

# HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 12

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By: **Delegates Queen, Gibson, and Gutierrez**

Introduced and read first time: February 9, 2018

Assigned to: Rules and Executive Nominations

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## HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

1 A House Joint Resolution concerning

2 **Presidential Authority Over the Use of Nuclear Weapons**

3 FOR the purpose of requesting Maryland's Congressional Delegation to establish a system  
4 of checks and balances to ensure that the President of the United States does not  
5 have unchecked authority to launch a first strike of nuclear weapons.

6 WHEREAS, There are over 15,000 nuclear weapons globally, most possessed by the  
7 United States and Russia, which are significantly more destructive than those dropped on  
8 Hiroshima and Nagasaki; and

9 WHEREAS, The use and detonation of even a small number of nuclear weapons  
10 would have catastrophic human, environmental, and economic consequences globally,  
11 impacting everyone on the planet; and

12 WHEREAS, The first use of nuclear weapons against any other nuclear-armed  
13 nation would result in their immediate retaliation and invite the near total destruction of  
14 municipalities near the Washington Metropolitan Area; and

15 WHEREAS, A single nuclear detonation of a 10 kiloton improvised highly enriched  
16 uranium device in Baltimore City would cause upwards of 67,320 fatalities and 102,080  
17 injuries; and

18 WHEREAS, The citizens of our State have the right to live a life free from the threat  
19 of the reckless use of nuclear weapons; and

20 WHEREAS, Nuclear weapons fail to address 21st century national security concerns  
21 such as climate change, cyberattacks, and terrorism while draining precious resources from  
22 programs that make us safer and more secure; and

23 WHEREAS, Over 300 former heads of state, experts, and religious and military  
24 leaders have called for urgent action to eliminate all nuclear weapons globally; and



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1           WHEREAS, Every American president since Ronald Reagan has worked to reduce  
2 global nuclear stockpiles in an effort to ultimately eliminate these weapons of mass  
3 destruction; and

4           WHEREAS, President Donald J. Trump has repeatedly questioned why we cannot  
5 use nuclear weapons and called for a major nuclear buildup, which will incite other  
6 countries to do the same and dramatically increase the risks of nuclear war; and

7           WHEREAS, The United States is on track to spend \$1 trillion over the next 30 years  
8 to upgrade its nuclear arsenal, money that could be better spent on education, healthcare,  
9 clean-energy jobs, public safety innovation, and infrastructure; and

10           WHEREAS, The President of the United States currently has the sole and unilateral  
11 power to launch a nuclear war without any consultation or any system of checks and  
12 balances; now, therefore, be it

13           RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That Maryland's  
14 Congressional Delegation should take all necessary steps to establish a system of checks  
15 and balances with regard to the first use of nuclear weapons and to ensure that the  
16 President of the United States shall no longer have the sole and unchecked authority to  
17 launch nuclear weapons, except in circumstances of retaliation; and be it further

18           RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded by the Department of  
19 Legislative Services to the Honorable Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr., Governor of Maryland; the  
20 Honorable Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr., President of the Senate of Maryland; and the  
21 Honorable Michael E. Busch, Speaker of the House of Delegates; and be it further

22           RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded by the Department of  
23 Legislative Services to the Maryland Congressional Delegation: Senators Benjamin L.  
24 Cardin and Christopher Van Hollen, Jr., Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510;  
25 and Representatives Andrew P. Harris, C. A. Dutch Ruppersberger, III, John P. Sarbanes,  
26 Anthony G. Brown, Steny Hamilton Hoyer, John Delaney, Elijah E. Cummings, and Jamie  
27 Raskin, House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515.