



## If I Had a Trillion Dollars... Youth Video Festival



IHTD winners on Capitol Hill in 2011

## WHAT WOULD YOU DO WITH A TRILLION DOLLARS?

Instead of spending them on war and tax cuts....

**State and Federal budget cuts are closing schools, threatening Pell grants, healthcare and other programs that are crucial to young people and our communities, while at the same time we are facing historically high unemployment.**

### WHOSE Federal Budget Priorities?

Why are we facing high unemployment and cuts to education and other programs when:

- Nearly \$1 trillion is spent yearly on the US military
- More than \$1 trillion has been spent on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan
- More than \$1 trillion was spent on tax cuts for the wealthiest

### Move the Money

Labor, community, peace and economic justice groups around the country are calling on Congress to:

- End the wars, cut the military budget
- Tax the wealthy and corporations
- Protect important social programs
- Invest in job creation

### What are YOUR priorities?

Bring your perspective to this national conversation by making a short video saying how YOU would rather spend \$1 trillion. Take a look at our fact sheets to understand the issues. The visit our website for information on how to submit your entry! [www.bit.ly/ifihadatrilliondollars](http://www.bit.ly/ifihadatrilliondollars)



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### END THE WARS AND CUT THE MILITARY BUDGET

#### A Fact Sheet

**The US spends nearly \$1 trillion a year on the military and the cost of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan has exceeded \$1 trillion.**

**Substantial cuts can be made to the defense budget without a threat to our national security.**

With military spending accounting for 60% of the discretionary budget — more than all other discretionary spending programs combined — deep cuts in this area must be a major component of any serious effort to reduce the federal deficit.

#### US Military Outspends the World

Department of Defense budgets have increased 43% over the last decade and the United States is now responsible for nearly half of global military spending according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. Spending can be cut by reducing overseas military bases, nuclear weapons programs, military aid programs, ending Cold War weapons manufacturing and research, and ending the Iraq and Afghanistan wars.

#### Waste and Fraud

According to the Commission on Wartime Contracting in Iraq and Afghanistan, “at least \$31 billion, and possibly as much as \$60 billion, has been lost to contract waste and fraud in America’s contingency operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.” The report also states that if continued without scrutiny, accountability and better

oversight by US Government much more tax payer money will be lost.

#### Military Spending Isn’t the Best Investment in Jobs

Investment in sectors such as education, health care, and clean energy produce more jobs than similar investment in military programs. According to the report “[What Kinds of Federal Spending Create The Most Good Jobs?](#),” \$1 billion in spending in education services creates 29,100 jobs, \$1 billion in Healthcare would create 19,600 jobs, where as \$1 billion in military spending would only create 11,600 jobs.

#### Additional Resources

[Ten Reasons Why Congress Should Cut the Pentagon Budget](#) — Friends Committee on National Legislation

[10 Years After 9/11 - The Dollars and Sense of War](#) — National Priorities Project





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### TAX THE WEALTHY AND CORPORATIONS

#### A Fact Sheet

**When you balance your household budget, you need to consider money coming in as well as the money that is spent.**

The money that comes into the federal budget in the form of taxes is called revenue. Corporations and the wealthiest among us have not been paying their fair share, and we haven't had enough money coming in.

**Over \$1 trillion was spent giving tax breaks to the wealthy!**

Congress needs to:

- End Bush era tax cuts for the wealthiest
- End tax breaks for corporations

#### Tax Cuts for the Rich = Big Deficit

According to Citizens for Tax Justice, when you factor in income and estate tax cuts, "extending the tax cuts for the rich would add over a trillion dollars to the ten-year federal budget deficit." The Congressional Budget Office recently ranked *making permanent the Bush tax cuts for all taxpayers (including the rich) as the least effective policy option for creating jobs in the short term.*

#### Millionaires Should Pay Their Share

The current tax code doesn't distinguish between households earning \$373,000 and other super rich income holders who earn over 1 million. Creating new tax brackets for higher annual income, and taxing capital

gains and dividends for taxpayers with income above \$1 million would raise about \$784 billion over 10 years.

#### Corporations Should Pay Their Share

Many corporations avoid paying taxes completely. The New York Times reported that in 2010 General Electric "reported worldwide profits of \$14.2 billion, and said \$5.1 billion of the total came from its operations in the United States. Its American tax bill? None. In fact, G.E. claimed a tax benefit of \$3.2 billion."

For example, in 2010 if all corporations paid the 35% marginal rate they are supposed to, we would have had an addition \$219 billion in Federal revenue.

#### Additional Resources

[Tax Day 2011 resources](#) — National Priorities Project  
[www.costoftaxcuts.org](http://www.costoftaxcuts.org)





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### PROTECT IMPORTANT SOCIAL PROGRAMS

#### A Fact Sheet

The government has a budget that it gets to decide how to spend each year and that is the discretionary budget. Most of the talk about deficits and balancing the budget involves cuts to what are called “non-defense discretionary spending.” That means cutting social programs instead of the military budget, even though the military budget is more than half of discretionary spending.

#### What are Social Programs?

Programs that fund programs in education, housing, healthcare, and job creation at the federal, state and local level are the kind of social programs that are under threat when non-defense discretionary spending is cut. **Even programs outside the discretionary budget, such as Medicaid, Medicare and Social Security are being considered for cuts.** Our deficit is the result of two unfunded wars and tax cuts for the wealthy and corporations. *Our communities should not pay the price.*

#### Social Programs Are Effective

The Special Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) is one of the most cost-effective programs, in the U.S. WIC prenatal benefits reduce low birth-weight babies by 25% and very low birth-weight babies by 44%. For very low birth-weight babies, an increase of 1 pound at birth saves approximately \$28,000 in first year medical costs.

Refundable tax credits for working families, like the earned income tax credit (EITC) and child tax credit, keep millions

of families out of poverty. In 2009, the EITC lifted an estimated 6.6 million people, including 3.3 million children, out of poverty.

#### Medicaid, Social Security and Medicare

Cutting Medicaid would affect senior citizens, children, and people with disabilities. Plus, when people don’t get the care they need they visit the emergency room or need hospital stays they cannot pay for, raising the cost of care for for everyone else, and resulting in a “**hidden health care tax.**” Half of Americans age 65 and older have an annual income of less than \$18,500 per year and half of all Medicare beneficiaries spend about \$3,100 annually out of pocket for their health care.

Social Security is the one source of income that many seniors can rely upon, especially in this economic climate with declining home values, a volatile stock market and dwindling pensions.

#### Additional

#### Resources:

[Medicaid, Deficit Reduction and the Super-Committee](#) by Families USA

[Confusion on Social Security and Medicare](#) by Russ Armstrong and Steve Gorin





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### INVEST IN JOB CREATION

#### A Fact Sheet

The US is facing historically high rates of unemployment; 14 million people are jobless and a startling 6 million people have been unemployed for six months or more. And youth unemployment is estimated at 18-25 percent.

#### Investment in Jobs Will Help the Deficit

Job and income growth is necessary because people with jobs pay taxes. Congress should make short-term investments in job creation, not cuts in healthcare, education and social programs that cause more layoffs.

#### Cutting Spending Will Eliminate Jobs

You don't create jobs and growth by firing workers and cutting spending," says Nobel Prize-winning economist Joseph Stiglitz. Spending cuts to healthcare, education and other social programs will reduce public investments which could lead to slower long-run economic growth and lower living standards for future generations.

#### Invest in High Impact Sectors

When it comes to job creation, investment in sectors such as education, health care, and clean energy produce more employment dollar for dollar than investment in the military.

According to the report "[What Kinds of Federal Spending Create The Most Good Jobs?](#)," \$1 billion for education services creates 29,100 jobs, \$1 billion for health care

would create 19,600 jobs, whereas \$1 billion for the military would only create 11,600 jobs.

#### Budget Cuts Hurt the Fragile Economy

This is not the time for major budget cutting measures. Instead, the government should spend more to allow new job creation. A new Congressional Budget Office (CBO) report estimates that the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) increased the number of people employed between 1.0 million and 2.9 million jobs as of June 2011. Without the help of the government spending, many more people would have been unemployed. In the long run, lower unemployment means smaller deficits.

#### Additional Resources:

[How to Put America Back to Work](#) by Joseph Stiglitz  
[What's missing from the debt ceiling debate? Jobs](#)

by John Irons  
[Debt Ceiling Deal Threatens Deep Job Losses and Lower Long-Run Economic Growth](#) by Andrew Fieldhouse and Ethan Pollack



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