

Nuclear Threat Reduction: Resuming Nuclear Testing is Unnecessary and Would Undermine the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty

The NDAA conference committee should ensure the FY 2021 NDAA excludes any funding to prepare for or conduct a nuclear test.

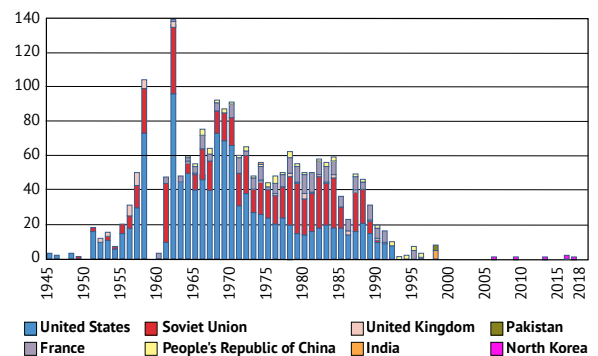
ACTION

Strike Section 3166 of the Senate 2021 NDAA (S. 4049), which authorizes at least \$10 million to prepare for nuclear testing, and support Section 3121 from the House 2021 NDAA (H.R. 6395), which prohibits funds being used to prepare for or conduct a nuclear weapon test.

Background

- [The US conducted 1,030 nuclear weapons tests, more than all other nations' tests combined. The last US test occurred in 1992.](#)
- Since 2000, only one nation—North Korea—has conducted nuclear tests with the last occurring in 2017.
- Our Stockpile Stewardship Program has “allowed DOE and DOD to certify the safety, security, and effectiveness of the U.S. nuclear weapons stockpile to the President without the use of nuclear explosive testing” for the last 23 years, according to the National Nuclear Security Administration’s FY 2020 Stockpile Stewardship and Management Plan.

Worldwide Nuclear Testing, 1945–2018



Source: [Wikimedia Commons](#)

The Case Against Restarting US Nuclear Testing

- Maintaining the international norm against nuclear testing ushered in by the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) in 1996 and discouraging the development of new nuclear weapons by other nations.
- Protecting the credibility of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, [under which 186 countries have promised not to acquire nuclear weapons.](#)
- Avoiding unnecessary risks of radiation exposure of the American people and military personnel. Underground tests contaminate the [atmosphere and the soil, affecting US communities.](#)

The FY 2021 NDAA

- In June 2020, SASC approved Sen. Tom Cotton’s amendment to the 2021 NDAA, authorizing at least \$10 million to [“carry out projects related to reducing the time required to execute a nuclear test if necessary.”](#) However, the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) said that there was no technical need for a test.
- In July 2020, Rep. Ben McAdams’ amendment to the NDAA was adopted by the House, prohibiting funds from FY 2021 or earlier going to [“conduct or make preparations for any explosive nuclear weapons test that produces any yield.”](#)

We ask that during the NDAA conference, please support the House-passed amendment language and reject the Senate’s version on nuclear testing.