

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

October 11, 2011

The Honorable Patty Murray
The Honorable Max Baucus
The Honorable John Kerry
The Honorable John Kyl
The Honorable Rob Portman
The Honorable Pat Toomey

The Honorable Jeb Hensarling
The Honorable Xavier Becerra
The Honorable Dave Camp
The Honorable Jim Clyburn
The Honorable Fred Upton
The Honorable Chris Van Hollen

Dear Members of the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction:

The Berlin Wall fell. The Soviet Union crumbled. The Cold War ended. Yet 20 years later, we continue to spend over \$50 billion a year on the U.S. nuclear arsenal. This makes no sense. These funds are a drain on our budget and a disservice to the next generation of Americans. We are robbing the future to pay for the unneeded weapons of the past. Now is the time to stop fighting last century's war. Now is the time to reset our priorities. Now is the time to invest in the people and the programs to get America back on track.

The Super Committee is best positioned to cut this outdated radioactive relic. The Soviets are long gone, yet the stockpiles remain. The bombs collect dust, yet the bills are with us to this day. We call on the Super Committee to cut \$20 billion a year, or \$200 billion over the next ten years, from the U.S. nuclear weapons budget. This cut will enable us to stay safe without further straining our budget. This cut will improve our security. This cut will allow us to continue funding the national defense programs that matter most.

Consider how this savings compares to vital programs on which Americans rely. We spend approximately \$20 billion per year on Pell Grants to help students pay for college. We spend \$5 billion to ensure that Americans do not freeze in their homes during the winter. We need to freeze our nuclear weapons, and fuel our stalled economy.

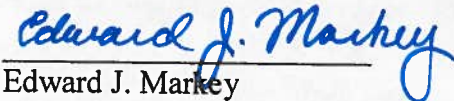
The Ploughshares Fund estimates that the U.S. will spend over \$700 billion on nuclear weapons and related programs over the next ten years. Nuclear weapons and missile defense alone will consume over \$500 billion. We can no longer justify spending at these levels. We can save hundreds of billions of dollars by restructuring the U.S. nuclear program for the 21st century.

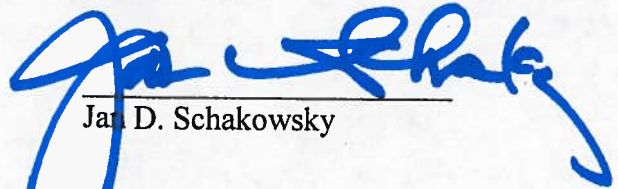
Our current arsenal totals approximately 5,000 nuclear warheads. This enormous stockpile will allow us to annihilate our enemies countless times. At any one time there are up to 12 Trident submarines cruising the world's seas. Each submarine carries an estimated 96 nuclear warheads. Each submarine is capable of destroying all of Russia's and China's major cities. Why then do we need all of these weapons? There is no good reason. America no longer needs, and cannot afford, this massive firepower.

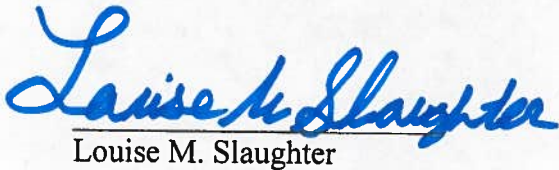
The Super Committee should not reduce funding to vital programs relied upon by millions of Americans. Cut Minuteman missiles. Do not cut Medicare and Medicaid. Cut nuclear-armed B-52 and B-2 bombers. Do not cut Social Security. Invest in the future, don't waste money on the past. We do not need to maintain our current level of nuclear weapons to secure our country. The President agrees. The Senate agrees. The New START treaty will reduce our level of deployed strategic warheads to 1,550. This is a 25 percent cut from today's levels. Fewer nuclear weapons should equal less funding.

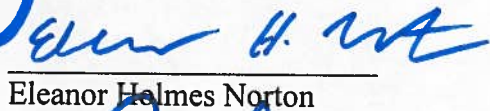
We should not cut entitlement programs first. We should not target our seniors, our children, and our sick first. Instead we should target outdated and unnecessary nuclear weapons. Let's freeze the nukes so we can fund the future.

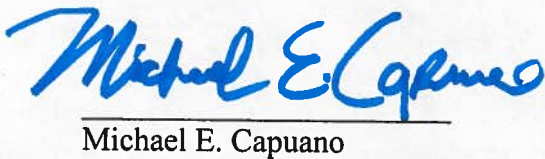
Sincerely,

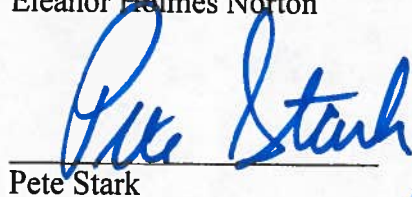

Edward J. Markey

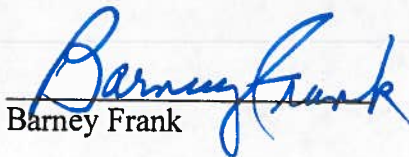

Jan D. Schakowsky

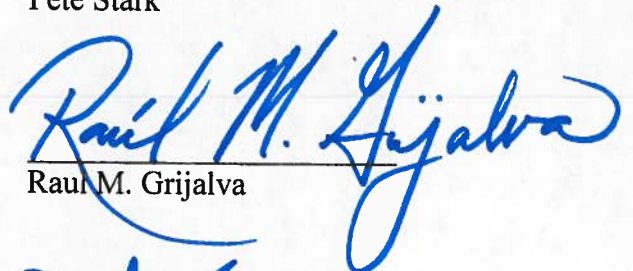

Louise M. Slaughter

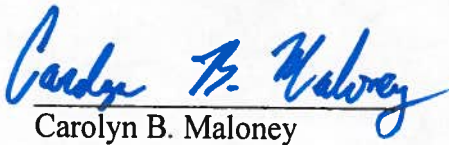

Eleanor Holmes Norton

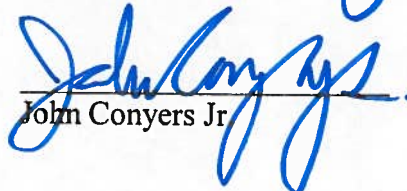

Michael E. Capuano

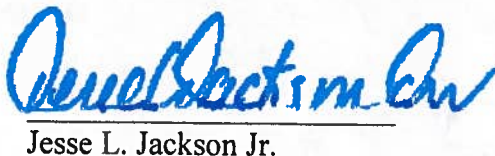

Pete Stark

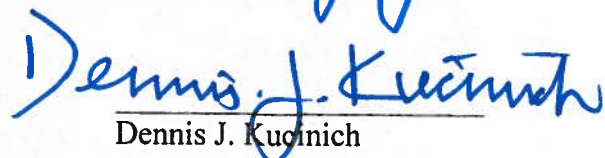

Barney Frank


Raul M. Grijalva


Carolyn B. Maloney


John Conyers Jr.


Jesse L. Jackson Jr.


Dennis J. Kucinich

Barbara Lee
Barbara J. Lee

Rush Holt
Rush D. Holt

Lois Capps
Lois Capps

John Lewis
John Lewis

John W. Olver
John W. Olver

Bob Filner
Bob Filner

Jim McDermott
Jim McDermott

Jim P. McGovern
Jim P. McGovern

Jerrold Nadler
Jerrold Nadler

Edolphus Towns
Edolphus Towns

Maurice D. Hinchey
Maurice D. Hinchey

Mike M. Honda
Mike M. Honda

Frank Pallone Jr.
Frank Pallone Jr.

Lynn C. Woolsey
Lynn C. Woolsey

Gwen Moore
Gwen Moore

Danny K. Davis
Danny K. Davis

Gregory W. Meeks
Gregory W. Meeks

Earl Blumenauer
Earl Blumenauer

Anna C. Eshoo
Anna C. Eshoo

Sam Farr
Sam Farr

George Miller

George Miller

John F. Tierney

John F. Tierney

Peter A. DeFazio

Peter A. DeFazio

William R. Keating

William R. Keating

Stephen F. Lynch

Stephen F. Lynch

Peter F. Welch

Peter F. Welch

Bruce L. Braley

Bruce L. Braley

Keith Ellison

Keith Ellison

Donald M. Payne

Donald M. Payne

David E. Price

David E. Price

Donna F. Edwards

Donna F. Edwards

Steve Cohen

Steve Cohen

Robert A. Brady

Robert A. Brady

Hansen Clarke

Hansen Clarke

Jackie Spier

Jackie Spier

Laura Richardson

Laura Richardson

Jared Polis

Jared Polis

Mazie K. Hirono


Mazie K. Hirono

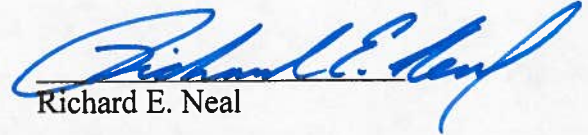
Elijah E. Cummings

Elijah E. Cummings

Loretta Sanchez

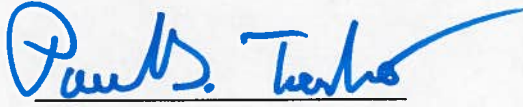
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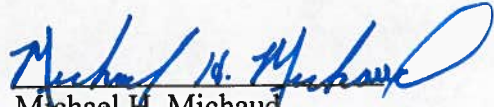

Jim P. Moran Jr.


Richard E. Neal


Tim H. Bishop

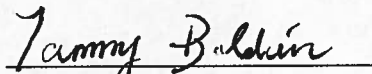

Chellie Pingree

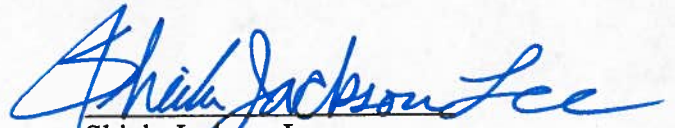

Paul D. Tonko



Michael H. Michaud

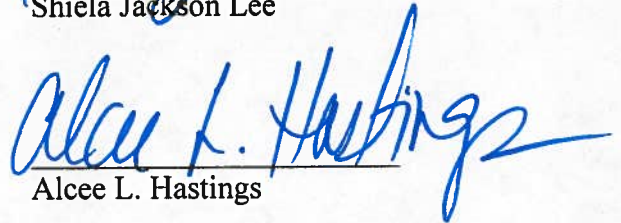

John A. Yarmuth

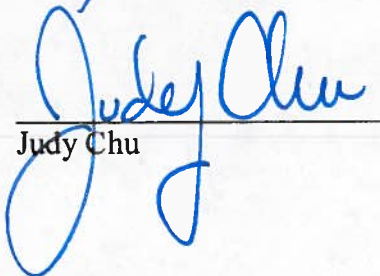

Doris O. Matsui


Tammy Baldwin


Shiela Jackson Lee


Hank C. Johnson


Alcee L. Hastings


Judy Chu