



United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0504
<http://feinstein.senate.gov>

August 9, 2016

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As you review potential changes to our nation's nuclear policy, I want you to know it is my strongly held belief that the United States must never again initiate a nuclear exchange.

I remember hearing the awful news that more than 100,000 souls had perished in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. I remember the absolute devastation and decades of worldwide fear of nuclear weapons it precipitated.

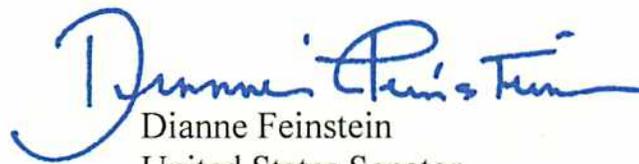
You were right to say that “we have a shared responsibility to look directly into the eye of history and ask what we must do differently to curb such suffering again,” and I am grateful that you went to Hiroshima to deliver this message earlier this year. In my mind, this burden carries special weight for the only nation that has ever used nuclear weapons in war.

I am convinced that the United States is capable of responding to any threat we or our allies may face without threatening a nuclear first strike. The only moral purpose for nuclear weapons is to deter their use by other nuclear powers. To unambiguously state that we will never initiate nuclear war would reinforce an international norm that will help keep us safe, and minimize the very real risk that a foreign power might someday misinterpret a benign rocket launch or a non-nuclear military action as a nuclear strike.

Declaring a national no-first-use nuclear policy is an important step towards fulfilling the pledge you made in Prague in 2009 to “seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons.”

It is time for our policy to reflect our moral judgment that nuclear weapons are an abhorrent and perilous weapon that should never be used except in response to a nuclear attack. I urge you declare a no-first-use policy, which would be a lasting commitment on behalf of the American people to peace and stability.

Sincerely,



Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator