

May 9th, 2019

Dear Senators:

We write to request your cosponsorship and support for S.J.Res.11, the Prohibiting Unauthorized Military Action in Venezuela Resolution of 2019, introduced by Senator Jeff Merkley (D-OR). The resolution would prevent funding from being appropriated in the event of an unauthorized U.S. military intervention in Venezuela (a similar bill was recently reported favorably out of the House Foreign Affairs Committee).

Senate opposition to U.S. military intervention could not come at a more urgent time. U.S. officials in charge of policy toward Venezuela, including National Security Advisor John Bolton and State Department Special Envoy Elliott Abrams, have pursued a strategy of provocation and confrontation with the Maduro regime. Further, President Trump and his advisors have continued to reiterate that “all options are on the table” for Venezuela, with Trump reportedly claiming early in his presidency that Venezuela is the “country we should be going to war with. They have all that oil and they’re right on our back door.”

Meanwhile, Secretary Pompeo explicitly endorsed U.S. military action this week, stating: “Military action is possible. If that’s what’s required, that’s what the United States will do” in Venezuela.

The reality is that there is no U.S. military solution to the crisis in Venezuela. Given that the Trump administration’s actions and rhetoric has made clear it is considering kinetic operations, it is imperative Congress show opposition to unilateral military action by the president without prior congressional authorization.

Article I, Section 8, Clause 11 of the Constitution gives Congress the sole authority to declare war. The Framers of the Constitution, recognizing the Executive Branch’s inclination to war, wisely and deliberately assigned to Congress the power to decide whether, when, and where the United States goes to war. S.J.Res.11 presents a common sense solution to make clear that the Trump administration does not have the unilateral authority to take the United States to war in Venezuela.

The president has a constitutional obligation to present his case for war to both chambers of Congress and have the people’s duly elected representatives carefully debate and vote on whether to authorize any use of lethal force. We urge you to cosponsor S.J.Res.11 without delay.

Sincerely,

Just Foreign Policy

Indivisible

MoveOn

CREDO

FreedomWorks

Common Defense

Committee for Responsible Foreign Policy

Demand Progress

Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA)

Win Without War
World BEYOND War
American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)
Peace Action
Daily Kos
Franciscan Action Network
Latin American Working Group
Roots Action
Americans for Democratic Action (ADA)
Friends Committee on National Legislation (FNCL)
Quixote Center
Presbyterian Church (USA)
Global Exchange
Center for International Policy
The United Methodist Church, General Body of Church and Society
Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns
Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas – Institute Justice Team
Action Corps
Global Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ
CODEPINK
Freedom Forward
About Face: Veteran Against the War
Defending Rights and Dissent
Arise for Social Justice
Venezuela Solidarity Coalition
CASA De Maryland
Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES)
Antiwar.com
The Libertarian institute
US Support Committee for Korean Prisoners of Conscience
One Corea Now
Venezuela Anti-Intervention Coalition
ESTA
Historians for Peace and Democracy
Concerned Citizens for Change
Alianza Americas
Institute for Policy Studies, New Internationalism Project
Fellowship of Reconciliation
The National Institute of Hahm Sokhon Philosophy
Chicago Area Peace Action
Task Force on the Americas
Marcha Patriotica Capitulo California
International Committee for Peace, Justice and Dignity