

Pentagon Bloat Threatens Community Needs

The Pentagon Budget

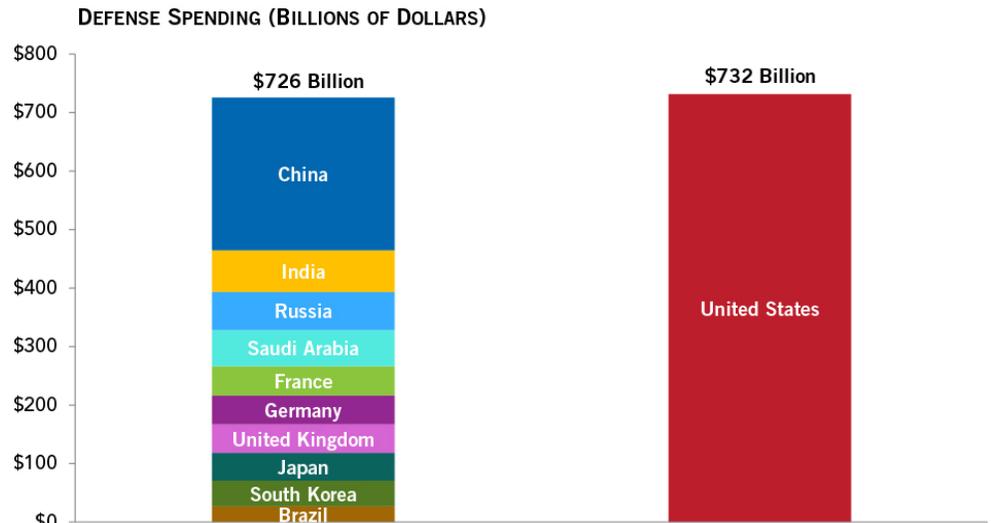
The U.S. spends more on its military than the next ten countries combined.

These numbers don't include the budgets for the C.I.A., N.S.A., and Department of Homeland Security.

Such consistently massive military budgets have been funding wars and overseas operations that disproportionately target and harm people of color around the world. All while simultaneously eating up funding for critical programs here at home, which then takes a greater toll on communities of color.



The United States spends more on defense than the next 10 countries combined



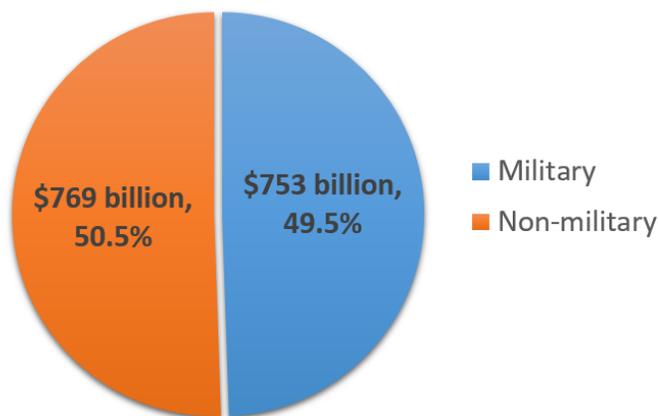
SOURCE: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, *SIPRI Military Expenditure Database*, April 2020.
 NOTES: Figures are in U.S. dollars converted from local currencies using market exchange rates. Data for the United States are for fiscal year 2019, which ran from October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2019. Data for the other countries are for calendar year 2019. The source for this chart uses a definition of defense spending that is more broad than budget function 050 and defense discretionary spending.
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Skewed Spending Priorities

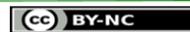
The discretionary budget, a portion of the total budget that Congress decides how to allocate on a yearly basis, shows you how skewed our government's priorities are.

Even as we face historic pandemic and another economic crisis, the Biden administration requested nearly half of the budget should be spent on the military industrial complex. He requested a whopping \$13 billion more for the military than Trump did.

Biden FY 2022 Discretionary Budget Request, \$1.52 Trillion



nationalpriorities.org



Source: Office of Management & Budget, National Priorities Project

Just a Few of the Countless Possible Cuts



There are many possible cuts to be made to the bloated Pentagon budget. Particularly at this time of dueling crises, we should be prioritizing human needs over the military industrial complex. **We should push the Biden administration and Congress to stop wasting money on:**

- **Lockheed Martin’s Failed F-35 Jet:** Starting at around \$100 million per plane, numerous malfunctions over the years have ballooned costs to an estimated \$1.7 trillion for this program’s life cycle. This plane has received a reputation as notoriously flawed and carries dangers for those flying it — including potential for fatal whiplash, occasional oxygen deprivation, and a “serious” risk of death during ejections. Earlier this year, the Air Force essentially admitted this jet is not what they need.
- **New Nuclear Weapons:** \$1.7 trillion is set to be spent on new nuclear weapons including “low yield” weapons and a nuclear sea-launched cruise missile. These raise the risk of accidental nuclear war. Plans to upgrade the entire land-based leg of the nuclear triad, the most destabilizing portion of our nuclear arsenal, are also in the works with an estimated \$264 billion price tag.
- **So-Called “Optimization” of Naval Ships:** The Navy’s long-standing Littoral Combat Ship program has run into issues with not only development cost overruns, but also design-flaws and reliability. Major propulsion flaws found in a whole class of the ship caused the USS Detroit to be towed into port last fall. Ballooning operating costs — estimated as high as \$70 million per ship — should make us rethink this program’s future, as well.

Get Involved

- **Contact your Senators and your Representative** and let them know your thoughts.
 - Ask members of Congress to cut the topline Pentagon budget and redirect those funds to critical human needs. Ask members to tell the Biden-Harris administration to reduce Pentagon spending in their proposed budget.
 - To find your member of Congress, go to www.usa.gov/elected-officials.
 - Call the Capitol switchboard at 202-224-3121 to get connected with their offices.
- **Contact the Biden administration** and let them know your thoughts.
 - Call the White House switchboard at 202-456-1414 or fill out a form online at www.whitehouse.gov/contact.
- **Write and submit letters to the editor** in response to articles on Pentagon spending
 - Letters to the editor can be a powerful way to educate the public and influence public opinion. Keep your letter short and to the point and critique or add to a published article.