

Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515-2107

## DISTRICT OFFICES:

5 HIGH STREET, SUITE 101  
MEDFORD, MA 02155  
(781) 396-2900

188 CONCORD STREET, SUITE 102  
FRAMINGHAM, MA 01702  
(508) 875-2900

<http://markey.house.gov>

November 16, 2009

President Barack Obama  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama:

I am writing to commend your leadership on the issues of nuclear arms control and nonproliferation, and to urge you make certain that your administration's forthcoming Nuclear Posture Review accomplishes the significant and positive changes which you have repeatedly championed. You have recognized that in a world of suicidal terrorism, the existence of nuclear weapons threatens us more than their power defends us.

Your landmark April 5, 2009, speech in Prague heralded a new path forward in U.S. nuclear policy. Your call for "an end to Cold War thinking" and your pledge that the United States will "reduce the role of nuclear weapons in our national security strategy" reestablished our nation's leadership in reducing the threat of nuclear weapons.

This strong leadership has already been recognized by the world community. Your receipt of the 2009 Nobel Prize for Peace, in large part because of your commitment to nuclear arms control and disarmament, shows that the time has come for a dramatic break from the nuclear weapons policies of the past. To improve our national security, it is absolutely essential that the new Nuclear Posture Review herald significant change in the legacy roles and missions for our nuclear weapons.

As your administration prepares its 2010 Nuclear Posture Review (NPR), there are several elements I hope you will consider incorporating:

- ***Mission limitation to core deterrence.*** The NPR should state that U.S. nuclear weapons exist for the sole purpose of deterring the use of nuclear weapons against the United States or its allies. This statement would signal a clear change from past policy and fulfill your promise to reduce the role of nuclear weapons.
- ***End of "high-alert" or "hair-trigger" launch status.*** The NPR should state that the United States will no longer require its nuclear forces to be capable of immediate launch. Our survivable nuclear deterrent allows you to take whatever time is necessary to confirm the facts surrounding any attack upon the United

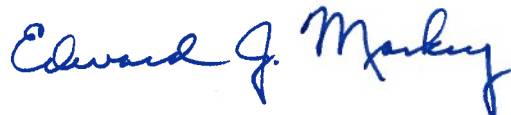
States prior to authorizing the use of nuclear weapons. Declaring your intent to do so will maximize strategic and crisis stability. This new de-alerted posture should be communicated to Russia to encourage similar action on their part.

- ***A formal pledge of no first use.*** The NPR should state that the United States will not be the first to use nuclear weapons. Even our close ally Japan, which has previously been a staunch supporter of the U.S. “first use” option, has abandoned this policy. Just last month, Japanese Foreign Minister Katsua Okada called on the United States to declare a “no first use” policy, saying that it is not “consistent to call for nuclear abolition, while requesting the first use of nuclear weapons for yourself.”
- ***Reduction of the U.S. nuclear stockpile to fewer than 1,000 total warheads, both deployed and non-deployed.*** This number is more than sufficient for deterrence, but would be less expensive to maintain and easier to safeguard. In addition, warhead reductions would strengthen the United States’ position in international discussions of arms control and nonproliferation.
- ***No new-design nuclear warheads, and no modifications to create new military capabilities.*** As you know, the Congress rejected two proposed programs during the Bush administration which would have created new nuclear warheads, the Robust Nuclear Earth Penetrator and the Reliable Replacement Warhead. These proposed new warheads were not necessary from a military or technical perspective and they would have significantly impeded the United States’ international nonproliferation agenda.
- ***U.S. ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.*** In your Prague speech you stated your desire for action “immediately and aggressively” on the CTBT, and we strongly support ratification of this treaty. Especially in light of the significant technological advancements by our nuclear laboratories in the past decade, there is no question that the United States can maintain its stockpile of safe, reliable warheads without nuclear test explosions.

With the inclusion of these elements, your administration’s Nuclear Posture Review will faithfully implement the historic agenda you have laid before our nation.

Mr. President, while some may resist your vision for a new and positive direction in our nuclear force posture, you must not let an entrenched bureaucracy or old patterns of thinking stop you from making the changes necessary to increase American security. By at long last eliminating “Cold War thinking” and reducing the role of nuclear weapons in our national security strategy, your administration will lead the world in reducing, and ultimately eliminating, the nuclear threat. I thank you again for your leadership, and offer my support for this essential agenda.

Sincerely,



Edward J. Markey