalculations, many of which have been documented in the past; and

**Whereas**, the United States is currently planning to spend at least \$1.2 trillion rebuilding our entire nuclear weapons arsenal; and

**Whereas**, Oregon taxpayers spend approximately \$188 million on nuclear weapons annually, which takes funding away from necessary programs such as education, health care, infrastructure and the environment; and

**Whereas**, in July 2017, 122 nations called for the elimination of all nuclear weapons by adopting the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons; and

**Whereas**, the United States Constitution gives Congress the sole power to declare war, but the President of the United States currently has de facto sole authority to order nuclear attacks, without any required consultation or any system of checks and balances; and

**Whereas**, Salem residents have also contributed significantly to efforts to eradicate nuclear weapons, including former Mayor Sue Harris, a leader in citizen diplomacy with the Soviet Union, Dr. Andy Harris, a national leader of Physicians for Social Responsibility, former U.S. Congress member Mike Kopetski, who, along with Oregon's Senator Mark Hatfield, led the congressional effort to end nuclear weapons testing, and Ted Coran, Susan Gordon, Don Skinner, and Peter Bergel, who provided national and local grassroots leadership to support the ending of nuclear weapons testing; and

**Whereas**, Oregonians currently benefit from the safety and security provided by existing nuclear arms reduction treaties, including the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons, Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty and New START, and previously benefited from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action; and

**Whereas**, this resolution advocates for the same actions as those set forth by the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, which is a leading medical organization dedicated to the global elimination of nuclear weapons and was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1985; and

**Whereas**, members of Oregon’s Congressional Delegation, including Senators Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley and Representatives Earl Blumenauer, Peter DeFazio and Suzanne Bonamici, are leaders in Congress on nuclear disarmament and have cosponsored legislation to end nuclear first strike capability, reduce spending on nuclear weapons and support the INF treaty; and

**Whereas**, plutonium for the bomb the United States dropped on Nagasaki was produced at the Hanford Nuclear Reservation, a site on the banks of the Columbia River in the state of Washington that displaced area residents, affected the health of “Downwinders” and caused sacred sites, villages and fishing areas of Native American tribes to be lost; and

**Whereas**, the Hanford Site, upriver from Oregon, remains the most toxic contamination site in the Western Hemisphere, a nuclear sacrifice zone that threatens the health and environment of our region; and

**Whereas**, the Marshall Islands were the site of 67 nuclear weapons tests by the United States during the Cold War, and Oregon currently has one of the largest populations of Marshall Islanders in the nation, many of whom continue to suffer health consequences from their home being used as a nuclear sacrifice zone; and

**Whereas**, the service and suffering of all atomic veterans was acknowledged by the State of Oregon in 2005 with the designation of July 16 every year as Atomic Veterans Day, and in 2017 with the designation of Interstate 5 between Salem and Albany as Atomic Veterans Memorial Highway; and

**Whereas**, Oregon has been home to many courageous people who have dedicated their lives to the eradication of nuclear weapons, including Hiroshima survivor Dr. Hideko Tamura Snider of Medford, Hanford cleanup advocate and Yakama Nation Elder Russell Jim, Nobel Peace Prize recipient Linus Pauling, Hanford “Downwinder” Pat Hoover of Eugene and Carol Uner, who organized the first Hiroshima commemoration in Portland in 1962; and

**Whereas**, nuclear weapons-related mining, milling, production, testing, storage and use disproportionately affect communities of color, indigenous peoples and women, and adequate compensation has not been made for the environmental and health consequences of nuclear weapons activities pursued by the federal government during the 50 years of the Cold War, most often on Native American land; and

**Whereas**, in order to survive climate change and pursue social justice, we will need our brightest scientific minds and limited resources to no longer be squandered on weapons, because as the climate crisis increases stress on communities around the world and intensifies the likelihood of conflict, the potential for nuclear war will grow; and

**Whereas**, a single nuclear detonation could cause hundreds of thousands of immediate fatalities, hundreds of thousands of injuries and illnesses from radiation and devastating effects on agricultural land and natural resources for decades; and

**Whereas**, Oregonians have the human right to live a life free from nuclear contamination and the

threat posed by the reckless use of nuclear weapons.

NOW THEREFORE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SALEM, OREGON  
RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:

**Section 1.** The City of Salem respectfully urges the Congress of the United States to take appropriate steps and fulfill its ethical obligation to the people to lead a global effort to prevent nuclear war by establishing a system of checks and balances to ensure that the President of the United States no longer has the sole and unchecked authority to launch nuclear weapons, renouncing the option of using nuclear weapons first, taking U.S. nuclear weapons off hair-trigger alert, canceling the plan to replace the entire U.S. nuclear arsenal with next-generation nuclear weapons and actively pursuing a verifiable and multilateral agreement among nuclear-armed states to eliminate their nuclear arsenals;

**Section 2.** The City of Salem supports the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and we call upon the federal government to join the treaty.

**Section 3.** A copy of this memorial shall be sent to the President of the United States, to the Senate Majority Leader, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and to each member of Congress.

**Section 4.** This resolution is effective upon adoption.

ADOPTED by the City Council this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2022.

ATTEST:

City Recorder

Approved by City Attorney: \_\_\_\_\_