

October 2017 – HAND DELIVERED – Washington, D.C.

Dear Members of Congress,

**When our children ask, “Did you help create the Department of Peacebuilding?”
What will you say?**

We come to Washington, DC shortly after the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi (October 2) to deliver messages from the children and young people of America and their supporters that it is past **time to create a culture of peace and a cabinet-level Department of Peacebuilding**. *It is time to listen to our children and to make peace a national priority.* Mahatma Gandhi said, **“If we are to reach real peace in this world, we shall have to begin with the children.”**

Students in San Diego and Los Angeles, CA, San Diego City Council President Myrtle Cole, e3 Civic High School CEO Helen Griffith, Grandmother Cynthia Gilliam, and Daniel Horton asked us to deliver their message that **peace is urgent**. Their voices represent this nation. **They ask you to cosponsor and work for a Department of Peacebuilding (HR 1111)** – legislation sponsored by Congresswoman Barbara Lee (CA-13) by **contacting the Congresswoman at 202-225-2661 as soon as possible**.

About Peace – From High School Students in San Diego (e3 Civic High) and Los Angeles (El Camino Charter High School):

- “There has **not been a definite world of peace for my generation** ... “ – Salome Montoya
- “**Violence is part of our lives** ...” – Jahi
- “... peace means ... **freedom to speak my mind**. Peace should be accessible to all people. It’s a word that brings no violence or death.” – Tania Lloyd
- “Peace is ... **being safe in my opinion**.” – Raymond Reynoso
- “Peace is **freedom for everyone to feel**, and to have respect [for] one another to show care ...” – Destiny Santos
- “My mother was young when she had me ... had to make money in a different type of way like prostitute, she really didn’t have an education ... **I learned how to release my anger by writing song, rapping and poetry**. This is how I found my peace ...” – Nicey G
- “Our lives could be better if everyone related to each other in a nonviolent way because if you think about it, **most problems start because of one person being angry at something or someone** ...” – Daliah Nunez
- “Peace ... This five-letter word could be the **very fine line between life and death for many** ... Peace is a world without violent conflicts, but rather, a place where everyone is cared for, and always has what is needed and provided for. **Lives would change because greed would be eliminated, and needs would be fulfilled**.” – Ruth Fariscal Adordionicio
- “Peace means **preventing violence** ... like fighting, bullying, or calling each other names or anything that has to do with making people feel bad or scared.” – Unsigned
- “... peace means no war, no racism and no sexism ... there would be less stress and more freedom. **EVERYONE will be more relaxed and calm and fun** – it’s like peace will be our high.” – Heavynn Farnum
- “... peace means **worldwide love** ... if we lived in a world filled with peace, then the holocaust wouldn’t have happened, slavery wouldn’t have happened, bullying wouldn’t be a thing ...” – Shefaa Abdalla
- “If we lived in a world without hate, I can tell you one thing for sure ... the **world would be such a better place**.” – Melani Gutierrez
- “Peace ... people would not have hatred in their hearts, we would be **more forgiving, caring, generous, kind, understanding, loveable, positive**, etc. Peace is awesome.” – Samantha Toledano
- “... peace can bring **kindness, happiness** and a lot of beautiful things. Peace can make things different such as no fighting ...” – Sandra Torres Hernandez
- Peace is the **ever flowing of communication, caring, giving, understanding, forgiveness and love**.” – Cierra Cloud

(See reverse side.)

- “**Life without peace would not last.**” – Nayely Mendoza
- “As long as we stop violence like killing, torture and rape from being passed on to the next generation ... then the **human race might still have a chance at worldwide peace.**” – Unsigned

About a Department of Peacebuilding - From High School Students in San Diego and Los Angeles:

- “**I have never lived in a world where the US was not at war** ... By empowering younger people with a pencil and not a weapon, we pave the way for advancement in science and medication ... if we put aside some for a Department of Peacebuilding, then we can **focus on how to help not only ourselves, but also underprivileged countries** ... ” – Marilees Conde-Kalmijn
- “The lives of my family, the lives of my friends, the life of mine ... it would all be better if we could all just sit down and have a restorative circle ... **a Department of Peacebuilding is important to my peers and I because it will teach us how to have integrity and leadership** ...” – Jason Coleman Jr.
- “... a department of Peacebuilding is important because they want to create peace all over the world by **stopping every violent thing that is going on** [in] the world today.” –Gabriel Givens
- “We would benefit from a dedicated department that spent its time **developing and promoting peace instead of war.**” – Emily Jones
- “People having peace is the whole point of the Department of Peacebuilding ... The main point of peace is everyone not arguing, **everyone understanding why violence is not the option** and rather to talk about things or protest in a nonviolent way. Peace is having the freedom of choices without being prosecuted for having your own opinion because everyone deserves a chance to be open with their thoughts and **when someone has the opposite opinion, to talk about it peacefully.**” – Edwin Garza
- “Peace is the **best medicine for the hatred** ... I’d like to thank the Department of Peacebuilding for its hard work.” – Tia Lorennij

About Peace and a Department of Peacebuilding - From Concerned San Diego Citizens:

- About the Department of Peacebuilding, “As a grandmother, I say you have let our children down in a time like this. We need peace not hate ... This is what I call a **911 Call to Congress for our youth** ... we the people need you to move this into law for our youth in a Diego and for youth everywhere in this Nation ...” – Cynthia Gilliam, Grandmother
- “I want a world with more peace, unity and acceptance ... [students] were born to make a difference and to be a positive change in this world ... I urged my students to **celebrate all people. That is what a Department of Peacebuilding is about.**” – Helen Griffith, Ed.D., CEO at e3 High School.
- “It is through peace that economies can flourish, communities can come and grow together, love is made stronger, minds are healed, bodies are healed, and above all, the world is made stronger ... **A Department of Peacebuilding will save lives, families, communities, and money. More importantly, it is the right thing to do.**” – Daniel Horton, Concerned Citizen.

About Peace and a Department of Peacebuilding - From Myrtle Cole, President, San Diego City Council:

- “During this time of divisiveness and intolerance, it is important to work for a culture of nonviolence and inclusion. **We owe this to our children and ourselves** ... Please support the children of San Diego and young people throughout our national by cosponsoring Department of Peacebuilding legislation.” – Myrtle Cole

It is time to make peace and peacebuilding a national priority.

Nancy Merritt, sunmntain@aol.com

**On Behalf of the National Department of Peacebuilding Committee
And Department of Peacebuilding Supporters**

“A US Department of Peacebuilding would assist in **bringing humanity back to being human.**” – Dalilah Nunez, 11th Grade

“CONGRESS PLEASE STAY WOKE - LISTEN TO WHAT WE HAVE TO SAY”– Nicey G, 11th Grade

DoP/Letters/9/17SDLtrs-NMLobbyDaysSDYouth