

# NUCLEAR NO FIRST USE: A COMMONSENSE POLICY THAT MAKES US SAFER

“TO PRESERVE OUR  
CIVILIZATION IN THIS  
MODERN AGE, A NUCLEAR  
WAR CANNOT BE WON  
AND MUST NEVER BE  
FOUGHT.”

—PRESIDENT RONALD REAGAN

Photo: US Air Force/Michael Peterson

## US NUCLEAR WEAPONS POLICIES ARE DANGEROUS

The United States is the only country to have ever used nuclear weapons against an adversary. In 1945, we turned Hiroshima and Nagasaki to rubble, killing tens of thousands of civilians in literal seconds. Since then, the United States—and eight other countries—have developed far more powerful nuclear bombs, capable of vastly more damage.

You might think that US nuclear weapons policies would reflect a commitment to never again unleash such devastation unless we were attacked with such weapons first. You’d be wrong. Current US policy dictates that our country can use nuclear weapons first in a non-nuclear conflict with Russia, China, or North Korea—each of which is nuclear-armed.

**This policy allows the United States to initiate a nuclear war, with potentially disastrous consequences for the entire world.** It also increases the likelihood that other nuclear states will use these weapons against us.

But policies can be changed. They *need* to be changed. Working together with hundreds of thousands of people like you, the Union of Concerned Scientists is pushing for sensible, evidence-based US policies governing the use of nuclear weapons that will make us all safer. You can help.

*Turn the page to learn how to support this effort.*

## NO FIRST USE

UCS is starting with a simple and commonsense principle: The United States must commit to never initiate a nuclear conflict. A No First Use policy:

- Reduces the risk that another country will use nuclear weapons against the United States, either preemptively or in retaliation.
- Contributes to global stability, by reaffirming our leadership in arms control and risk reduction efforts, and inspiring other countries to take similar steps.
- Makes it less likely that nuclear weapons will ever be used.

**“IT WOULD BE BENEFICIAL TO  
DECLARE *NO FIRST USE* AS OFFICIAL  
US DOCTRINE AND DEMONSTRATE TO  
OTHER NUCLEAR POWER STATES THAT  
OUR PRIMARY GOAL IS DETERRENCE,  
NOT DOMINATION.”**

—WILLIAM PERRY  
SECRETARY OF DEFENSE 1994–1997

## MOMENTUM IS BUILDING FOR COMMONSENSE NUCLEAR WEAPONS POLICIES

Join the growing movement of voters and activists to support no first use and a safer world by taking the following actions:

- Urge your Member of Congress to cosponsor the **NO FIRST USE ACT (HR 921/S 272)**
- Write a **LETTER TO THE EDITOR** of your local newspaper describing the need for the No First Use Act
- Educate others and **ENGAGE DECISIONMAKERS** on social media

If you have questions, or would like to get more involved, contact Madison Arnold-Scerbo at [MArnoldScerbo@ucsusa.org](mailto:MArnoldScerbo@ucsusa.org).

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