

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3101

April 17, 2007

Dr. Robert M. Gates
Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301

Dear Secretary Gates,

I am concerned about the recent debate regarding this Administration's nuclear weapons policy and specifically the Reliable Replacement Warhead (RRW). While General Cartwright, Commander, U.S. Strategic Command, and Thomas D'Agostino, Acting Administrator of the National Nuclear Security Administration have been forceful and articulate advocates, I believe your voice must be heard. I encourage you to engage in this debate to emphasize the importance of sustaining a smaller, but adaptable, deterrent.

As one of the original sponsors of the RRW initiative, I continue to believe that the program represents vital evolution of our nuclear weapons program and is essential if we are to achieve our goal of reducing the overall number of weapons and cutting the number of weapons systems by 50 percent. Without a demonstrated capacity to produce systems that have state-of-the-art use control, increased reliability margins, and the ability to be certified without underground testing, military leaders must continue to manage our deterrent by maintaining a massive inventory as a hedge against future uncertainty.

This Administration has a very strong record of reducing the number of weapons in the U.S. arsenal. You should not hesitate to remind critics that President Bush negotiated the Washington-Moscow Treaty to cut the number of weapons to the lowest level since the Eisenhower Administration. The Nuclear Posture Review of 2001 also makes it clear that this Administration's priority is to significantly decrease the number of active and inactive weapons, as well as recognition that our country must adapt to an evolving nuclear threat, whether it comes from countries like North Korea and Iran or from terrorist threats. Unlike previous Administrations, only this Administration has changed the nation's nuclear strategy to address an entirely new and evolving threat while simultaneously decreasing our weapon inventory.

You must answer critics who have argued that the RRW will lead to an arms race. The RRW program has no relationship to North Korea cheating on the Agreed Upon Framework, and it is abundantly clear that Iran pursued its nuclear goals well before 2005 when the RRW program was developed. In addition, evolution of the U.S. deterrent will

reinforce the confidence of our allies in the reliability of our remaining nuclear stockpile – a stockpile on which they depend in their decision to forego their own nuclear weapon capability.

Finally, based on the success of the Stockpile Stewardship Program we have now have the confidence to design and manufacture RRW weapons that will be deployed without underground testing. In light of this reality, I would like to discuss with you how this could impact the Administration's decision to revisit its position on the ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and if you believe that such action would guarantee that countries like India, Pakistan and North Korea would sign on the Treaty and would encourage China, Iran, Indonesia and Egypt to follow the U.S. action to ratify the treaty.

I encourage each of you to make it clear that the RRW is just one element of this evolving strategy to sustain our deterrent, but is essential if we are to continue to reduce the overall number of weapon systems maintained in our arsenal.

I appreciate your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Pete V. Domenici", is written over the typed name and title. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the beginning.

Pete V. Domenici
United States Senator

cc: Secretary Bodman

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3101

April 17, 2007

Stephen J. Hadley
National Security Advisor
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. Hadley,

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Pete V. Domenici
United States Senator

cc: Secretary Bodman

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3101

April 17, 2007

Dr. Condoleezza Rice
Secretary of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington DC, 20510

Dear Secretary Rice,

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Pete V. Domenici
United States Senator

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