



## Fact Sheet: Rep. Adam Smith and Sen. Elizabeth Warren's No First Use Act

- No first use (NFU) refers to a pledge or a policy by a nuclear power not to use nuclear weapons in a conflict unless attacked first with nuclear weapons by an adversary.
- The United States has a vested interest in avoiding a nuclear exchange or conflict—an increased likelihood of a nuclear exchange would weaken national security, and lowering the threshold for a nuclear first strike puts all Americans' lives at risk.
- The United States does not currently have a pledge or policy of no first use of nuclear weapons. Furthermore, the 2018 Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) expands the range of significant non-nuclear strategic attacks to which the U.S. may respond with use of nuclear weapons to include cyberattacks and chemical and biological warfare.
- If less than 1% of the global nuclear arsenal was detonated over cities in a regional war, the resulting fires would trigger a worldwide nuclear ice age and nuclear famine, putting billions of people in jeopardy.
- No nation's existing emergency response system, including the United States', would be able to handle the mass health effects and casualties from a nuclear exchange. As an organization of health professionals, we recognize that the only cure to a nuclear exchange is preventing one from ever happening.
- In its Interim National Security Strategy, the Biden administration planted arms control efforts firmly in its national security strategy, stating, "When possible... We will take steps to reduce the role of nuclear weapons in our national security strategy, while ensuring our strategic deterrent remains safe, secure, and effective and that our extended deterrence commitments to our allies remain strong and credible." A No First Use policy would be in line with the administration's current objectives.
- President Biden is on record supporting a No First Use (NFU) nuclear policy. In 2017 Biden said, "It's hard to envision a plausible scenario in which the first use of nuclear weapons by the United States would be necessary. Or make sense. President Obama and I are confident we can deter—and defend ourselves and our Allies against—non-nuclear threats through other means."

## **Related Resources:**

Adam Smith/ Elizabeth Warren 2019 Statement:

<https://adamsmith.house.gov/2019/1/chairmansmith-senator-warren-introduce-bill-establishing-no-first-use-policy-for-nuclearweapons>

No First Use Act Text:

<https://www.warren.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/No%20First%20Use%20Act.pdf> PSR Official Statement:

<https://www.psr.org/blog/2019/01/30/just-what-the-doctor-ordered-for-our-health-and-future-nofirst-use-legislation/>

President Biden's remarks on No First Use (Video from Union of Concerned Scientists)

<https://ucsusa.org/resources/no-first-use-policy>

Nuclear Famine report:

<https://www.psr.org/blog/resource/nuclear-famine-two-billion-people-at-risk/>

Biden administration's Interim National Security Strategic Guidance:

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/NSC-1v2.pdf>