



AFSC Talking Points on Federal Budget Priorities

- Just as peace is more than the absence of war, national security is more than planes and bombs; its jobs, schools, housing, healthcare.
- The biggest security challenges we face are unemployment, foreclosures and wrongheaded attempts to balance budgets on the backs of working families and children.
- In fact, many families have to choose between paying medical bills or the mortgage.
- The federal budget is so top-heavy with spending on “defense” that it weakens our actual security.

(ONE EXAMPLE) One soldier sent to Afghanistan costs \$1.2 million a year; money which could fund 30 well-paying jobs at home (\$40,000 annually).

(ANOTHER EXAMPLE) We could take the \$334 million spent each day in Afghanistan and fund 2 million 4-year scholarships at state universities.

(ANOTHER EXAMPLE) If we spent the \$1 Trillion on both wars on fixing our roads and bridges, we could have hired 15 million jobless folks at \$50,000 apiece.

- Given our still high unemployment rate and continued foreclosures, does it make sense economically to keep putting money into “defense” or “security-related” spending?
- Let’s cut the “security-related” or “defense” budget and put those dollars into meeting human needs.

HINT: Adding local examples and specific information about how much money your community has paid in taxes for the wars or the military budget and what that money would have bought instead is a great way to keep the media interested. You can find this information at <http://nationalpriorities.org/en/tools/tradeoffs/>

For more information: mzerkel@afsc.org