



➔ **By overfunding weapons of war instead of investing in the tools to address present and future security challenges, the current Pentagon budget fails to truly keep us safe – a reality underscored by the coronavirus pandemic.**

Bloated Pentagon spending undermines funding for essential programs, including non-military solutions to security challenges, and human needs here at home, like education and healthcare.

- National security spending focused solely on military dominance overlooks the importance of diplomatic, economic, and peacebuilding solutions to conflict, and is incompatible with this century's non-military security challenges, like the climate crisis and pandemics.
- Instead of continuing to funnel money into the Pentagon, the U.S. must adopt a holistic vision of security spending that is focused on addressing 21st century challenges to human security.

THE BLOATED PENTAGON BUDGET

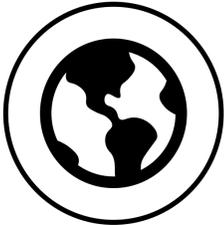
The Pentagon has never passed an audit and historically high spending levels increase redundancy, waste, and corruption.



- The U.S. spends more on its military than the next 10 countries combined. Any readiness crisis is due to an overextension of the military after 20 years of endless war, not lack of resources.
- Lack of Pentagon spending oversight and discipline has contributed to billions of dollars worth of waste, fraud, and abuse, with one internal DOD study finding "\$125 billion in administrative waste over five years."
- [More than half](#) of the Pentagon's annual budget goes to [weapons](#) contractors, including tens of millions of dollars in compensation for their CEOs. Recently, the Pentagon [misused](#) \$1 billion of its COVID-19 relief funds to purchase weapons of war and line these contractors' pockets instead of producing direly-needed PPE as intended.

BUDGETING FOR TOMORROW'S CHALLENGES

Wasteful Pentagon spending diverts resources away from essential non-military solutions, like diplomacy, local capacity-building, and humanitarian assistance.



- Pressing global security challenges like climate change, inequality, violent conflict, pandemics, and forced displacement do not have military solutions. Relying on the Pentagon to address every security threat increases the militarization of U.S. foreign policy.
- Rebalancing resources towards more robust non-military alternatives will drive U.S. engagement with the world toward effective, proactive diplomacy, rather than military force.

AN IMBALANCED BUDGET

The U.S. must take a holistic approach to national security spending and dramatically rethink how it is allocating resources.



- Not only does spending on the Pentagon, current wars, and nuclear weapons amount to well over 50% of all federal discretionary spending, *even other forms* of discretionary spending are increasingly spent on militarism. For example, U.S. embassy protection and weapons sales are becoming ever-larger portions of the State Department's budget.
- When national security is conflated with military buildups, "softer," but often more effective security programs, like diplomacy and climate change mitigation, are consistently short-changed.

NATIONAL SECURITY IS HUMAN SECURITY

Prevailing notions of national security falsely equate national security with military force. The reality is that human security is not divisible – as the COVID-19 crisis has made all too clear, our own security depends on the security of others around the world. To truly provide safety and security, we must urgently address global challenges, such as protecting the health of the planet, building an inclusive global economy, and combating rising right-wing authoritarianism.





POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONGRESS

Members of Congress can take the following actions to reign in the Pentagon budget and reorient national security spending towards non-military engagement:



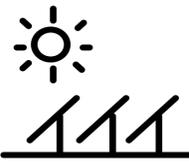
CUT THE PENTAGON'S BLOATED BUDGET

Reject Biden's budget request and other attempts to raise the Pentagon budget. Reduce funding for nuclear weapons and failed weapons like F-35s, bring troops home, reduce the size of the U.S. armed forces, and cut U.S. bases around the globe.



REBALANCE SECURITY SPENDING

Fully fund the State Department, USAID, and humanitarian agencies that increase human security. Reorient security spending toward robust, sustainable, non-military solutions that focus on state fragility and conflict prevention.



BUDGET FOR A NEW CONCEPTION OF NATIONAL SECURITY

Spending bills should treat national security problems holistically, rather than siloing them. This would require re-configuring the appropriations subcommittees to focus on major national security challenges together – from climate change to Afghanistan to global inequality.

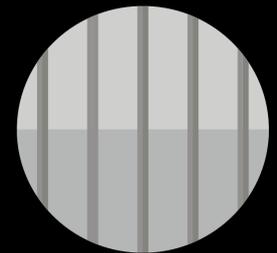


PLEDGE TO CONDUCT OVERSIGHT OF PENTAGON SPENDING

Stop encouraging irresponsible spending by writing blank checks to the Pentagon. Create penalties until the Pentagon passes a full financial audit. Hold defense contractors accountable for abuse and fraud.

THE BLACK BUDGET

The "black budget" represents classified government spending for covert operations and intelligence agencies, estimated to be over \$50 billion. This includes a massive CIA budget that includes funding of surveillance technologies, paramilitary activities, and black site prisons. The amount of taxpayer dollars spent on these programs should not be a secret. **Congress must call for the black budget's partial declassification to allow for appropriate oversight, accountability, and public debate on the need for such operations.**



SELECT LEGISLATIVE ACTION ON PENTAGON BUDGET CUTS

- **FY2015:** An NDAA amendment was adopted in the House that systemized criteria for classifying contingency operations and including their funding as part of the OCO budget.
- **FY2016:** An NDAA amendment requiring that Congress receive a report on how OCO funds were used was adopted into the final bill.
- **FY2018:** House voted 60-360 on a potential NDAA amendment to reduce the base Defense Department budget by 1%, not including military/reserve/National Guard personnel or the Defense Health Program account.
- **FY2020:** House voted 115-307 on a proposed NDAA amendment to cut the OCO budget by \$16.8 billion.
- **FY2021:** House and Senate both voted on proposed amendments to H.R. 6395 to cut 10% of the Pentagon budget, the House voting 93-324 and the Senate voting 23-77.
- **FY2022:** President Biden released his FY22 budget request, which is \$12.5 billion more than even Trump's highest spending levels.

For further questions and additional resources:



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