

Assembly Joint Resolution No. 13—Committee
on Legislative Operations and Elections

FILE NUMBER.....

ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION—Urging the Federal Government to maintain the moratorium on the testing of explosive nuclear weapons.

WHEREAS, The State of Nevada and its citizens have long contributed to the national security of the United States by hosting the Nevada National Security Site, formerly the Nevada Test Site, where a total of 100 atmospheric tests and 828 underground tests were conducted; and

WHEREAS, After sustained advocacy by Nevadans, the era of explosive nuclear testing in the United States ended in 1992 when a moratorium on underground nuclear testing was passed by bipartisan majorities in the United States Congress and signed into law by President George H.W. Bush, and the moratorium has been voluntarily upheld by every president for over 30 years; and

WHEREAS, Former national security officials and other Washington-based research organizations have recently called for renewed explosive nuclear testing which, if adopted, would occur underground at the Nevada National Security Site in Nye County, just 65 miles from Las Vegas, Nevada, and would introduce environmental, health and economic risks to all Nevadans; and

WHEREAS, When the Federal Government first selected the Nevada Test Site for nuclear testing, an estimated 57,000 people lived in Clark County and the five nearby rural counties, whereas today these counties are home to more than 2.3 million people; and

WHEREAS, Underground testing of explosive nuclear weapons could inadvertently release radioactive material into the air, as has happened in the past with at least 32 venting accidents from underground tests at the Nevada Test Site, including the 1970 Baneberry incident, which released a significant amount of radioactive material across a widespread area of the western United States and exposed 86 Nevada Test Site workers to high levels of radiation; and

WHEREAS, More than 32,000 “Downwinder” claims have been filed as a result of atmospheric testing, and more than 27,000 claims have been filed under the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act by former Nevada Test Site employees and contractors, demonstrating the impact of nuclear testing on the health of Nevadans; and



WHEREAS, Exposure to radiation from resumed testing of explosive nuclear weapons could result in negative chronic health effects to the local population over time, including cancer, heart disease, neurological disorders, autoimmune disorders and thyroid disease; and

WHEREAS, Previous underground testing of explosive nuclear weapons caused tremors in Las Vegas registering as high as 5.7 on the Richter scale, which rattled residents and visitors, underscoring that resumed testing could pose significant risks to the infrastructure, buildings and, ultimately, economy of Nevada, including its tourism and real estate industries; and

WHEREAS, Resumed explosive nuclear testing would further contaminate local groundwater sources, as evidenced by the environmental reports of the National Nuclear Security Administration indicating radioactive materials in groundwater from previous testing and the known effectiveness of groundwater in dispersing radioactive contamination into the surrounding environment; and

WHEREAS, There is no technical or military requirement to resume nuclear testing, as the Directors of the Los Alamos, Sandia and Lawrence Livermore National Laboratories and the Commander of United States Strategic Command, along with the Secretaries of Defense and Energy, have annually affirmed the safety, security, reliability and performance of nuclear weapons for over 25 years and have consistently determined there is no technical or military requirement to resume testing; and

WHEREAS, No country other than North Korea has conducted an explosive nuclear test this century, and 187 countries, including the United States, every NATO and United States Pacific ally, Russia and China, are signatories to the 1996 Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty; and

WHEREAS, Resumption of the testing of explosive nuclear weapons would undermine the national security of the United States by encouraging Russia, China and other countries to resume the testing of nuclear weapons and improve their nuclear arsenals; and

WHEREAS, The United States has extensive data from having conducted more nuclear tests than any other country, which fuels today's powerful science-based stockpile stewardship program with cutting edge diagnostic, modeling and computing capabilities that are second to none; and

WHEREAS, Polling conducted by the University of Maryland in 2024 found that more than two-thirds of Nevada Republicans and



Democrats favor continuing to abide by the moratorium on nuclear testing; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED BY THE ASSEMBLY AND SENATE OF THE STATE OF NEVADA, JOINTLY, That the members of the 83rd Session of the Nevada Legislature hereby urge the Federal Government to maintain the moratorium on the testing of explosive nuclear weapons; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly prepare and transmit a copy of this resolution to the President of the United States, the Vice President of the United States as the presiding officer of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the United States Secretary of State, the United States Secretary of Defense, the United States Secretary of Energy, the Under Secretary for the National Nuclear Security Administration and each member of the Nevada Congressional Delegation; and be it further

RESOLVED, That this resolution becomes effective upon passage.

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