

**One of our START op-eds:**

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**Subject:** One of our START op-eds:

Jim DeMint vs. the US Military

(656 words)

On Thursday, September 16, a bipartisan supermajority of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee voted to recommend the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) for ratification by the full Senate. Senator Jim DeMint couldn't be bothered to stay for the final vote, but during committee debate, he said, "If we are going to move ahead with the commitment not to protect the people of the United States, I think everyone in this country ought to know it."

Senator DeMint's comment raises the singular issue regarding New START, and any other national security treaty: does it make America safer? Senator DeMint clearly thinks not-and, in fact, that the Treaty is a "commitment not to protect" our country.

But if Senator DeMint is right, our nation has a bigger problem than New START, because a Treaty that amounts to a "commitment not to protect" America has been enthusiastically and unanimously endorsed by our national security leaders. In more than twenty Senate hearings on the Treaty and its implications for national security, supporters have included the Republican Secretary of Defense, Bob Gates; Admiral Mike Mullen, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; General Kevin Chilton, commander of America's strategic nuclear forces; Lieutenant General Patrick O'Reilly, director of the U.S. Missile Defense Agency; and the senior administrator and lab directors overseeing nuclear weapons safety, maintenance, and dismantlement.