

Stop the New Intercontinental Ballistic Missile

The United States currently fields 400 nuclear-tipped Minuteman III intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) in land-based silos at Malmstrom, Minot, and Warren Air Force bases stretching across Montana, North Dakota, Wyoming, Nebraska, and Colorado.

Despite a recently-completed, multibillion-dollar, decade-long program to extend these missiles' service life, **the Air Force is moving ahead with a new, replacement ICBM**—the Ground Based Strategic Deterrent (GBSD). The country's struggle to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic highlights the **urgent need to rethink national security and budget priorities, including this costly, dangerous, and unnecessary new weapon.**

In early September, the Air Force awarded a \$13.3 billion sole-source contract to Northrop Grumman for the engineering and manufacturing development of the GBSD. House Armed Services Committee Chairman Adam Smith (WA-9) called the decision to move forward with the uncompetitive sole-source contract "very troubling."

The GBSD project should be stopped because:

- » **A new ICBM is *costly*.** An independent Pentagon study estimated that the GBSD will eventually total **\$85-\$150 billion**. The lack of contract competition will likely escalate total costs even further. Even at a \$100 billion total program cost, each of the planned 400 deployed missiles would cost \$250 million apiece—all to sit mutely in their silos for decades or else unleash intolerable nuclear destruction.
- » **A new ICBM is *unnecessary*.** As sea-based nuclear weapons have allowed for a stronger deterrent due to their invulnerability and undetectability, ICBMs have become obsolete—especially given that development of new nuclear submarines and bombers are also underway this decade.
- » **A new ICBM is *dangerous*.** Land-based ICBMs are always on high-alert status, putting extreme pressure on the president to quickly order a launch if there are indications of an incoming adversary strike against the missiles' vulnerable silos. Land-based ICBMs not only increase the likelihood of sliding into nuclear war over a false alarm, but they also explicitly invite adversaries to consider a nuclear first strike against the American heartland—a dangerous strategic rationale that endangers both American lives and our shared environment.

**Congress
should stop the
Ground Based
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it's too late.**

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