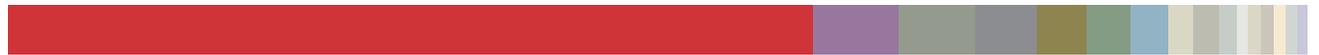


# **Invest in People** **Not the Pentagon**



**Wage Peace Budget Action Kit**  
**Spring 2013**



**American Friends  
Service Committee**

February, 2013

This is a kit for community groups, Quaker meetings, faith communities, students and anyone else who is ready to work in this crucial moment to make sure that vital social programs are preserved and that deep cuts to Pentagon spending are made.

In the next couple of months we probably have our best chance for cutting Pentagon spending and moving that money to our communities. Congress's right wing is in disarray, a consensus is building that military spending can be cut deeply, and powerful national organizations are starting to join that consensus. But this moment will be brief.

**TAKE ACTION NOW!**

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Parts of this kit were adapted or included with thanks from the following resources:

New Priorities Network spring resources: <http://newprioritiesnetwork.org/january-february-2013-toolkit/>

National Priorities Project and Peace Action curriculum <http://costofwar.com/publications/2013/move-money/>

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION as the campaign develops:**

Sign up for the Wage Peace newsletter for action alerts:

<http://www.afsc.org/action/sign-wage-peace>

“Like” our Facebook page:  
AFSC Wage Peace Campaign

Follow us on Twitter @AFSCPeace

email or call us:

Mary Zerkel/ [mzerkel@afsc.org](mailto:mzerkel@afsc.org), 312.427.2533



**MILITARY**

Health and  
Human Services

Education

State

Other Programs

Department of  
Homeland Security

Housing and Urban  
Development

Justice

Agriculture

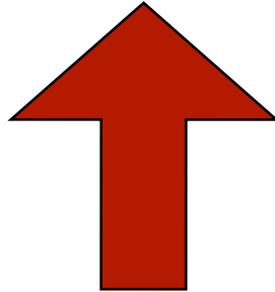
NASA

Energy

Labor

Treasury

Interior  
Environmental Protection Agency  
Transportation



# **Vinyl banners of US Discretionary Budget**

**Use for marches, press conferences, to hang on side of  
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\$200.00 shipping included**

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312.427.2533**



**American Friends  
Service Committee**



# Actions

photo by Sarah Jane Rhee



## **Core messages**

### **February-April 2013:**

Cut bloated Pentagon spending, not vital programs that create real security.  
Cut what we don't need so we can save what we do need.

We want \$1 Trillion in cuts to Pentagon spending.

#### ***Contributing messages:***

We can't have real security without investments in  
education, healthcare, jobs.

The programs we use have already been cut.  
Now it's the Pentagon's turn.

## **Strategy**

AFSC, along with our partners across the country who work with the New Priorities Network, the Budget Priorities Working Group and the Pentagon Spending Campaign, have agreed upon the following strategy:

Put our message before the public in as many ways as possible. Public events, op-eds, letters to the editor, media events, etc.

Make sure Congress knows about our message.

**TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE A CHANGE!**



## **TIMELINE OF OPPORTUNITIES\***

### **February**

- 4 - Deadline for Release of President's Budget Request
- 7 - Brennan Hearings (CIA)
- 12 - State of the Union Address
- 14 - Valentine's Day
- 20 - President's Day national day of action SAVE for ALL coalition
- 27 - National Day of Action on Cuts to Pentagon Spending
- 11-17 - Congressional Senate recess
- 18-22 - Congressional House recess

### **March**

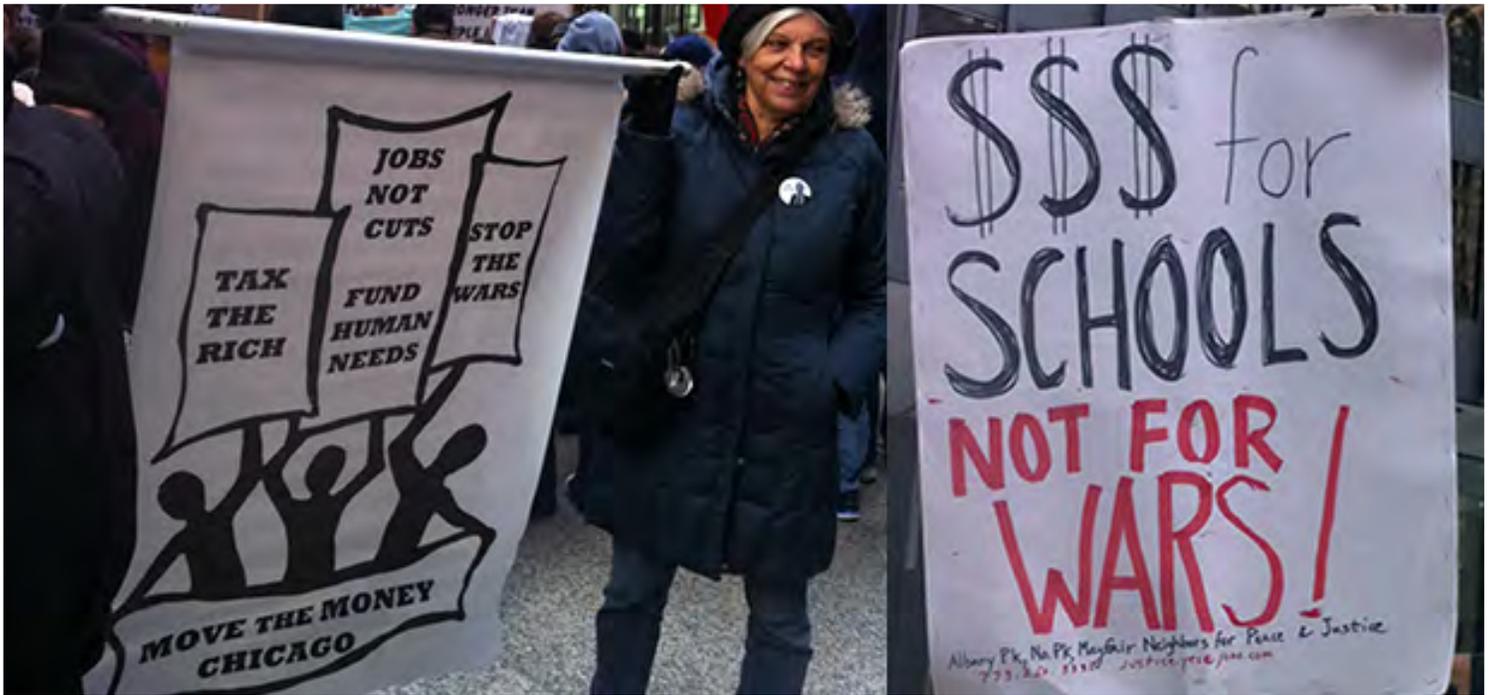
- 1 - Delayed Release of President's Budget/ Sequestration goes into effect
- 27 - Continuing Resolution Expires

### **April**

- 15 - Tax Day/Global Day of Action on Military Spending/IHTD and Congress Completes Action on Budget Resolution

\*subject to change during this volatile period check [www.afsc.org/wagepeace](http://www.afsc.org/wagepeace) for timeline updates





## Creative Actions For Talking About Federal Budget Priorities

### SIGNAGE

One easy way to present these issues to your community is through signs. Stage an action with the signs at the site of crucial services in your community that are threatened with cuts.

### Federal Budget Banner

The heading at the top of each page in this toolkit has been reproduced as a 2 1/2"x 20" banner in vinyl. It can be carried during a march, held by several people on a busy street corner, or hung from a building. It is available for purchase for \$200 (shipping included). To receive more information or to order email [mzerkel@afsc.org](mailto:mzerkel@afsc.org)

### Homemade

This can be as simple as a hand lettered sign carried at a march, or placed in a window on a well-trafficked street.

### Billboards

You can create something dramatic, like the billboard pictured on the right. Many billboard companies will be willing to negotiate with you for a PSA rate. AFSC has helped communities in several different states put up billboards.



**Top:** A handmade sign in the window that faces the State Capitol in New Hampshire.  
**Bottom:** A community group in Lansing Michigan raised money to pay for this billboard.

## Dramatize the Results of Cuts

Use your creativity to show the impact of cuts to vital services. Stage a "Reality Tour" for local media to see how cuts affect neighborhoods or create a "hooverville" out of card board boxes to show the impact of future cuts, as AFSC and allies did in Chicago (seen below).

Capturing the stories of those affected by cuts is also important. We want the public to understand that we need to cut what we don't need so that we can save what communities DO need.

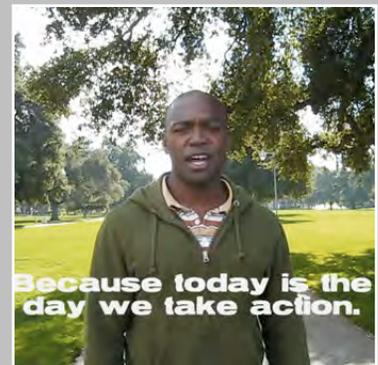
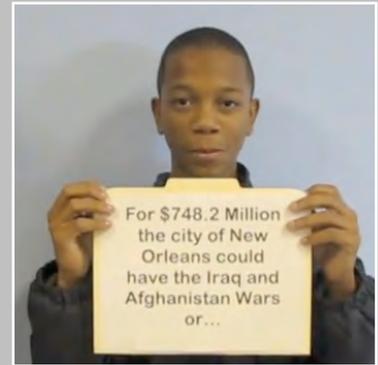
## Hold a Video Screening

American Friends Service Committee and the National Priorities Project hold an annual film festival for youth ages 13-23.

We asked them to make short videos about what they would rather spend \$1 trillion on instead of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, or instead of tax cuts for the rich. Each year we receive fabulous entries from around the country that show the cost of disinvestment in our communities. You can use these short videos as a public program to generate discussion in your community.

For viewing the videos, you can stream them via YouTube on our channel <http://www.youtube.com/user/IHTDVideos?feature=mhum> (this will require an internet connection at your chosen location) or borrow a DVD from AFSC. Email or call Erin Polley at [epolley@afsc.org](mailto:epolley@afsc.org) or 317-626-0868 to make arrangements. Videos are lent out in 10 day periods for no charge.

## IF I HAD A TRILLION DOLLARS...

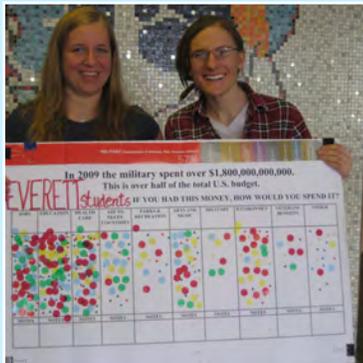


### Stills from the DVD

The winning entries are from around the country including these.

- Top: New Orleans, LA
- Middle: Portland, OR
- Bottom: Los Angeles, CA





Top: High school students in Michigan voted how to spend funds by using stickers on a poster.

Middle and right: Community members in Portsmouth, NH and high school students in Chicago voted with pennies put into plastic tubes corresponding to the budget categories.

Bottom: Community members in Rhode Island voted for how they wanted federal dollars spent by placing pennies in plastic buckets.

## Interactive Tools

A very good way to help the people in your community understand our federal budget priorities is to involve them in an interactive display.

### Make Your Own Penny Poll

The classic tool for this is the penny poll. Your community will be creating a visual display of the categories within the federal budget and asking passersby to vote on where they think their tax dollars should be spent.

Give each person who wants to participate 10 pennies or stickers and ask them to distribute them among the categories in the federal discretionary budget:

- Military: includes Department of Defense, War, Veterans Affairs and Nuclear Weapons programs.
- Health and Human Services
- Education
- State Department
- Homeland Security
- Housing and Urban Development
- Justice
- Agriculture
- NASA
- Energy (excluding Nuclear Weapons programs)
- Labor
- Treasury
- Interior
- EPA
- Transportation
- Other programs





## HOW TO TALK TO CONGRESS

### Meet and call your member of Congress effectively

You do not need to be an expert on federal budget issues to address it with your congressional delegation — you are their constituent and **your views are important** to their decisions on matters before Congress.

#### Scheduling a Lobby Visit

- Good lobbying begins with access. The scheduler controls who will meet with the member, and for how long.
- Request an appointment in writing as early as possible.
- In your request state clearly who will be attending and what issue you would like to discuss.
- Visiting in groups of 6 or less and discussing one or two major topics is most effective.

#### Do Your Homework

- Appoint a spokesperson for your group.
- Practice answering questions in a simple, straightforward manner.

- Identify one specific aspect of your issue for each person in the group to highlight briefly.
- Know the member's voting record on budget issues.
- Use concrete local examples and numbers about how federal budget priorities affect your community. [www.nationalpriorities.org](http://www.nationalpriorities.org) has great resources.

#### State Your Power

- Be clear about your connection to the member's constituents and your affiliations.
- If you are a constituent, say so. If you represent constituents, tell them how many. Do you have influence over a community of constituents? If you work with churches or other organizations in their district, tell them.



## LOBBYING 101

### Be respectful but not star struck.

#### Be concise and direct!

- Expect to get 15-30 minutes; preparation is key to making the most of this short window.
- Members of Congress have a tendency to talk a lot, and will talk about things that they know, not necessarily the issue that you came to them with.
- Make sure they don't take over the meeting. Politely redirect the conversation to your point as needed.

#### Paint a Picture

- After starting with concrete examples, facts and figures can help to support your case.
- Have someone present at your meeting who can speak with their heart and personal experience about how federal budget decisions and war spending have affected them.

#### Avoid Threats or Accusations

- Basic courtesy is essential for advocacy, even when we are

deeply angry about a bad policy or failure to act.

- Approach whomever you meet with as an ally no matter where they stand.
- Convey urgency and responsibility in a manner that empowers action rather than raising defenses and stifling further dialogue.

#### Thank Them

- Thank your representative for their time and their leadership on federal budget priorities if their voting record has been good.

#### State a Clear Ask

- The most important thing about a meeting is to make a direct and clear ask.
- Use our talking points to help you frame your ask about federal budget priorities and if they have



a specific role to play in the process focus on that.

#### Leave Something Behind

- Leave written materials for the representative and/or their staff.

#### Don't Worry

- If you don't know the answer to a question that is asked, it will give you the opportunity to find the answer and get back in touch.

#### Follow Up

- Be sure to send a thank you note to your representative.

### Additional Resources

#### Friends Committee on National Legislation

[Climbing the Ladder of Engagement](#) — a guide to building a relationship with your member of Congress

#### National Priorities Project

[Budget Tools](#) — A place to find specific numbers on the impact that federal spending has on your local community. This is great info for your meeting with a member of Congress.

#### AFSC Congressional Directory

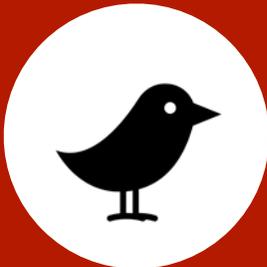
Find your member of Congress [here](#).

#### New Priorities Network

American Friends Service Committee, UFPJ, National Priorities Project, FCNL, Peace Action, USLAW, Code Pink, Veterans for Peace, and many other groups from around the country come together in the NPN. [Use this website](#) to find current national campaigns and resources.



**COMMUNITIES NEED  
INVESTMENT TO  
THRIVE**



**Tips for Calling a  
Member of Congress**

Most legislative offices keep track of calls from constituents on various issues and report the number of calls they get to the legislators themselves on a regular basis. Calling your legislator's office to register your opinion is an important way to advocate for a responsible federal budget.

Call the US Capitol Switchboard at **202-224-3121** and ask to be connected to your legislator's office. You may also call the member of Congress outside of Washington in their district office (go to [www.contactingthecongress.org](http://www.contactingthecongress.org) to find local info on your member of Congress).

**Identify yourself** and where you are from to make it clear you are a constituent.

Identify legislation and action you want taken.

**Clearly explain** your position on the issue (only address one issue per call) and what you would like the legislator to do (vote for or against a bill, etc.).

**Ask** to speak with the staff person who works on the issue you are concerned about (for example: "May I speak with the staff person who works on budget issues?").

**Be courteous, polite and concise.**

**Basic Budget Talking Points:**

- People in my community want DEEP CUTS to the Pentagon budget and to bring the war dollars home.
- It is important to raise revenues by increasing taxes on corporations and the wealthy. Tax cuts and loopholes for corporations and the wealthiest Americans have contributed greatly to the deficit.
- During these difficult economic times it is even more essential to protect funding for the most vulnerable.
- With record unemployment it is essential to INVEST in job creation.

HINT: customize your talking points by adding local information. [www.nationalpriorities.org](http://www.nationalpriorities.org) can help you with information specific to your community.



## ALERT THE MEDIA

**There are many ways to get your message across using these simple tools**

Amplify your creative actions by making sure that you let the media know what you are doing.

### **Make it visual**

If your action has a strong visual component the media will be more likely to show up. Use some of the ideas in this packet or come up with something totally unique! Take your own picture and send it to the local media, even if they didn't show up. Sometimes you'll get a photo in the newspaper even if they don't run a story.

### **Connect Locally**

Make sure to have a local angle on the way that budget cuts are affecting your community. The National Priorities Project has a great website that can tell you precisely how many tax dollars your community has spent on the war AND the military budget and what your community could have

spent the money on instead. Visit [www.nationalpriorities.org](http://www.nationalpriorities.org)

### **Press Template and Media tips**

AFSC has a [template](#) you can use to contact the media and a [list of tips](#) about speaking to the media.

### **Letters to the Editor**

Writing a letter to the editor is one fantastic way to reach the people in your community and let them know that you support ending the war, cutting the military budget and funding human needs. Use our [template](#), or write your own.

### **Social Media Savvy**

Facebook, Twitter and other social media outlets are great ways to help organize your community and to broadcast your community's feeling about budget priorities. Download AFSC's [social media guide](#).



# Facts



## **Congress cut taxes. Now it's time to make smart, strategic reductions in Pentagon spending.**

Both sides reached an agreement on taxes. While they should do a lot more to tax corporations and the top 1%, they are going to focus on government spending for the next two months.

That leaves them two choices:

- Cut programs we in the 99% use – Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, and a whole list of important social programs –
- Or cut a Pentagon budget that has exploded out of control in the last ten years.

### **Any commonsense solution will make deep cuts to the Pentagon.**

The Pentagon makes up more than half of discretionary spending and it is simply common sense for the Pentagon to be more than half of any government spending solution.\*

### **It's either Pentagon cuts or deep cuts in "people programs."**

If Congress wants to reduce the deficit, it needs to make big cuts in spending.

Either Congress can slash "people programs," Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, education, food stamps—or they can trim the Pentagon's runaway budget.

### **People programs have been cut while the Pentagon has mushroomed.**

Domestic discretionary spending – education, public health, food safety – has grown 14% since 2000. *The Pentagon budget has grown three times as much without even counting the two wars.* And since the housing crash in 2008, many important domestic programs have been cut.

### **Do we want to keep paying for Pentagon waste?**

The Pentagon budget includes billions in outdated and/or unnecessary programs and is rife with waste. **In fact, there has never even been a proper audit of Pentagon spending.** Too much of our money is building weapons that don't work to fight enemies that no longer exist. Cuts could start with:

**The F-35 Joint Strike Fighter:** Total cost is estimated to be \$1.5 trillion – delaying procurement is not enough. We should end the program altogether.

**Nuclear weapons programs:** We are slated to spend \$640 billion over the next ten years on nuclear weapons (SBXX, MOX, Long Range Bomber), many of which are designed to respond to Soviet-era threats.

**Defense contracting CEO salaries:** The average salary of a top 5 defense contracting CEO last year was \$21.5 million. This is higher than almost any other CEO on Wall Street – paid for by American taxpayers.

**Overseas military bases:** The US presently spends billions maintaining large deployments in Europe and elsewhere that, strategically speaking, are Cold War-era holdovers.

There is no way to get the government's fiscal house in order without turning off the running faucet of Pentagon spending.



## Now it's the Pentagon's turn...

Since 2000 the Pentagon budget has grown three times as much as non-military domestic spending. The Pentagon grew 42% – *not counting the wars* – while “people programs” like education grew only 14%.

When the housing crisis hit and the economy collapsed, many domestic programs started to shrink. Here are some of the important programs that were cut from Fiscal Year 2010 to Fiscal Year 2012 while the Pentagon continued to expand.

<b>Program</b>	<b>What it does</b>	<b>Cuts FY2010- 2012*</b>	<b>If automatic cuts hit March 1**</b>
<b>Community Services Block Grants</b>	Help cities keep senior centers, parks, and local services going when budgets are cut	3.3%	16.2%
<b>Low Income Energy Assistance</b>	Helps low-income families heat their homes	32.0%	36.0%
<b>Adult Job Training (WIA)</b>	Helps employers find workers; helps workers find and keep jobs	10.6%	23.5%
<b>Community Service Employment for Older Americans</b>	Helps unemployed older Americans find work with businesses seeking trained, qualified, and reliable employees.	45.7%	53.6%
<b>Effective Teachers and Leaders State Grants</b>	Helps low-income and minority students get equitable access to effective teachers and principals, and helps evaluate them	16.3%	28.5%
<b>English Learner Education</b>	Professional development, accountability, and innovative programs to help children learn English	2.4%	16.5%
<b>21st Century Community Learning Centers</b>	After-school academic enrichment centers, especially for students in high-poverty and low-performing schools and their families	1.2%	15.6%
<b>YouthBuild</b>	Helps high school dropouts finish their education and learn construction skills	22.4%	33.5%

\*These numbers don't include stimulus spending. If they did, some of the cuts would be much bigger. For example, Community Services Block Grants got a billion dollars in stimulus funds in FY2010 that expired the next year. If you include that, the block grants shrank 60% from FY2010 to FY2012. \*\*If Congress cuts domestic programs and doesn't cut the Pentagon, these cuts could get much larger.

Source: Coalition on Human Needs, [“Self-Inflicted Wounds: Protecting Families and Our Economy from Bad Budget Choices,”](#) April 3, 2012, pages 25-37.



# We're Not Broke: Commonsense Cuts to Pentagon Spending

Proposed reforms	Potential annual savings (\$billions)
End the U.S. war in Afghanistan	86
Eliminate one-third of the U.S. military bases in Europe and Asia	10
<b><i>Eliminate military waste and unnecessary weapon systems:</i></b>	
Drastically reduce the nuclear warhead arsenal as a major step on the path to nuclear abolition	20
Stop R&D and procurement of unnecessary weapons	9
Eliminate two active Air Force wings and two carrier groups that are not needed to address current and probable future threats	8
Achieve savings from eliminating inefficiencies to reduce overall military spending, rather than increasing other Pentagon expenditures	28
Scale back outsourcing to military contractors by 15 percent	40
End Foreign Military Financing	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$198 billion a year</b>

“We’re Not Broke: A commonsense guide to avoiding the fiscal swindle while making the United States more equitable, green, and secure” (Institute for Policy Studies, December 12, 2012) recommends these military spending cuts as part of an \$881-billion-a-year budget balancing plan. IPS says we should “**Right-size the Pentagon to make the United States and the world more secure....** without hurting our national security largely by ending the war in Afghanistan, scaling back the sprawling network of overseas U.S. military bases, and scrapping obsolete and wasteful military programs” (p. 1).

## Military Profiteers Want to Cut Our Programs!

When you click on [Fix the Debt's website](#) you see eight ordinary working Americans. But according to "[Operation Fiscal Bluff](#)," a report from the Public Accountability Initiative, the \$60 million "Fix the Debt" campaign is a tool of the defense industry. "Fix the Debt" is calling for cutting the social safety net, not wasteful Pentagon spending. (They also call for *more* corporate tax breaks.) The report says that:

- 38 Fix the Debt leaders have ties to 43 companies with defense contracts totaling \$43.4 billion in 2012.** Fix the Debt leaders profiting from defense spending include the group's cochairs, steering committee members, and CEO council members; they have ties to these companies as board members, executives and CEOs, and lobbyists.
- Boeing** (with \$25.1 billion in defense contracts) **and Northrop Grumman** (with \$8.5 billion) **lead the pack.** Boeing CEO W. James McNerney, Jr. is on Fix the Debt's CEO Council, and Northrop Grumman board member Vic Fazio is on Fix the Debt's steering committee.
- Four other Fix the Debt-linked companies have more than \$1 billion in 2012 defense contracts: **GE** (\$2.1 billion), **Textron** (\$2 billion), **Honeywell** (\$1.5 billion), and **World Fuel Services** (\$1.2 billion).
- The 38 Fix the Debt leaders with ties to defense contractors drew at least \$401 million in compensation from the 43 companies in 2011 – an average of **\$10.6 million each**....



# Jobs, the Economy and Military Spending

**Argument:** Cutting the Pentagon will cost jobs.

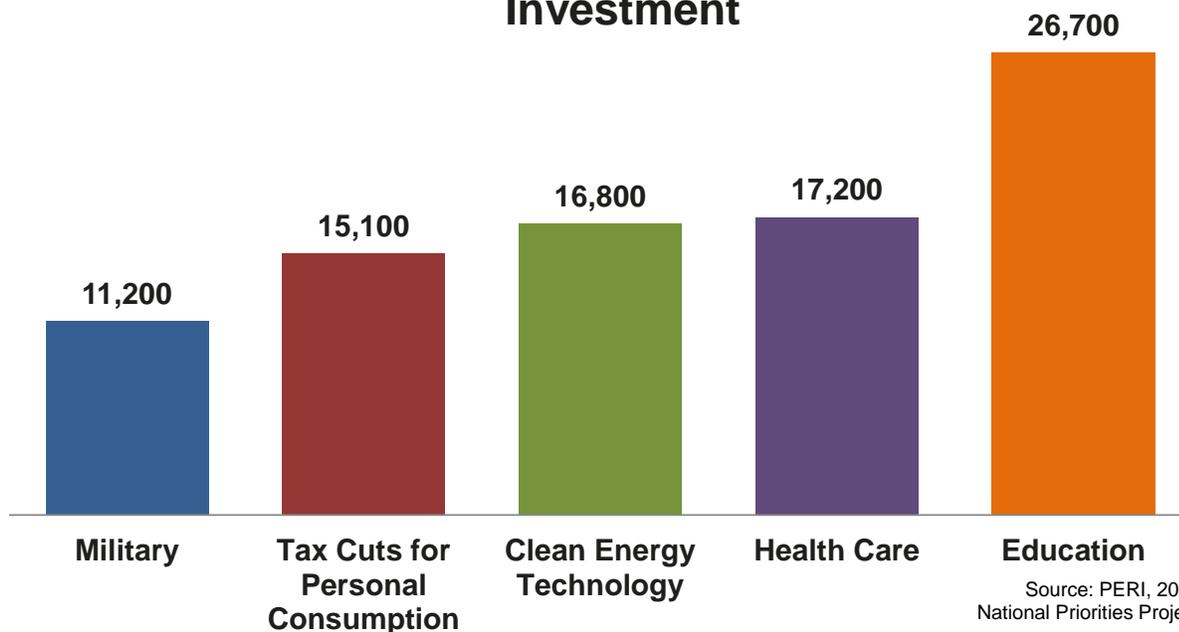
**Fact #1:** While true, this statement tells only part of the story. Virtually all federal investment creates jobs. Yet as a study by the Political Economy Research Institute (PERI) at the University of Massachusetts shows, when it comes to job creation, the military is a poor investment compared to other areas of the economy. As the chart below shows, every \$1 billion of federal investment in the military sector of the economy generates 11,200 jobs. Similar investments in other economic activities, however, generate even more jobs.

## Quick Facts



- Federal investment in the military produces fewer jobs than equal investment in a range of domestic initiatives.
- Cuts in domestic programs eliminate more jobs than similar cuts to the military.

## Jobs Created Per \$1 Billion in Federal Investment



[NOTE: Employment estimates include direct jobs (essentially contractors) indirect jobs, (their subcontractors) and induced jobs (those resulting from the economic activity stimulated in the community by direct and indirect employment)].

**Why does investment in military-related activities compare so poorly to other forms of federal investing in job creation?** There are several reasons military spending generates fewer jobs than other federal spending. One is that a lot of military-related funding is either spent overseas or on imported goods. Meanwhile most of the money spent on things like education is spent in the United States.

Second, military spending is more capital intensive (facilities, equipment, and materials) while spending in other areas is focused more on labor (people). It therefore has a smaller ripple effect on the economy than when you put money in the hands of people who then spend it.

**Fact #2:** While the PERI report shows that increases in funding for domestic spending are better job creators than spending on the military, the opposite is also no doubt true — domestic spending cuts will eliminate more jobs than equivalent cuts to the Pentagon.

## Sources and Resources

- “The U.S. Employment Effects Of Military And Domestic Spending Priorities: 2011 Update,” Political Economy Research Institute, December, 2011 [http://www.peri.umass.edu/fileadmin/pdf/published\\_study/PERI\\_military\\_spending\\_2011.pdf](http://www.peri.umass.edu/fileadmin/pdf/published_study/PERI_military_spending_2011.pdf)
- “Military Spending: A Poor Job Creator,” By William D. Hartung, Center for International Policy, January 2012 <http://www.ciponline.org/research/entry/military-spending-poor-job-creator>
- Top 10 Myths of the Jobs Argument Against Military Cuts By Miriam Pemberton, Research Fellow, Foreign Policy In Focus, August 14, 2012 [http://www.ips-dc.org/blog/top\\_10\\_myths\\_of\\_the\\_jobs\\_argument\\_against\\_military\\_cuts/pending](http://www.ips-dc.org/blog/top_10_myths_of_the_jobs_argument_against_military_cuts/pending)

# Veterans Funding — Cutting Military Spending Won't Hurt American Vets

**Argument:** Cutting the Pentagon budget will hurt our nation's veterans by reducing benefits.

**Fact:** It is a misperception that veterans' benefits are part of the annual defense budget — they're not. The Veterans Administration (VA) — created in 1930 — is an autonomous federal agency completely separate from the Defense Department. The discretionary portion of the VA budget is appropriated as part of the Military Construction, Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies appropriations act, not the defense appropriations bill.

[Note: Roughly 44 percent of the VA budget is discretionary spending and funds veterans' medical care. The remaining portion of the VA budget is mandatory spending, which funds primarily pensions and education benefits. And as part of the mandatory budget, this funding is relatively safe from spending cuts.]

**Argument:** Veterans funding has already been cut.

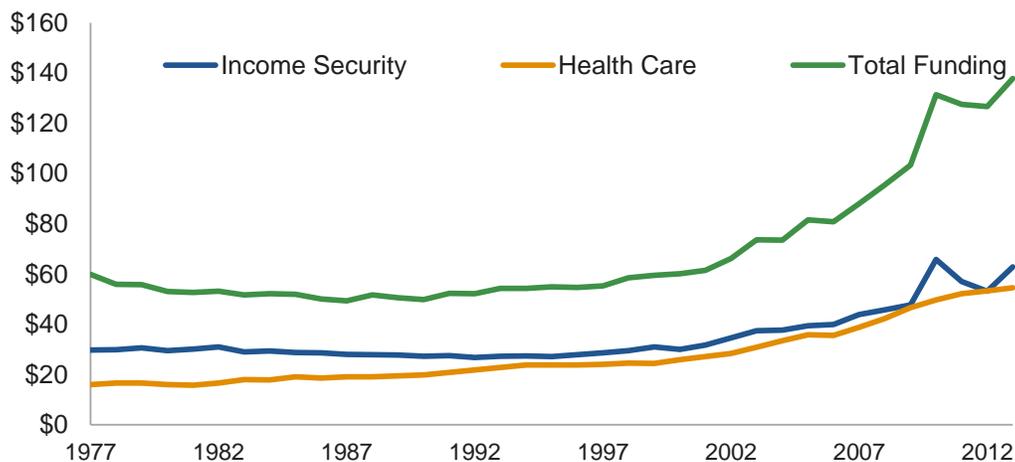
**Fact:** As the chart below shows, veterans funding has grown dramatically since the 1970s, and has almost doubled in the last decade alone. From FY2002 to FY2012 veterans funding grew from \$66 billion to \$127 billion (in inflation-adjusted 2013 dollars), a real increase of 91 percent.

## Quick Facts



- Funding for veterans programs is not tied to changes in the Pentagon's budget.
- Far from being cut, overall funding for veterans programs has grown by 91 percent over the last decade.
- While veterans' healthcare costs have increased over the years, they are not the primary cause of recent funding increases.

## Veterans Affairs Funding, 1997-2012 (In Constant FY2013 Dollars)

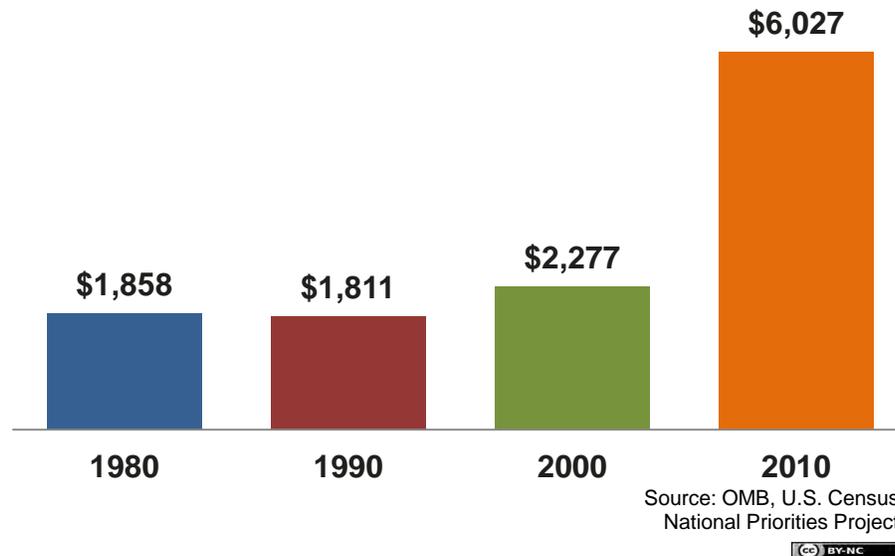


Source: Budget of the United States Government, Fiscal Year 2013, Historical Table 5.1  
National Priorities Project

**Argument:** It's not surprising VA funding is going up, given that more veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan are entering the system.

**Fact:** The number of veterans has actually decreased since the 1980's. And while veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are entering the VA system, as yet it is not in numbers large enough to offset the drop due to the passing of veterans from earlier wars. As a result, the amount of money in the VA budget per vet has increased, as shown in the chart below.

## Per Capita Funding for Veterans (Constant FY2013 Dollars)



**Argument:** Healthcare costs are rising for everyone, and vets require additional and more expensive care.

**Fact:** Veterans health care costs are rising, just like everyone else's. But as the first chart shows, the increase in health care costs has not been large enough to account for all the increases in the VA budget. This is not to imply that more funding automatically means better benefits, health care and services. And while overall funding has gone up, it may have not risen for a particular program. Some programs within the VA have actually been cut. And new veterans entering the VA may need different types and levels of care than their predecessors. For example, personnel leaving the military after service during the Iraq and Afghanistan wars have experienced long delays in registering for VA benefits. The impact of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) has become much more widely acknowledged, and the VA is facing the growing challenges of serving service personnel who have experienced limb amputations or head injuries and concussions.

## Sources and Resources

- Budget of the U.S. Government, FY2013, Historical Table 5.1—Budget Authority by Function and Subfunction: 1976–2017. <http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/budget/fy2013/assets/hist05z1.xls>
- Budget of the U.S. Government, FY2013, Historical Table 10.1-Gross Domestic Product and Deflators used in Historical Tables: 1940-2017. <http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/budget/fy2013/assets/hist10z1.xls>
- Budget of the U.S. Government, FY2013, Analytical Perspectives Table 32-1: Budget Authority and Outlays by Function, Category and Program. [http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/budget/fy2013/assets/32\\_1.pdf](http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/budget/fy2013/assets/32_1.pdf)

# Impact of Federal Spending on Communities of Color

*United for a Fair Economy*

## Overview

The U.S. economy is not a force of nature. It is the direct result of policy decisions about what to tax and what not to tax, as well as how to spend those tax dollars. Federal taxes and federal spending have significantly contributed to the modern surge in economic inequality since the 1980s, especially in regards to the racial wealth divide.

Communities of color have borne the brunt of our nation's history of racism. Although there have been many social and economic gains made for all races, people of color continue to be disproportionately left behind. Vast racial disparities still exist in wealth and income, education, employment, poverty, incarceration, and health. Extreme inequality continues to entrench racial disparities and further shrink the broad middle class that has been the foundation of a strong American economy and a cohesive society.

Economic inequality between white people and people of color will persist unless bold and intentional steps are taken to make meaningful progress towards racial equity, to sever the connection between race and poverty, and ultimately to eliminate the racial economic divide altogether.

## Wealth

- **The housing crash and ensuing Great Recession have shrunk the wealth of families of all races but has hurt families of color the most.** Between 2005 and 2009, the median white household saw its wealth decline by 16 percent, to \$113,149. Meanwhile, the median Black household saw its wealth decline by 53 percent, to \$5,677, and the median Latino household saw its wealth decline by a staggering 66 percent, to \$6,325. The economic downturn has only worsened the racial wealth gap.<sup>1</sup>

## Unemployment

- **Unemployment levels are higher for Black people and Latinos.** As of December 2011, the unemployment rate was 15.8 percent for Black individuals, 11.0 percent for Latinos, and 7.5 percent for whites.<sup>2</sup>
- **Due to pre-existing wealth disparities, Black people and Latinos depend on unemployment insurance in times of crisis more often than white people.** 16.4 percent of white households lack enough net worth to subsist for three months at the poverty level without income while 41.7 percent of Black people and 37.4 percent of Latinos are in that position.<sup>3</sup>
- **Pay freezes and cuts to the public workforce hurt the country as a whole but damage communities of color the most.** Black people are 30 percent more likely than the overall workforce to work in public sector jobs and they are 70 percent as likely to work for the federal government.<sup>4</sup> In the two years prior to September 2009, more than 110,000 state and local jobs were lost, including 40,000 teachers and 4,000 uniformed police officers and fire fighters.<sup>5</sup>
- **We can boost our economy by investing in unemployment insurance, states, and public infrastructure.** Extending unemployment benefits yields \$1.64 in economic stimulus for each dollar

## Quick Facts



- Cuts to public sector jobs have a greater impact on communities of color because Black people and Latinos tend to hold more public sector jobs than white people.
- High levels of unemployment in the Black and Latino communities increase their dependence on social safety net programs, including unemployment insurance, social security, and Food Stamps. It is imperative that the federal government place high priority on funding these programs in order to close the racial wealth gap.
- The federal budget plays a key role in supporting programs that will ultimately raise communities of color out of poverty and joblessness.

spent by the federal government. Federal aid to states produces \$1.36 and increased spending on public infrastructures yields \$1.59 in economic stimulus per dollar.<sup>6</sup>

## Social Safety Nets

- **Cutting public assistance programs will worsen economic inequalities throughout the country, and would be a direct assault on Black and Latino communities that are already plagued by poverty.** The poverty rates for Black people and Latinos are more than twice that of whites, and childhood poverty rates for Black children and Latinos are more than three times that of white children.<sup>7</sup>
- **Communities of color rely on Social Security benefits in old age.** Without Social Security, 53 percent of older Black people and 49 percent of older Latinos would be in poverty, compared to an elderly poverty rate of 20 percent for both Black people and Latinos with Social Security.<sup>8</sup>

## Healthcare

- **People of color are less likely to have health care coverage than whites.** Before the provisions of the 2010 Affordable Care Act were implemented, health care coverage rates for white people, Black people, and Latinos were 86.3 percent, 78.3 percent, and 68.0 percent respectively.<sup>9</sup>

## Sources and Resources

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2. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, December 2011 Employment Situation News Release, January 6, 2012. [http://www.bls.gov/news.release/archives/empsit\\_01062012.htm](http://www.bls.gov/news.release/archives/empsit_01062012.htm), (accessed January 8, 2012).
3. "Unemployment Insurance, the Recession, and Race: A Kirwan Background Report," Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity, Ohio State University, 2010, [http://nationbuilder.s3.amazonaws.com/theblackinstitute/pages/67/attachments/original/unemployment\\_insurance\\_the\\_recession\\_and\\_race.pdf?1308529803](http://nationbuilder.s3.amazonaws.com/theblackinstitute/pages/67/attachments/original/unemployment_insurance_the_recession_and_race.pdf?1308529803).
4. Unpublished Center for Economic and Policy Research analysis of the Current Population Survey Outgoing Rotation Group.
5. Matt Sherman and Nathan Lane, "Cut Loose: State and Local Layoffs of Public Employees in the Current Recession," Center for Economic and Policy Research, 2009, <http://www.cepr.net/documents/publications/layoffs-2009-09.pdf>.
6. Mark M. Zandi, "Assessing the Macro Economic Impact of Fiscal Stimulus 2008," Moody's Economy.com, 2008, <http://www.economy.com/mark-zandi/documents/Stimulus-Impact-2008.pdf>.
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9. Original analysis of U.S. Census Bureau March Current Population Survey data.

# U.S. Military Spending vs. the World

## Overview

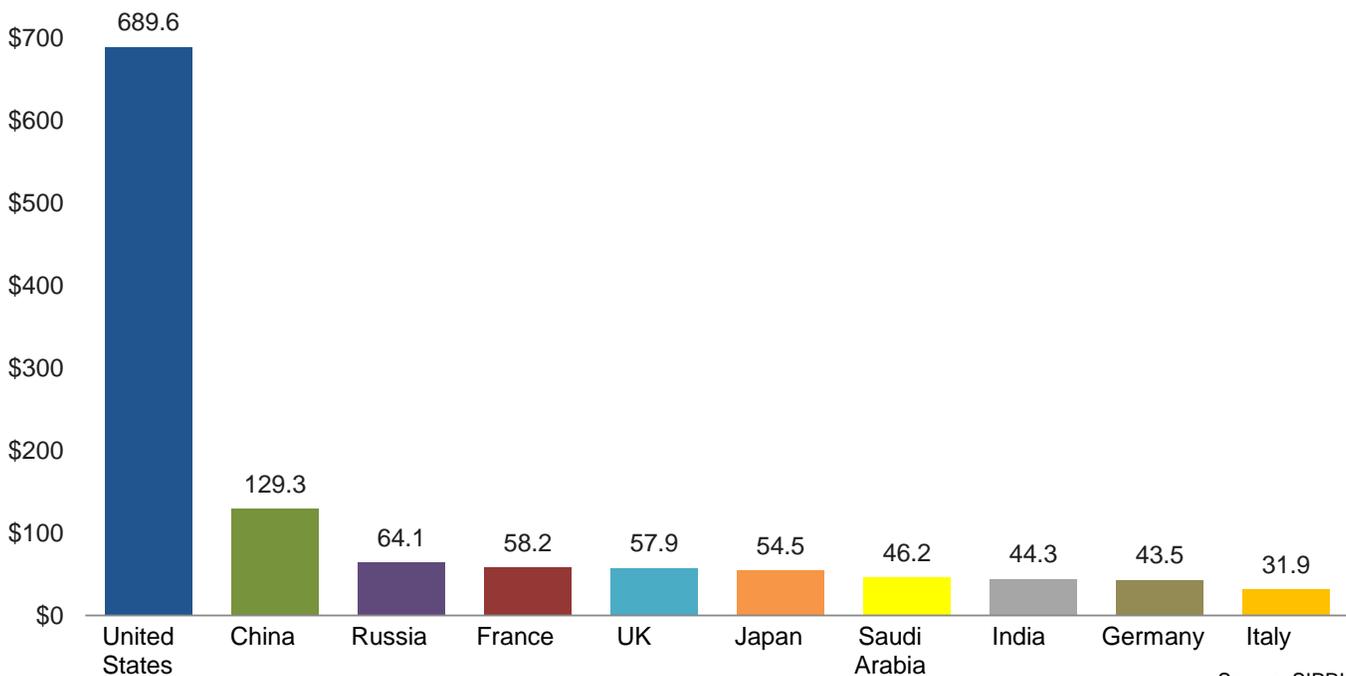
The United States is easily the global leader in military expenditures. World military spending in 2011, the most recent year for which data is available, reached just under \$1.6 trillion. The United States accounted for almost half of this total. Although accurate data for 2011 is not available for some of the countries labeled as the “axis of evil” or “rogue states,” it is likely that these countries — Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Sudan, and Syria — make up only about 1 percent of world military spending.

## Quick Facts



- The United States ranks #1 in the world for military expenditures.
- The United States accounts for 43 percent of total world military expenditures.
- U.S. military spending dwarfs the budget of the #2 country — China — which it outspends by more than 5 to 1.
- The United States and its NATO allies account for roughly two-thirds of total global military spending.
- U.S. military expenditures are greater than the total expenditures of the 16 next largest countries, combined.

**Top 10 Countries Ranked by Military Spending, 2011**  
(\$ in Billions)



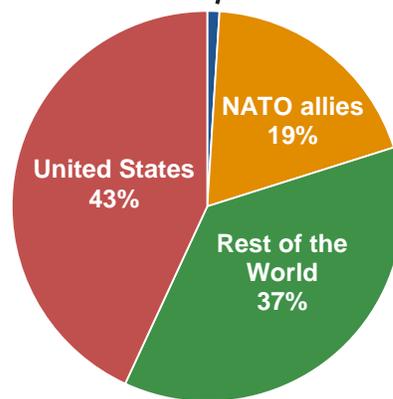
Source: SIPRI  
National Priorities Project



As the chart shows, the United States and its NATO allies account for roughly two-thirds of total global military spending. This doesn't include other U.S. allies — South Korea, Japan, Israel, et. al.

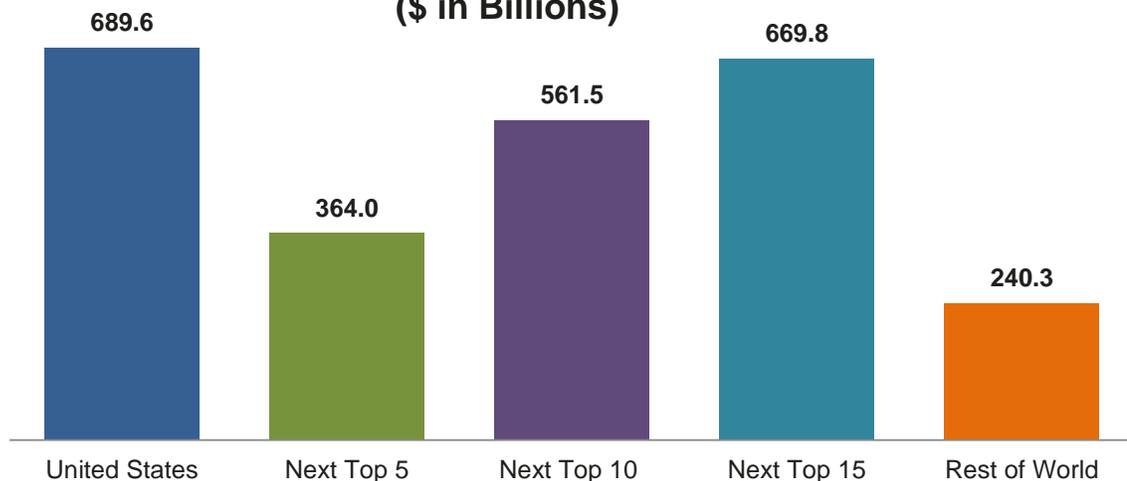
# World Military Spending, 2011

Cuba, Iran, N. Korea, Somalia, Sudan, Syria



Source: SIPRI  
National Priorities Project

## U.S. Military Spending Compared to Other Top Spenders, 2011 (\$ in Billions)



Source: SIPRI, National Priorities Project

### Sources and Resources

- Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SPIRI) "Military Expenditure Database" using constant (\$2010) prices.

NOTE: As in most years, the figures used by SIPRI for U.S. military spending shown here do not match official Defense Department figures. They are used so that comparisons between U.S. military spending and that of other countries reflect the same methodology and assumptions.

## Tools of Influence: The Military-Industrial Complex at Work

By William Hartung

# How to Talk About the Pentagon Budget

Rethink Media

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## Why do we have a Pentagon budget in the first place?

Most Americans believe the Pentagon budget makes our country *SAFER* and *STRONGER*. They believe that the goal of the Pentagon budget is to prevent an attack on the American people and strengthen America's role in the world. Understanding these two primary values is key as we discuss the Pentagon budget. Arguments that imply a reduced level of security or a trade-off between security and fiscal health are unpersuasive. All of our arguments should emphasize these two values: that a refocused Pentagon budget will make America *SAFER* and *STRONGER*.

## Talking about the Pentagon Budget

1. **Troops, troops, troops:** One of the public's greatest concerns, as evidenced in polling data, is that any talk of cuts to the military budget is perceived as negatively impacting troops. Americans understand the tides of war are receding, but they want to make sure our troops are taken care of.

**INSTEAD OF:** "It's time for us to cut the military budget."

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**SAY:** "We need to refocus money away from the bloated programs that don't make us any safer and put it toward the troops and veterans who have protected us."

2. **How to refer to the budget:** Whenever possible, we suggest using the phrase "Pentagon budget". The "military budget" connotes troops — and as we see above, the majority of Americans do not want to cut funding to soldiers. The "defense budget" connotes safety and security — cutting the "defense budget" implies that the country will be less safe. The "Pentagon budget" connotes bureaucracy, corruption, and out of date programs. Polling data shows that voters are twice as likely to support Pentagon budget cuts over military budget cuts or defense budget cuts.

**INSTEAD OF:** "The military budget doesn't keep us safe. It's time to cut it."

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**SAY:** "We need a Pentagon budget that addresses 21<sup>st</sup> century threats."

3. **Reshape the budget, not just cut it across the board:** The majority of American voters are split on whether they support cutting the Pentagon budget outright. Instead, the majority of Americans agree that it's time to refocus the budget on actual national security threats and make the budget more effective — even if that costs more money. Emphasize the importance of a budget that reflects our national security goals.

**INSTEAD OF:** "We need to make serious budget cuts."

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**SAY:** "We need to re-shift the budget to address our actual security needs and eliminate the waste."

4. **Partisan attacks fall flat:** Voters want a nonpartisan solution to our Pentagon budget problems instead of mudslinging. When discussing the Pentagon budget, emphasize that our side wants a practical, real

solution instead of excuses. Cite unexpected allies who support a realigned, more effective Pentagon budget.

**INSTEAD OF:** “Republicans are responsible for this defense budget and they should fix it.”

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**SAY:** “Secretary of Defense Panetta agrees that it’s time for all of us to come to the table with a practical solution to our bloated Pentagon budget.”

5. **Emphasize the existing negative feelings about Congress and defense lobbyists:** Voters resent the influence defense lobbyists have had on Congress and also believe Congress has been using the Pentagon budget as a political tool. Whenever possible, highlight the detrimental effects of lobbying efforts and “playing politics” with our national security.

**INSTEAD OF:** “The defense industry may lose some jobs, but it would be better off for us in the long run.”

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**SAY:** “Our military budget today is determined by politicians and the lobbyists and special interests, not safety. Decisions should be made based on what’s best for our military, not politics and profits for special interests.”

6. **It’s not enough to cut the Pentagon budget to solve the deficit:** Voters are less convinced that we should cut the Pentagon to resolve the deficit. Instead, arguments about deficit reduction and Pentagon spending should emphasize the importance of American economic strength as the foundation for our national security.

**INSTEAD OF:** “The country is in debt and we need to cut the military budget to get back on track.”

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**SAY:** “Our economic security is the foundation for our national security. These enormous Pentagon budgets actually hurt us by adding to the deficit, weakening the economy, and making us less of a competitive player in the world market.”

7. **Sequestration:** Voters perceive sequestration as overwhelmingly negative and dangerous for our national security. Our elected officials, Pentagon spokespersons, and most members of the press reinforce this sentiment. Instead of emphasizing that our Pentagon budget would be fine even if sequestration were to happen, emphasize that this was designed for Congress to make the tough decisions to get our budget back on track and that all programs should be on the table.

**INSTEAD OF:** “Sequestration would really just bring us back to the spending levels we had in 2007 — it’s not so bad.”

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**SAY:** “If sequestration is truly bad for our national security, then we need to come to a nonpartisan solution to prevent it. Enough of the politics and catering to defense lobbyists. Let’s sit at the same table and come to a more practical solution than sticking our heads in the sand.”

**REMEMBER:**

- People remember stories, not numbers.

- Get “inside the circle” with your audience. Share things about yourself that make you both relatable and trustworthy to the people you’re connecting with.
- Don’t try to fit all seven points into an op-ed or an interview. Pick two or three that you feel most comfortable speaking on and go back to those points again and again.
- Use metaphors and similes to explain your points. (“Our Pentagon budget has been coasting with no one at the wheel.”)
- Frame a choice for your audience. (“We can either avoid tough decisions or get our Pentagon budget back on track.”)