

RESOLUTION OPPOSING THE BASING OF ANY NUCLEAR WEAPON DELIVERY SYSTEM
IN VERMONT

1. WHEREAS in 2018, the U.S. Air Force awarded Lockheed Martin \$83.1 million in to develop and test equipment for F-35A nuclear capability (a), and
2. WHEREAS the development and requisite testing and certification for nuclear capability in the F-35A is expected to last until February 2024 (a), and
3. WHEREAS the Air Force plans to mount the B61 Mod12 nuclear gravity bomb on the F-35 thus integrating it into the air-delivery leg of the nuclear triad (a), and
4. WHEREAS the B61-12 nuclear gravity bomb has a nuclear warhead yield as low as 0.3 kilotons and as high as 50 kilotons (a), and
5. WHEREAS the Air Force is integrating the B61-12 nuclear weapon into the F-35 this year as part of a long-range plan to deploy a nuclear-armed, dual capable F-35, which will be able to give commanders a wider envelope of precision nuclear armed options (b), and
6. WHEREAS the risk reduction activities have been completed insuring the F-35A is fully compatible with the B61-12 weapon (c) and
7. WHEREAS planning for Block 4 nuclear certification efforts have begun in anticipation of initial B61-12 integration on the F-35A this year (c), and
8. WHEREAS the most current Mod 12 version of the B61 thermonuclear gravity bomb demonstrated a bunker-buster earth-penetrating capability (d), and
9. WHEREAS federal lawmakers questioned whether adding new low-yield nuclear weapons could lower the threshold to nuclear war and introduce new elements of danger (h), and
10. WHEREAS Pentagon officials claimed that a nuclear-capable F-35 presents new threats to a potential adversary...and would increasingly be called upon to function as a key element of the US nuclear deterrence strategy...and might also be able to respond much more quickly with low-yield nuclear weapons in the event that new intelligence information locating a new target emerges (b), and
11. WHEREAS the 2018 U. S. Nuclear Posture Review stated that a nuclear-armed F-35 is fundamental to deterring Russia, and that we (U. S. military officials) are committed to upgrading DCA (dual capable aircraft) with the nuclear-capable F-35 aircraft (e), and
12. WHEREAS the Air Force is working closely with industry weapons developers to actively build new weapons specifically for the F-35 (c), and
13. WHEREAS the F-35 Lightning II Joint Program Office has been working on integrating the latest modification into its weapons arsenal (f), and
14. WHEREAS the F-35 was designed with a requirement to carry a nuclear payload (g), and

15. WHEREAS in 2015, an F-35 flew with the B61-12 to measure its vibration in the aircraft's weapons bay (g), and
16. WHEREAS the Pentagon has accelerated development of a nuclear-armed F-35 Joint Strike Fighter as part of a new sweeping strategic nuclear weapons modernization and development strategy aimed at countering Russia, China and North Korea (h) and
17. WHEREAS in written testimony, Defense Secretary James Mattis cited the F-35 as an indispensable element of US and NATO nuclear deterrence (h), and
18. WHEREAS in 2018, Defense Secretary James Mattis cited the emergence of the F-35 as a "nuclear delivery system" (h), and
19. WHEREAS defense officials confirmed that a nuclear-armed F-35 is slated to emerge in the early 2020s if not sooner (h), and
20. WHEREAS the Air Force Magazine reported that the F-35 is equipped to carry the B-61 nuclear bomb (h), and
21. WHEREAS the Director of the F-35 Program Integration Office stated that the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter is slated to be armed with the B61-12 nuclear gravity bomb sometime between 2020 and 2022 but could carry the weapon sooner; and that the schedule could be quickened if the weapon were needed sooner (i), and
22. WHEREAS the Executive Officer of the Joint Program Office testified before Congress in March 2018 that nuclear certification planning efforts—part of the F-35 Block 4 modernization— have been initiated to equip the aircraft with the nuclear bomb (j), and
23. WHEREAS the Director of the F-35 Program Integration Office stated that arming the F-35 with the nuclear bomb will require some extra training for pilots but nothing out of the ordinary from their usual regimen (i), and
24. WHEREAS Senator Patrick Leahy wrote that throughout his time in the Senate he has "always fought to reduce the number of nuclear armaments and to halt the testing, production, and proliferation of nuclear arsenals" and that he has "long believed that simply upgrading the entirety of the U.S. nuclear arsenal is an unaffordable course of action that would not improve our security situation. We should instead focus on securing our existing nuclear weapons, rather than dedicating resources to new technologies that will only increase tensions between nuclear armed nations." (k), and
25. WHEREAS Senator Bernie Sanders wrote that he "strongly oppose(s) the basing of nuclear weapons in Vermont" and that he has "consistently supported efforts to reduce our nuclear arsenal," (l), and
26. WHEREAS Senator Bernie Sanders wrote that he disagrees with expanding and enhancing the United States nuclear arsenal as stated in the Nuclear Posture Review, and says that "such a program ignores the inherent dangers of nuclear weapons" (m), and
27. WHEREAS as part of the official Air Force Administrative Record of the F-35 basing process in Vermont, it lists among the capabilities of the proposed basing locations which would be considered advantageous include "rapid initial operational capability attainment by pooling

broad spectrum of nuclear expertise and operational missions” and “the ability to hire civilian nuclear expertise from local area” (n), and

28. WHEREAS as part of the official Air Force Administrative Record of the F-35 basing process in Vermont, the VT National Guard Public Relations officer, CPT Chris Gookin, requested from the Secretary of the Air Force Media Operations Officer a “suitable response to (a) query on the F-35A and its nuclear weapon capabilities” (o), and
29. WHEREAS as part of the official Air Force Administrative Record of the F-35 basing process in Vermont, an information paper prepared by the VT National Guard contained a list of five “Questions We Hope We Don’t Get” from the press. The fifth question listed was “Where are you planning on storing the Nuclear Weapons that are part of the F-35 arsenal?” (p), and
30. WHEREAS as part of the official Air Force Administrative Record of the F-35 basing process in Vermont, documentation from HQ Air Force on the use of ordnance stated that “The F-35 would train for and deploy all the types of ordnance it is capable of carrying.” (q)

Now THEREFORE be it RESOLVED that the Vermont Legislature and the people of Vermont oppose the basing in Vermont of any nuclear weapon delivery system;

And furthermore, be it RESOLVED that the Vermont Legislature and the people of Vermont direct the Governor and the members of our Congressional Delegation to inform the Department of Defense that no nuclear weapon delivery system will be allowed to be based in Vermont.

SOURCE REFERENCES

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- b. **“The F-35: Ultimate Nuclear Bomber?”** Kris Osborn, *Warrior Maven*, May 23, 2018 (<https://nationalinterest.org/blog/the-buzz/the-f-35-the-ultimate-nuclear-bomber-25932>)
- c. Major Emily Grabowski, Air Force Spokeswoman, *Warrior Maven*, May 23, 2018 (<https://nationalinterest.org/blog/the-buzz/the-f-35-the-ultimate-nuclear-bomber-25932>)
- d. Federation of American Scientists, May 2018 (<https://nationalinterest.org/blog/the-buzz/the-f-35-the-ultimate-nuclear-bomber-25932>)
- e. United States Nuclear Posture Review, January 2018 (<https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&cad=rja&uact=8&ve>)

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- f. Lt Gen Jack Weinstein, Deputy Chief of Staff for Strategic Deterrence and Nuclear Integration, May 1, 2018 (<https://www.military.com/dodbuzz/2018/05/01/air-force-advances-testing-new-nuclear-gravity-bomb-general.html>)
- g. **“Air Force Advances Testing of New Nuclear Gravity Bomb”** [military.com](https://www.military.com/dodbuzz/2018/05/01/air-force-advances-testing-new-nuclear-gravity-bomb-general.html), 1 May 2018 (<https://www.military.com/dodbuzz/2018/05/01/air-force-advances-testing-new-nuclear-gravity-bomb-general.html>)
- h. **“Mattis: Nuclear-Armed F-35 Can Change ‘Deterrence’ Equation”** Kris Osborn, [Warrior Maven](https://www.realcleardefense.com/2018/02/08/mattis_nuclear-armed_f-35_can_change_quotdeterrencequot_equation_300202.html), February 8, 2018 (https://www.realcleardefense.com/2018/02/08/mattis_nuclear-armed_f-35_can_change_quotdeterrencequot_equation_300202.html)
- i. Brig Gen Scott Pleus, Director of the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter Program Integration Office, **“F-35 Could Carry B61 Nuclear Warhead Sooner Than Planned”** [DefenseTech](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwi6tlfM6OngAhWSm-AKHbF1ClSjAAegQIChAB&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.military.com%2Fdefensetech%2F2017%2F01%2F10%2Ff-35-carry-b61-nuclear-warhead-sooner-planned&usg=AOvVaw0jjOKJvGC1Y78P_99Np-jU), Oriana Pawlyk, January 2017. (https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwi6tlfM6OngAhWSm-AKHbF1ClSjAAegQIChAB&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.military.com%2Fdefensetech%2F2017%2F01%2F10%2Ff-35-carry-b61-nuclear-warhead-sooner-planned&usg=AOvVaw0jjOKJvGC1Y78P_99Np-jU)
- j. Lt Gen Chris Bogdan, Joint Program Office Executive Officer, House Armed Services Committee hearing, March 2016 (https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwi6tlfM6OngAhWSm-AKHbF1ClSjAAegQIChAB&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.military.com%2Fdefensetech%2F2017%2F01%2F10%2Ff-35-carry-b61-nuclear-warhead-sooner-planned&usg=AOvVaw0jjOKJvGC1Y78P_99Np-jU)
- k. Senator Patrick Leahy in a form letter to constituents, May 2, 2018
- l. Senator Bernie Sanders in a form letter to constituents, January 8, 2019
- m. Senator Bernie Sanders in a form letter to constituents, May 18, 2018
- n. U.S. Air Force F-35 Operational Basing Process: Administrative Record #AR 41811, May 28, 2010 (<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1zAQdtUwOeUGK0yN5h1h5A9J830rRISE8>)

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- p. U. S. Air Force F-35 Operational Basing Process: Administrative Record #AR 58254, April 29, 2013 https://drive.google.com/open?id=1i1VXAZdzR9vgUmQ7ygz0_YARMtOvHnZF
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