

## Physicians for Social Responsibility - Los Angeles Nuclear Weapons Community Cost Program

Nuclear weapons threaten us every moment of every day. While most reasonable individuals recognize that these weapons cannot and must not ever be used, approximate [13,125 weapons](#)<sup>1</sup> remain in the nuclear arsenals of the world. We also know that the use of even a tiny fraction (<.5%) of these weapons over a single populated region would cause catastrophic climate change resulting in a global famine, putting potentially [2 billion people at risk](#)<sup>2</sup>.

These weapons also threaten us by robbing our communities of precious resources that could be redirected to the many needs that our communities cry out for. This Nuclear Weapons Cost Program, now in its 33 year, attempts to determine the full cost of nuclear weapons programs to our communities. There have been many excellent calculations of portions of the total nuclear weapons costs, including last year's [ICAN report on global costs](#)<sup>3</sup>. These reports deal primarily with the cost of warheads and that of delivery systems cost and development alone in an attempt to compare one nation to another.

In our report we include verifiable costs of all nuclear programs that would not be spent if nuclear weapons did not exist. Like the [Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons](#) which declares nuclear weapons illegal and seeks both the abolition of these weapons and reparations for the people, communities and environments affected by these weapons, we take a comprehensive approach. Our calculations, additionally include funding of the nuclear missile defense system, environmental cleanup and legacy programs dealing with communities that have been contaminated by the mining, development, testing and stockpiling of these weapons. Also nuclear nonproliferation funding and funding to safeguard and sequester nuclear weapons in Russia and former Soviet Union States.

Determining the full cost of U.S. nuclear weapon programs is a tedious process, as the United States is not fully transparent in these figures. We have chosen to list only figures that we can provide references for. There are other reports that estimate the forecast to be much higher, including Dr. Timmon Wallis in "Warheads to Windmills: How to Pay for a Green New Deal". In 2013, with the release of the "Black Budget" by Edward Snowden, it was estimated that there were some \$9 billion in clandestine nuclear operations that were never publicly released. While those are likely being funded still, it has become impossible to track those expenditures and thus there is no inclusion herein.

This fiscal year finds our nation in crisis with the national awakening to the chronic problem of institutionalized and systemic racism while dealing with the devastation of the COVID-19 pandemic. As our country struggles with these realities, it is our hope that this project will provide assistance to communities across our nation attempting to address social, racial, environmental, economic and health justice inequities together. We invite your comments and questions about our program.

Robert Dodge, M.D.

1. <https://fas.org/issues/nuclear-weapons/status-world-nuclear-forces/>
2. <https://www.ippnw.org/pdf/nuclear-famine-two-billion-at-risk-2013.pdf>
3. [Enough is Enough: 2019 Global Nuclear Weapons Spending](#)
4. [https://treaties.un.org/pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg\\_no=XXVI-9&chapter=26](https://treaties.un.org/pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=XXVI-9&chapter=26)