

PEOPLE OVER PENTAGON

This holiday season, we want to get in the spirit of giving... just not to the Pentagon.



AN INTRODUCTION....

Our nation's budget priorities are broken. Every year, the Pentagon receives nearly *three quarters of a trillion* dollars for weapons and war, while *critical* needs like education, healthcare, and climate action go starved for resources.

Why? Because warmongering politicians work hand-in-hand with powerful Pentagon lobbyists to keep the bombs falling and the cash flowing.

But together, we have the power to stop them. All year, every year, Win Without War works with progressive champions in Congress, leading movement partners, and grassroots activists like you to take on the war profiteers and fight to put *people* over the *Pentagon*.

And our power is growing. In just the last few years, we've seen unprecedented votes in Congress recognizing that the status quo is an utter failure. We're not there yet, but the tides are beginning to turn.

Now, as 2021 comes to a close, we've decided to compile some of our most helpful resources into a single short packet — to arm our movement with the knowledge needed to bring us to victory as we start a new year. We hope you find it useful.

If you're feeling extra giving this season, [leave us a tip](#) so we can continue our fight for a world that chooses human needs over Pentagon greed.

**THANK YOU FOR WORKING FOR PEACE,
- FAITH, AMISHA, MICHAEL, NASTARAN, & THE WIN WITHOUT WAR TEAM**

**Layout and design by Nastaran Far*



➤ *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.



I'M A DEFENSE INDUSTRY WORKER. IT'S TIME TO CUT THE PENTAGON BUDGET.

Limitless military spending doesn't help workers like me. Green, union jobs do.

BY DAVID STORY

Every year, the story is the same. Congress looks at the Pentagon budget, briefly debates the merits of decades of skyrocketing spending, and then pads it with tens of billions dollars more.

And every year, they do it in my name.

I'm a defense industry worker. I live and work in an area of Alabama referred to as "the Pentagon of the South." I'm a member of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers. And I say throwing money at the Pentagon doesn't help workers like me.

It's time to cut the bloated Pentagon budget and use those resources where they will actually serve my fellow workers: funding good, green, union jobs.

In September, the House of Representatives passed legislation authorizing an astonishing \$778 billion 2022 Pentagon budget. That's a \$37 billion boost from the year before, and more than twice the per annum size of the \$3.5 trillion reconciliation bill that has become the center of a storm of Beltway scrutiny. But because it was for the Pentagon, rather than the people, few even batted an eye.

About half of this exorbitant sum is destined to go directly to corporations in the lucrative defense contracting industry. There, executives will fill their pockets and spend a chunk of the remainder lobbying for even more the next year. The majority of Congress, swayed by the industry's influence, eyeing a cushy board position, or even directly profiting from contractor stocks, will comply. And they'll justify this decision by invoking the magic word: jobs.

Despite the public's opposition to unrestrained Pentagon spending, despite the fact that the Pentagon is notoriously wasteful, despite many politicians' claimed commitments to ending our country's endless wars, the limitless funding of an overpowered war machine is deemed necessary because it supposedly helps create jobs like mine.

It doesn't. Study after study has shown that spending on the military industry is one of the least effective ways to create jobs. For every seven jobs created by military spending, investments in clean energy would make 10 (and in health care and education, even more than that). Those who are using our names to excuse their votes for corporate interests are, in effect, stealing jobs that could be ours.

I'M A DEFENSE INDUSTRY WORKER. IT'S TIME TO CUT THE PENTAGON BUDGET.

...CONTINUED

Limitless military spending doesn't help workers like me. Green, union jobs do.

Meanwhile, it is workers who suffer the most from our misplaced budget priorities. It is everyday working people, not the executives at Raytheon, who are sent to fight and die in our nation's global forever wars—and everyday people in places like Afghanistan and Yemen who pay the price of our failed interventions. It is working communities whose schools are failing, working families that can't pay their medical bills, and the working class who disproportionately suffer the impacts of the climate crisis.

The reality is that, as in any industry, Pentagon spending is used to fatten the profits for the few, while the workers get pushed to the side.

Unfortunately, the leaders of my union have traditionally gone along with it. Rather than having the vision and courage to fight for what we workers need in the long term, they have decided it's easier to work hand in hand with industry bosses to try to maintain a failing status quo. We deserve better.

It's time to cut the Pentagon budget. But when we do, we workers can't be left behind. Our skills, our talents, from engineers to machinists, should be put to work on the urgent task of building a green economy.

The transition may be difficult at first. But in the long run, it's a clear win. More jobs means not only less precarity but also more bargaining power, and a stronger union for all of us. Beyond helping workers in our industry, a green job transition is a key step toward ending our nation's permanent war footing and confronting instead the greatest challenge of our time. That's a public good for generations to come.

I'm not advocating getting rid of the defense industry entirely. Just cutting it down to the real size that's needed for our actual defense, and spending the rest to help make sure we're safe from the imminent threats of climate change, unemployment, and an economy that caters to the interests of the few.

My fellow workers don't need a fatter Pentagon budget. We need good-paying, green, union jobs, and an economy that works for the many. The next time a politician claims that they're funding endless war for the sake of jobs, we defense industry workers must stand up and say, "Not in our names."

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BUSTING PENTAGON \$PENDING MYTHS...

So you want to divest from weapons and war, and invest in our communities instead? Prepare yourself to spot these common Pentagon spending myths and reveal the truth about our broken budget priorities.

✗ MYTH: REDUCING THE PENTAGON'S BUDGET WILL MAKE US LESS SAFE.

✓ **REALITY:**

- The United States can no longer afford to use 20th century solutions to address 21st century problems. The existential threats the United States faces today — the climate crisis, pandemics, global authoritarianism and nationalism, mass inequality — do not have military solutions and cannot be resolved by building more aircraft carriers.
- Spending an estimated \$1.7 trillion on unnecessarily “modernizing” our nuclear arsenal over the next 30 years, or hundreds of billions of dollars on the F-35 that may never be combat ready, does nothing to address the economic insecurity that working people face around this country.
- Our militarized spending on national security has made people around the world less safe, while further militarizing our own society has increased the lethality of police brutality, as well as mass shootings and attacks by white nationalists across the country. That’s not safety.



BUSTING PENTAGON SPENDING MYTHS... CONTINUED

✗ MYTH: WE NEED TO INCREASE THE PENTAGON BUDGET FOR THE SAKE OF MAINTAINING JOBS.

✓ REALITY:

- The fact is that spending on the Pentagon is one of the least effective ways to create jobs. For every \$1 million of taxpayer dollars spent, Pentagon spending only creates 6.9 jobs, while it could create 19.2 jobs in elementary and secondary education, 14.3 jobs in health care, and 9.8 jobs in clean energy that actually serve human needs.
- Studies by economists at the University of Massachusetts have demonstrated that spending on infrastructure, clean energy, or education would create one and a half to two times as many jobs per dollar spent than 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. By 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.

✗ MYTH: REDUCING THE PENTAGON'S BUDGET WILL HARM READINESS AND MAKE OUR TROOPS LESS SAFE.

✓ REALITY:

- A study from Brown University's Costs of War project found that more than half of the Pentagon's annual budget goes to private defense contractors. It's the CEOs that make multi-million dollar bonuses that benefit from bloat at the Pentagon, not U.S. servicemembers who face dismal housing conditions and low pay.
- Measuring military readiness against unrealistic expectations for combat scenarios sets servicemembers up to fail by, more often than not, asking them to solve political problems without clear military solutions.
- If specific mission sets are prioritized, then the appropriate funding can be allocated for personnel and systems with a clear return on investment, rather than a blank check rife with disparate expectations.

OUR POWER IS GROWING!

Together, we're building momentum to put people over the Pentagon. Check out some of our WINS from the past year!

We prevented the Pentagon from abusing more Covid relief funds!



Win Without War  @WinWithoutWar · Dec 29, 2020

Our 4th Highlight of 2020 🌈: Keeping #COVID Relief Funds Where They Belong

When we learned that the Pentagon got \$10B in COVID relief, we took action & succeeded in ensuring that future COVID relief legislation included no more money for the Pentagon.

When House and Senate leaders tried to sneak cash for the Pentagon into the infrastructure bill, we fought back, together with progressive champions in Congress. And we won! We kept money out of weapons dealers' pockets, so it can be invested in things like creating well-paying jobs and fighting climate change.

And, we stopped a 50\$ BILLION bump to the Pentagon budget!



Win Without War  @WinWithoutWar

This week we saw a huge victory in our fight to put #PeopleOverPentagon: a bipartisan Senate majority rejected \$50B more for the Pentagon...TWICE.

This victory was in part possible because our activists showed UP. 🧵

...But we still have a steep hill ahead of us to slash the Pentagon budget for good. So, now that you're equipped with the facts, what can you do?

1

FIND OUT if your member of Congress voted to CUT the Pentagon budget, or to INCREASE it. Thank them, or hold them accountable.

2

SIGN UP for action alerts, so you can remind Congress and the administration that they work for YOU, not lobbyists and weapons companies.

3

LEAVE US A TIP if it's in your budget, and if you found this booklet useful. Our work to end reckless Pentagon spending RELIES on your support.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS, FROM ALL OF US AT WIN WITHOUT WAR. WE HOPE YOU'LL JOIN US IN THE SPIRIT OF GIVING... JUST NOT TO THE PENTAGON.