

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

Missile Defense Success Story, Volume 4

Diplomacy can eliminate missile threat *100% intercept assured against missiles never built*

July 17, 2001

Dear Colleague:

As Congress debates ways to address potential foreign missile threats, we must remember that missile defense (as a military system) is not the only response. In fact, it is the riskiest, most expensive, and most desperate response of all. We must not let money and political capital spent on missile defense systems undermine all other methods to reduce missile threats.

It is far easier to defend against a missile that has never been built than against one that has been launched.

Take, for example, the ongoing North Korea ballistic missile test moratorium. In August 1998, North Korea surprised the world by test firing a ballistic missile, although the rocket failed in the third stage. In response, the Clinton Administration engaged Pyongyang, and negotiated in September 1999 a moratorium on further testing of North Korean missiles. North Korea cannot deploy missiles effectively to threaten us if they cannot prove the missiles through testing.

In May 2001, the North Korean government told European Union officials it would voluntarily extend the test moratorium through 2003. After initial reluctance, the Bush Administration restarted talks with the North Koreans, with a goal of ending their missile program. If these negotiations prove successful, **diplomacy will have eliminated the most likely rogue state ballistic missile threat**. Destroying a missile in the pre-construction phase assures, by nature, a 100% intercept rate.

There is little contention that this pre-boost intercept system, diplomacy, can work in reducing ballistic missile threats to the U.S. – something to keep in mind as we debate the efficacy of post-launch missile defenses.

Sincerely,


Alcee Hastings
Member of Congress


Tom Allen
Member of Congress