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University of Montana

University Relations

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MEDIA RELEASE

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TWO OF THREE MONTANANS FAVOR
BILATERAL NUCLEAR FREEZE

MISSOULA--

Roughly two out of three Montanans favor a bilateral nuclear freeze between the United States and the Soviet Union, according to a recent Montana Poll.

The poll gathered Montanans' opinions on the nuclear freeze movement and other defense-related topics in early June. The quarterly survey is cosponsored by the University of Montana Bureau of Business and Economic Research and the Great Falls Tribune.

About two-thirds of those polled said they favor a bilateral agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union halting the testing, production, and deployment of nuclear weapons on both sides. Only 18 percent said they oppose such a freeze.

A small but vocal minority, however, volunteered that it is difficult to simply approve or disapprove of a nuclear freeze. A few who said they favored the freeze (4 percent) tempered their approval with concerns about the Soviet Union cooperating. Several others (7 percent) said a freeze could not work because the Soviets could not be trusted and verification would be a problem.

Montanans turned thumbs down on the idea of a unilateral nuclear freeze -- one in which the United States implements a freeze without the Soviets following suit. An overwhelming majority (74 percent) said they oppose a unilateral freeze, and only 17 percent were in favor.

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