

Dear Members of Congress,

We, the undersigned organizations, write to urge you to support and pass a War Powers Resolution to end President Trump's unauthorized hostilities against the nation of Cuba. We ask senators to support and vote in favor of S.J.Res. 124, led by Senator Tim Kaine, and for members of the House to support Congresswoman Nydia Velazquez's H.J.Res. 153, as well as urgently introduce a privileged War Powers Resolution to ensure a House floor vote as soon as possible. With the Trump administration currently imposing an oil blockade on Cuba — which constitutes an unlawful use of force under international law — as well as reportedly drawing up plans for military action against Cuba and even [conducting hostile military surveillance drone flights](#), Congress must act now.

The U.S. has pursued a policy of economic isolation against Cuba since shortly after the overthrow of the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship in 1959. The U.S. commercial and financial embargo in place since the early 1960s has intentionally deprived the Cuban economy of income and external inputs, both by denying the country access to U.S. goods and markets and deterring international investors and capital via “secondary” sanctions. President Trump, in his first term, rolled back the tentative economic and diplomatic opening with Cuba shepherded by President Obama and tightened sanctions to an unprecedented degree, contributing to a severe economic and humanitarian crisis on the island. Now, Trump is actively enforcing an oil blockade, or “quarantine”, against Cuba, pushing the island to extreme fuel shortages and the brink of humanitarian collapse. Additionally, in the wake of the US military operation in Venezuela, Trump has regularly stated that Cuba “is next”, and the Pentagon has reportedly been planning a potential military intervention against the island.

Trump's current oil blockade against Cuba is a clear act of war, as noted by S.J.Res. 124, which states that “the use of the United States Coast Guard and other components of the Armed Forces to conduct a blockade or quarantine of Cuba, constitutes the introduction of United States Armed Forces into hostilities within the meaning of section 4(a) of the War Powers Resolution.” Article 42 of the UN charter implies that a blockade is a “use of armed force,” and the [U.N. General Assembly's Definition of Aggression Resolution](#) further clarifies that a blockade is an “act of aggression.” International law scholars have also previously determined that the U.S. “quarantine” of Cuba during the Cuban missile crisis — the language the White House now uses — [was also an unlawful use of force](#). Under the U.S. Constitution and the War Powers Resolution of 1973, the President may not introduce U.S. forces in hostilities or situations where hostilities are imminent without congressional authorization, just as Trump has already done and threatens to do further with Cuba. In addition, the deliberate deprivation of fuel to a civilian population is also a war crime under international law — [the Geneva Conventions forbid the collective punishment of civilians, and the ongoing fuel blockade, enforced by military force, is directly contributing to a collapse in medical care and living standards](#).

The continuation of these illegal acts of war also risks potentially severe consequences for both Cuban civilians and the people and interests of the United States. The oil blockade has already contributed to more frequent and more severe electrical blackouts and grid collapses on a national level. Continued enforcement of this fuel blockade has the potential to cause total institutional collapse or a “humanitarian collapse,” as the United Nations [has warned](#). Such a scenario would almost certainly cause an exodus of Cubans to U.S. shores as has happened during previous economic crises on the island — a reality acknowledged by Florida governor [Ron DeSantis](#), among others. There is speculation that the Trump administration's decision to allow a Russian tanker to

make a delivery of oil to Cuba in early April could have been designed to try to forestall a major migration crisis.

A military intervention into Cuba is far from guaranteed to be a cost-free, successful operation. This needless risk to U.S. troops and interests is exactly why the American people do not support the administration's threats, escalations, and military operations against Cuba and its people. [A 46 percent plurality of Americans disapprove of the oil blockade, compared to only 28 percent who support it, and 61 percent oppose military action against Cuba.](#) Americans across the political spectrum, regardless of their views of immigration policy, do not want to pursue more failed regime change operations that become a cause of mass migration to the United States. Even Secretary of State Marco Rubio acknowledged that the White House feared this outcome in Venezuela, stating that the administration's goal was "number one to stabilize the country," while avoiding "civil war," "systemic collapse," and "a mass migration event." Those same concerns are equally or more valid for any U.S. action against Cuba.

Congress must act urgently, and the Senate vote on S.J.Res. 124 is an important start. We urge all senators to vote YES on Senator Kaine's War Powers Resolution, and for House members to introduce a privileged concurrent resolution and schedule a vote as soon as possible. The Constitution demands that Congress play its part in averting this illegal war.

Sincerely,

Action Corps
Alliance of Baptists
Alliance for Cuba Engagement and Respect (ACERE)
Antiwar.com
Building Relations with Cuban Labor
Campaign for Peace, Disarmament and Common Security
Center for Economic and Policy Research
Center for International Policy Advocacy
Chicago Religious Leadership Network on Latin America
Coalition for Peace Action
Common Defense
Cuba/US People to People Partnership, Fund for Reconciliation and Development
Cuban Americans for Cuba
Demand Progress
Denver Justice and Peace Committee - DJPC
Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL)
Global Exchange
Global Health Partners
Just Foreign Policy
Latin America Working Group
Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns
Minnesota Cuba Committee
National Network on Cuba
NH Peace Action

Pax Christi Massachusetts
Pax Christi New York State
Peace Action
Peace & Justice Coalition of Prince Georges County Maryland
Pittsburgh-Matanzas Sister Cities Partnership
Presbyterian Church (USA), Office of Public Witness
Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft
RootsAction
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas - Justice Team
Solidarity Committee of the Americas (SCOTA)
United Church of Christ
United for Peace and Justice
US Women and Cuba Collaboration
The United Methodist Church - General Board of Church and Society
We Are CASA
Witness for Peace Solidarity Collective
Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics, and Ritual (WATER)
Women's International League for Peace & Freedom US