

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

February 19, 2025

The Honorable Marco Rubio
Secretary of State
The State Department
2201 C St NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Rubio:

On February 5, 2026, the 2010 New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) between the United States and Russia will expire. Unless a new agreement is in place by that date, there will be no legal limits on U.S. and Russian strategic nuclear forces, reversing decades of work to reduce the risk of nuclear war.

We urge you to work with Congress to replace New START and prevent a dangerous and costly arms race between the United States and Russia, the world's two largest nuclear powers. We also ask that the Department of State provide a briefing on the Administration's plan for New START in a timely manner.

For five decades, American presidents, including Richard Nixon, Ronald Reagan, and both George H.W. and George W. Bush, have supported the U.S.-Russia nuclear arms control process. This long-standing, bipartisan effort has enjoyed high approval ratings among the American public, who recognize the dangers of nuclear proliferation.

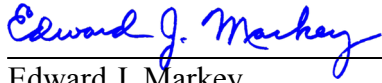
The Trump Administration has a historic opportunity to initiate high-level talks for a new pact and, until those talks reach completion, to mutually agree to respect the limits of New START using existing technical means of verification. Given the time it would take to negotiate a new agreement, an executive understanding that both sides will adhere to New START limits would help to reduce uncertainty in this interim period. It is critical that the Administration not increase the U.S. arsenal above New START limits or resume nuclear testing, which would set back the bipartisan progress made on nuclear nonproliferation and arms control. An unconstrained arms race would make the U.S. less secure and increase the risks to global security.

New START enhances U.S. national security by placing legal limits on all Russian-deployed intercontinental-range nuclear weapons. The United States and Russia agreed in 2021 to extend the treaty through February 5, 2026, and in February 2023, President Vladimir Putin announced Russia was "suspending" its implementation of the treaty. While Russia has agreed to abide by the treaty's limits, we believe it is in the best interest of both of our nations to pursue formal mechanisms aimed at preventing a nuclear arms race.

We condemn Putin's nuclear saber-rattling against Ukraine. Russia's illegal war against the Ukrainian people is at odds with our democratic ideals. Yet even when our nations have had profound disagreements, including during the Cold War, we managed to come to the table to bring the world back from the precipice of nuclear catastrophe. Today, we must do so again.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



John Garamendi
Member of Congress



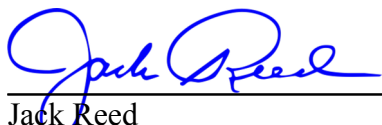
Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



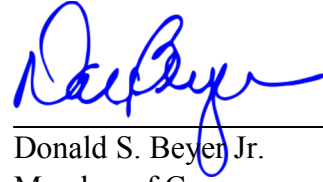
Rashida Tlaib
Member of Congress



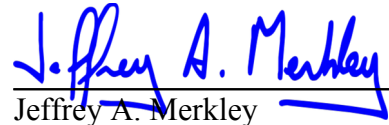
Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Jack Reed
United States Senator



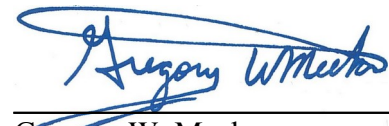
Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



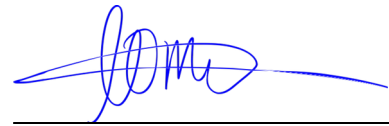
Peter Welch
United States Senator



Gregory W. Meeks
Ranking Member
House Foreign Affairs Committee



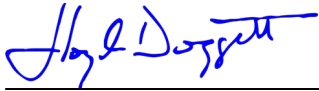
Bill Foster
Member of Congress



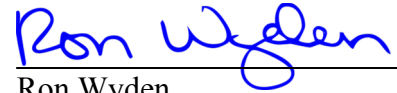
Ilhan Omar
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



Lloyd Doggett
Member of Congress



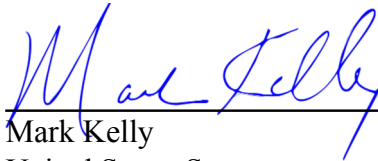
Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Andy Kim
United States Senator



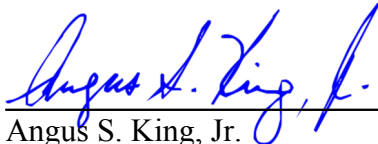
Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator



Mark Kelly
United States Senator



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator