

WIN WITHOUT WAR



Biden's Budget Accepts the Failed Status Quo. Congress Must Reject It.

Background: This Friday, President Biden will release his full proposed Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 Pentagon budget. Between the Department of Defense and nuclear weapons budgets, Biden is expected to request a ~\$12.5 billion increase in Pentagon spending from Trump's final spending levels.

Key Points:

- 2020 should have been a wake-up call: spending more on weapons and war will not keep us safe.
- Yet with this request, President Biden accepts the failed status quo of ever-growing Pentagon budgets. This can't go on.
- Our security — the security of people across the globe — depends on us reimagining how the United States uses its resources. Congress must reject President Biden's request. It's time to divest from excessive militarism and invest in people over the Pentagon.

Reimagining Security

- After a year of tragic proof that funneling limitless funds into the Pentagon while neglecting basic human needs is a recipe for disaster, President Biden has doubled down on the status quo.
- Biden's request not only accepts Donald Trump's Pentagon spending spree, it adds to it. Congress cannot accept a three-quarters-of-a-trillion dollar Pentagon budget as the new normal.
- Congress must, at minimum, reverse Trump's Pentagon spending and bring the budget back to Obama-Biden-era levels, including by making use of the "[peace dividend](#)" from the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan.
- The security challenges of today – pandemics, the climate crisis, mass inequality, white nationalism – will not be solved by buying another aircraft carrier or building more nuclear weapons.
- U.S. national security depends on us ending the cycle of militarism and instead making sweeping investments in healthcare, under-resourced communities of color, affordable housing, the THRIVE agenda, a Green New Deal, and more.

The Pentagon Does Not Need More Money

- Calls for increased Pentagon spending must be seen for what they are: attempts to enrich arms dealers and further the militarization of foreign policy — in direct contravention of the interests and [opinions](#) of everyday people.
- [Nearly half](#) of already appropriated funds for the Pentagon and the nuclear weapons complex goes to private contractors, a 164 percent increase from 2001.
- Executives from the top five Pentagon contractors made over [\\$1 billion](#) in collective compensation from 2017-2020.

- [Excessive weapons spending](#) doesn't keep people safe — from the \$1.7 trillion plan to unnecessarily [upgrade](#) the nuclear arsenal, to the [failed](#) trillion dollar F-35 program, to the continued procurement of the Ford Aircraft Carrier despite its vulnerabilities [identified](#) by the Navy.
- Over 11 years, the Pentagon [returned](#) \$128 billion to the Treasury that it could not spend — *and* it has never successfully passed an audit. Yet, every year, the Department of Defense expects more money with little accountability.
- As former Defense Secretary Robert Gates presciently [remarked](#) 12 years and over \$100 billion ago: “If the Department of Defense can't figure out a way to defend the United States on half a trillion dollars a year [\$613 billion in today's dollars], then our problems are much bigger than anything that can be cured by buying a few more ships and planes.”

The Pentagon is a Bad Jobs Program

- Spending on the Pentagon is simply not an effective way to create jobs. For every \$1 million spent, Pentagon spending only [creates](#) 6.9 jobs, while that same million would create 19.2 jobs in elementary and secondary education, 14.3 jobs in health care, and 9.8 jobs in clean energy — jobs that actually serve human needs.
- Spending on infrastructure, clean energy, or education would [create](#) one and one-half to two times as many jobs per dollar spent as throwing more money at the Pentagon.
- Subsidizing a bloated, broken bureaucracy that employs almost 600,000 private contractors doing redundant jobs is not fiscally responsible. Cutting spending on contracting by 15% and replacing the essential roles through good-paying government jobs could result in [\\$262 billion](#) in savings over the next decade alone.

Additional resources:

- [50+ House lawmakers call to decrease Pentagon budget](#)
- [40+ Orgs and 20+ MoC call to use Afghanistan Withdrawal to cut the Pentagon Budget](#)
- [Throwing Money at the War Machine: 5 Cases of Pentagon Waste](#), Win Without War
- [25+ Transpartisan Orgs Identify \\$80 Billion in Pentagon Budget Cuts](#)
- [Busting Pentagon Spending Myths](#), Win Without War (July, 2020)
- Polling: [The American People Agree: Cut the Pentagon's Budget](#), Rep. Mark Pocan
- [Policy Brief: The Pentagon's Misuse of Coronavirus Relief Funds](#), Win Without War
- [Report: Reimagining Security Spending for the 21st Century and Beyond](#), Win Without War