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Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

August 11, 2017

CO-CHAIR, DEMOCRATIC POLICY AND  
COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE  
  
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SUBCOMMITTEE ON  
EUROPE, EURASIA, AND EMERGING THREATS  
  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON MIDDLE EAST  
AND NORTH AFRICA

The Honorable Paul D. Ryan  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-232 The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Ryan:

In light of the ongoing standoff between the United States and North Korea, as well as President Trump's reckless words, I ask that you immediately call the House of Representatives back into session to debate legislation prohibiting the U.S. from conducting a pre-emptive nuclear strike without prior Congressional authorization.

It is critical that the Trump administration exhaust all diplomatic options before resorting to military force. Instead, President Trump has made a dangerous situation even worse by recklessly asserting that the United States is "locked and loaded" to bring "fire and fury" to North Korea.

The President's words matter. And in this case, his words have been harmful. There are more than 20,000 Americans serving on the Korean Peninsula today. Millions of Americans live within range of North Korea's intercontinental ballistic missiles. If the President will not defuse this situation, then Congress must.

One option that dozens of my colleagues and I support is H.R. 669, the Restricting First Use of Nuclear Weapons Act, which would prohibit the President of the United States from conducting a first-use nuclear strike without prior authorization from Congress. This legislation, which maintains the President's ability to immediately retaliate against a nuclear strike, will provide an opportunity to reduce tensions and prevent a catastrophic nuclear confrontation.

I thank you for your attention to this matter, and ask that you allow the House to fulfill its obligation under the Constitution to debate and, if necessary, authorize the use of force.

Sincerely,

David N. Cicilline  
Member of Congress