

November 15, 2021

Dear Senators,

The undersigned organizations write to you in support of reallocating funding away from a dangerous and outdated weapons system and into desperately-needed global COVID-19 vaccine production efforts. An amendment proposed by Senators Merkley and Warren to the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2022 (NDAA) would do just that, by moving a modest \$98 million away from the B-83 nuclear bomb in order to fund global vaccine production.

The B-83 is a Cold War relic. Deemed redundant as it will soon be replaced by the B61-12--a smaller, modernized weapon that serves the same purpose--the B83 was slated to be retired until the previous administration reversed course. Indefinitely sustaining this weapon will only become more expensive as it continues to age. Costs aside, the weapon is indiscriminate and would cause immense collateral damage if utilized. For context, just one of these weapons yields nearly half of all the explosives used in World War II, including both atomic bombs. Congress should seize this opportunity to retire the weapon from the stockpile, thus freeing up valuable taxpayer dollars to meet true human needs.

The pandemic has made abundantly clear that our most urgent threats can not be solved by pouring more money into weapons of war. Vaccinating the global population is in the obvious interest of our security, in order to prevent the emergence of dangerous new variants, to save trillions of dollars in the global economy, and finally to get the pandemic under control. But fewer than one percent of COVID-19 vaccines have been allocated to people in low-income countries, and as a result, we are facing a global vaccine apartheid. If reallocated, \$98 million could help fully fund the World Health Organization vaccine hub and other efforts to boost vaccine production capacity in Africa and low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) globally. This funding could also help promote on-the-ground efforts supporting LMIC COVID-19 vaccine distribution.

There is a dire need to fund global COVID-19 vaccine production, both to save lives in the short-term and to increase preparedness for future pandemic threats in the long-term. Retiring the B-83 is a straightforward way to invest in global health without compromising existing U.S. national security objectives. We urge you to co-sponsor NDAA Amendment 4069 led by Senators Merkley and Warren, and to vote in favor should it come to a vote on the Senate floor.

Sincerely,

Africa Faith and Justice Network  
American Friends Service Committee  
Arms Control Association  
AVAC  
Center for International Policy  
Chesapeake Physicians for Social Responsibility

Coalition on Human Needs  
Foundation for Integrative AIDS Research (FIAR)  
Friends Committee on National Legislation  
Friends in Solidarity, Inc.  
Friends of the Earth US  
Global Zero  
Council for a Livable World  
Health GAP  
IHM Sisters - Justice, Peace and Sustainability Office  
Justice is Global  
Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns  
Massachusetts Peace Action  
Mennonite Central Committee U.S.  
National Priorities Project at the Institute for Policy Studies  
Network Lobby for Catholic Social Justice  
Nuclear Watch New Mexico  
People's Federation for National Peace and Development (PEFENAP)  
Physicians for Social Responsibility  
Physicians for Social Responsibility-Los Angeles  
Ploughshares Fund  
Preventnuclearwar - MD  
Public Citizen  
RootsAction.org  
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas - Justice Team  
Sojourners  
The United Methodist Church - General Board of Church and Society  
Tri-Valley CAREs (Communities Against a Radioactive Environment)  
Union of Concerned Scientists  
Unitarian Universalist Service Committee  
United Church of Christ, Justice and Local Church Ministries  
Win Without War  
Women's Action for New Directions (WAND)  
World BEYOND War