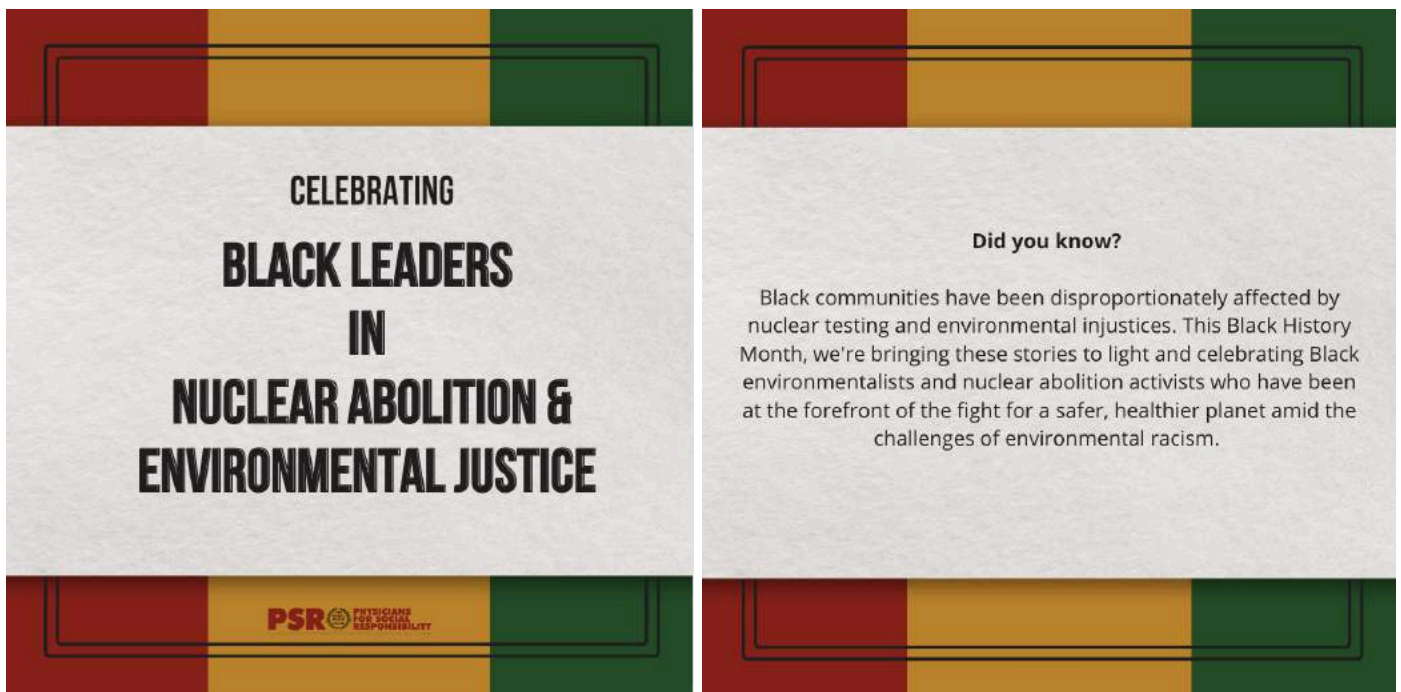




2024 Winter Newsletter

Greater Boston PSR Celebrates Black History Month



[#BlackHistoryMonth](#) [Read more.](#)

Climate Program

We are Clean Energy Advocates

The issue: Climate change and air pollution are threatening the health and safety of our communities.

The impact: Pollution from power plants and motor vehicles are threatening the health of Massachusetts residents (and beyond).

The action: Earlier in February, GBPSR Co-Chair Dr. Susan Racine was sponsored by Climate Action Campaign to join *Climate and Health Advocacy Days* in Washington, DC. The Climate Action Campaign, in partnership with the Medical Society Consortium on Climate and Health, and public health professionals from its Solutions for Pollution coalition participated in Climate and Health Advocacy Days to “Check Up” on the Biden Administration’s progress on finalizing the strongest Solutions for Pollution standards to reduce pollution and protect public health. Our Massachusetts team met with Senators Warren and Markey’s staff as well as the staff for Representatives Pressley, Rep Lynch, McGovern, and Auchincloss. At each meeting we emphasized how climate change and air pollution are threatening the health and safety of our communities through personal stories. We urged our legislators to press President Biden and the EPA to impose strict limits on air and climate pollution from power plants and motor vehicles. Fortunately, Massachusetts legislators were aware of the dire warnings of climate scientists and were receptive to our requests.



The issue: Plans for a proposed massive private jet hanger development at Hanscom Airfield came to light last year, as developers submitted details of their plans to the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) office.

The impact: There would be tremendous, statewide climate impacts to this project, including but not limited to clearcutting acres of mature trees (destroying much needed CO2 sequestration) and representing the single largest private jet expansion in Hanscom history, and possibly the nation.

The action: Greater Boston PSR Board Co-Chair Dr. Susan Racine spoke at the *Stop Private Jet Expansion at Hanscom and Anywhere* rally about the health hazards of jet fuel emissions and climate change in December. You can take action by adding your name to [this petition to Governor Healey](#).



We are Health Advocates

The issue: Last year's Climate Ambassadors are planning another Climate & Health Day at the Massachusetts State House in 2024, to bring attention to the health impacts of climate change. The date is yet to be set but will likely be mid-June. Health professionals and medical students will meet with policymakers to advocate for bills that aim to address environmental justice and improve public health. This year, we will be focusing on the following legislative priorities:

- An Act establishing a moratorium on new gas system expansion ([H.3237/S.2135](#))
- An Act establishing a zero carbon renovation Fund ([H.3232/S.2365](#))
- An Act advancing clean energy, equity, and innovation within municipal utilities ([H.3150/S.2117](#))
- An Act incorporating embodied carbon into state climate policy ([H.764/S.2090](#))
- An Act relative to energy facilities siting improvement to address environmental justice, climate, and public health ([H.3187/S.2113](#))

Stay tuned for the date of this year's Climate & Health Day!



Welcome to our 2024 Climate Ambassador!

We welcome this year's Climate Ambassador, Justin Andries! Justin is working with our chapter on projects relating to climate solutions and health. He received his Bachelor of Arts from Providence College where he majored in Global Health Equity and minored in Black Studies. He is currently studying Global Public Health with a concentration in Global Health at New York University. During his downtime, Justin enjoys reading, writing poetry, and composing playlists.



Nuclear Program



We are Environmental Justice Advocates

The issue: Pilgrim Nuclear Power Station

In July of 2023, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection [denied a permit](#) modification sought by Pilgrim Nuclear Power Station to discharge up to 1.1 million gallons of radioactive wastewater into Cape Cod Bay. Now, Holtec, the company that owns and is decommissioning the closed reactor, has found a loophole by actively [evaporating the radioactive waste water into our air](#).

The impact: Plymouth and surrounding communities are burdened by the polluting reactor, which [increases the risk of cancer to area residents](#). The current aerosolized releases increase the already elevated cancer rate.

The actions:

- In January, Greater Boston PSR Board Member Dr. Brita Lundberg presented at the Plymouth Board of Health Public Forum that pertains to the evaporation of radioactive waste water. Dr. Lundberg's informative presentation happens at minute 22:45 of [this recording](#).
- GBPSR members also sent [this letter](#) to Massachusetts Governor Maura Healey calling for an immediate halt to radioactive aerosol releases from the Pilgrim Nuclear Power Station, a danger to public health.
- Read this weekend's article in Commonwealth Magazine: [A Warning About Radioactive Air Pollution from Pilgrim](#), by GBPSR members Drs. Lundberg, Hodgkin and Racine.

Connecting with Students & Partners

In January, GBPSR Board Co-Chair Dr. Joe Hodgkin joined our colleagues at the Ikeda Center for a nuclear disarmament seminar with the Soka University undergrads. Here is a wonderfully [detailed write-up](#) we think you will enjoy with an overview of the day they spent together.



Committed to Nuclear Disarmament

The issue: Since nuclear war would have devastating consequences across the Commonwealth, we must ensure our state legislators take ownership over preventing it.

The impact: Massachusetts General Hospital has about 30 burn beds. If a nuclear blast were to hit Boston, the estimated number of burn beds needed would be around 200,000. Not only would it be impossible for our local institutions to care for this many burn patients, but the roadways and providers themselves would be destroyed as well. There is no way to adequately respond to a nuclear bombing; we must prevent it from ever occurring.

The action: In January, a group of motivated advocates from the Boston-hub of Back from the Brink took to the halls of the Massachusetts statehouse with one goal in mind: to educate our policymakers about how they can best help prevent a nuclear catastrophe at the local level. GBPSR endorses S. 1487, the statewide *Back from the Brink* resolution, which aims to protect Massachusetts citizens from severe risk by preventing nuclear war. We are also pleased to support S.1488 / H. 738, which would create a citizens' commission to research and report on the measures needed to protect the citizens of the Commonwealth from the dangers of nuclear weapons and climate change, and is both critical and timely. We look forward to working with the State House to support this important legislation.

We also held a briefing day at the State House, in conjunction with our Massachusetts Peace Action peers, which included a series of speakers covering multiple nuclear-related bills. The session was intended to educate legislators who may not yet be familiar with the statewide nuclear bills, or wanted more information.

We look forward to working with our representatives at the State House to support this important work to prevent nuclear war.

Our Work Ties into National Efforts

History

In the 1968 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, our federal government committed to multilateral nuclear disarmament with a goal of a world without nuclear weapons. This was reaffirmed in [January of 2021](#).

Destabilization Caused by the Ukraine War and the Israel-Gaza crisis

Since the invasion of Ukraine and the Israel-Gaza crisis, the conditions for these negotiations have become much more challenging. However, the threats to life on earth from the use of nuclear weapons are clearer than ever, and it is important to remember that after past nuclear crises, like the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis and the 1983 Euro Missile Crisis, rapid progress was made to decrease the danger of nuclear war.

Back from the Brink Campaign

If the world survives these current conflicts, we need to make sure we are never in this position again. To this end, Rep Jim McGovern (MA-2) has introduced [H. Res 77](#), which endorses the platform of our Back from the Brink campaign to make nuclear disarmament the centerpiece of US national security

policy and for the US to lead the world back from the brink of nuclear war. The resolution also has the support of Representative Richard Neil, Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley and Congressman Stephen Lynch.

Here's how you can help:

- Urge Your U.S. House Representative to show leadership on Nuclear Weapons by co-sponsoring H. Res. 77. Here's a simple [form](#) to fill out which will do just that.
- Write to Senators Markey and Warren asking them to introduce a companion resolution in the US Senate.
- Write and submit a letter to the editor (LTE) to your community newspapers, bringing attention to the issue and to the importance of H. Res. 77 as a vehicle for building congressional leadership for nuclear disarmament. [Here are some LTE talking points.](#)

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