



Training Materials

Presented by Peace Action and National Priorities Project



Move the Money Training Materials

All Move the Money materials are available online at: nationalpriorities.org/publications/2013/move-money/

INCORPORATED INTO TRAINING

Used in Understanding Federal Budget Priorities

Spending Your Nickels

- Where Your Federal Income Tax Dollar Went (blank, to be enlarged) (see Appendix)
- Where Your Federal Income Tax Dollar Went (complete) (see Appendix)
- National Priorities Project Budget Categories

Elephants in the Room

- Jobs, the Economy, and Military Spending
- Veterans Funding — Cutting Military Spending Won't Hurt American Vets
- Homeland Security — It's Not Just About the Military
- What is "Smart Security?" The Unified Security Budget
- Less Spending, More Security — SDTF Report

Let's Play Budget Jeopardy!

- Game board (see Appendix)
- MC list of questions and answers

Used in Impact of Federal Spending on Communities Of Color

- Impact of Federal Spending on Communities of Color (United for a Fair Economy)

The Dynamics of the Unfolding National Debate

- Federal Budget Timeline: Opportunities to Take Action

BACKGROUND MATERIAL

Fact Sheets

- Myth — Military Spending is Going Down (NPP)
- The Discretionary Budget — Military vs. Non-Military (NPP)
- Sequestration — What is it? Why do I Care? (NPP)
- U.S. Military Spending vs. the World (NPP)
- Tools of Influence: The Military-Industrial Complex at Work (William Hartung)
- How to Talk About the Pentagon Budget (ReThink Media)

Action Resources

- How to Train a Bird-Dog (Peace Action)
- How to Bird-Dog the Candidates (Peace Action)
- Birddogging and the News Media (Peace Action)
- How to Organize A Town Hall Meeting (Peace Action)
- How to Write a Letter to the Editor (Peace Action)

- Passing Local Resolutions on National Issues: Why is it important? (Peace Action)

APPENDICES

- Appendix 1: Where Your Federal Income Tax Dollar Went (blank, to be enlarged)
- Appendix 2: Where Your Federal Income Tax Dollar Went (complete)
- Appendix 3: Jeopardy Game Board
- Appendix 4: NPP's "Talking Paycheck" video
- Appendix 5: NPP's "Pentagon 101" webinar slides (in PowerPoint)
- Appendix 6: "Pentagon 101" narrative for presenters

National Priorities Project's Budget Categories

There are literally thousands of spending items in the federal budget. For simplicity's sake National Priorities Project breaks the federal budget down into thirteen general spending categories. These are NPP categories, and do not necessarily correspond exactly to specific items within the budget.



Military: Funding for the Department of Defense, the nuclear weapons-related activities of the Department of Energy, and international security assistance.

Health: Discretionary funding for Medicare, Medicaid, SCHIP and other health-related expenses. *NOTE: These are administrative costs related to Medicare, not benefit payments.*

Interest on Federal Debt: Annual payments on borrowing resulting from previous deficits. *This is a "must pay" item.*

Unemployment & Labor: Discretionary funding for job training, disability, retirement, unemployment insurance, and Social Security. *NOTE: These are administrative costs related to Social Security, not benefit payments.*

Government: Commerce, law enforcement, overhead costs of federal government and undistributed offsetting receipts. Excludes repayments to the Toxic Asset Relief Program (TARP).

Veterans' Benefits: Health care, housing and income and benefits for veterans.

Food & Agriculture: Agriculture and nutritional assistance, including Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC).

Housing & Community: Housing assistance and credit, community development and services supporting social need.

Education: Elementary, secondary, higher and vocational education, Head Start and Pell Grants.

Energy & Environment: Natural resources and environment, supply and use of energy and science and research activities. Clean energy technologies.

Transportation: Development and support of air, water, ground and other transportation.

International Affairs: Diplomatic, international development and humanitarian activities abroad. *NOTE: Does not include foreign military assistance.*

Science: Science and research activities.

Jobs, the Economy and Military Spending

Argument: Cutting the Pentagon will cost jobs.

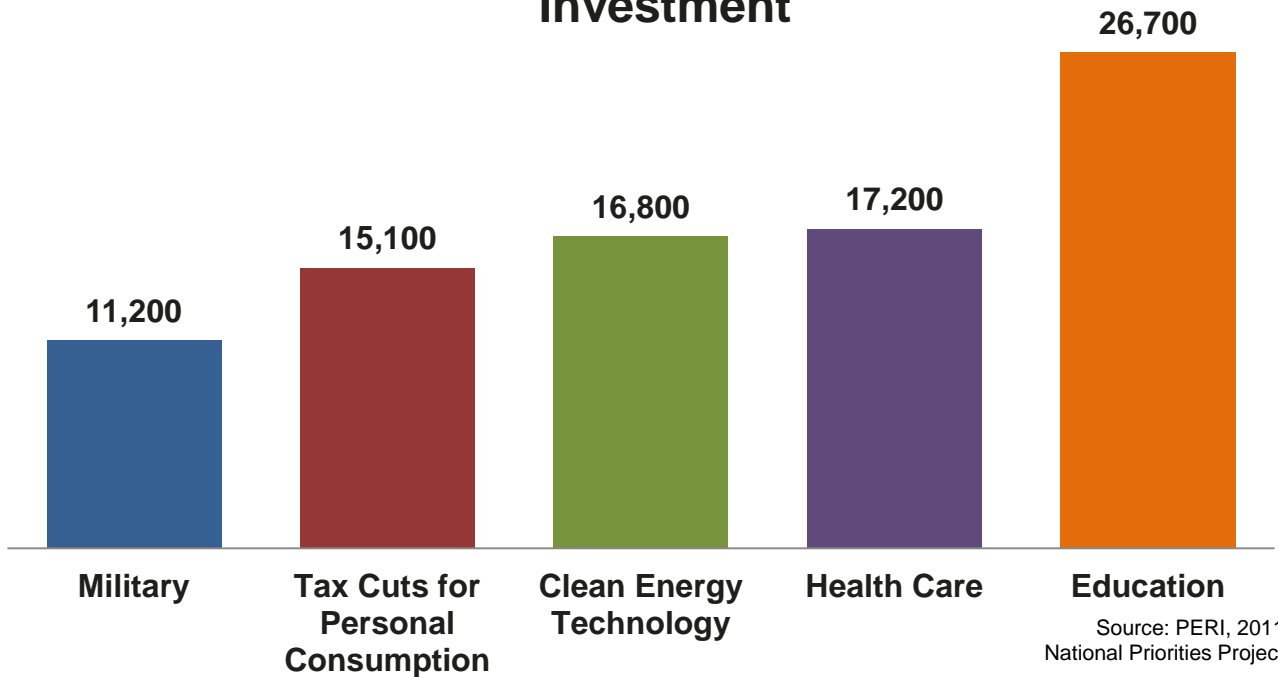
Fact #1: While true, this statement tells only part of the story. Virtually all federal spending creates jobs. Yet as a study by the Political Economy Research Institute (PERI) at the University of Massachusetts shows, when it comes to job creation, the military is a poor investment compared to other 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
- “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

Veterans Funding: Cutting Military Spending Won't Hurt 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 defense budget — they're not. The Veterans Administration (VA) — created in 1930 — is an autonomous federal agency completely separate from the Defense Department.

Roughly 42 percent of the VA budget is discretionary spending and principally funds veterans' medical care. The remaining portion of the VA budget is mandatory spending and supports 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 FY2003 to FY2013 veterans funding grew from \$75 billion to \$139 billion (in inflation-adjusted 2013 dollars), a real increase of 84 percent.

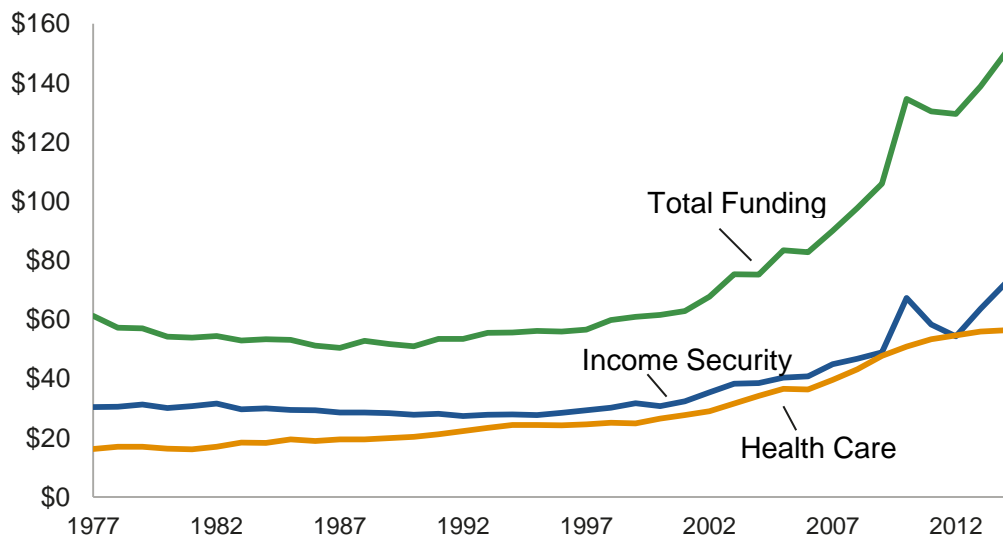
Quick Facts



- Funding for veterans programs is not tied to changes in the Pentagon's budget.
- Far from being cut, overall funding for veterans programs grew by 84 percent between 2003 and 2013.
- While veterans' healthcare costs have increased over the years, they are not the primary cause of recent funding increases.

Veterans Affairs Funding, 1997-2014

(in billions of constant FY2014 dollars)



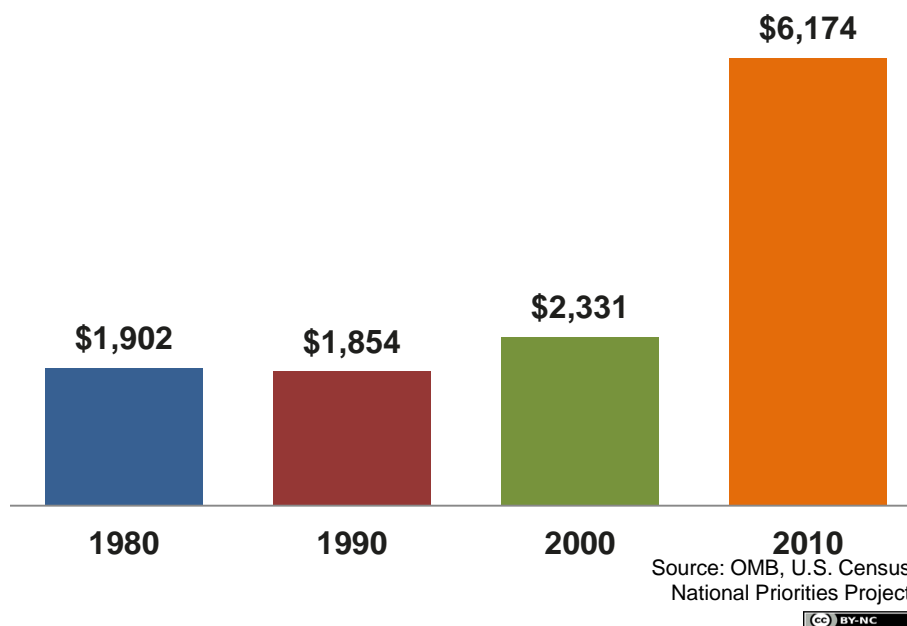
Source: Budget of the United States Government, Fiscal Year 2014, Historical Table 5.1
National Priorities Project



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 (FY2014 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

Homeland Security: It's Not Just About the Military

Argument: Cutting funding for defense will make us more vulnerable to terrorist attacks.

Fact: While the Pentagon's budget does contribute to homeland security funding, the military actually plays a small role in reducing the threat of terrorism to the United States. The Pentagon will contribute roughly \$17 billion to the \$73 billion fiscal year 2014 funding request for homeland security. This money funds two main activities — flying air-defense missions over U.S. territories and major public events in the United States, and providing security at U.S. military installations, both home and abroad, at U.S. embassies and foreign services missions around the world. The Pentagon also contributes intelligence information to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and other federal agencies, but this funding is not generally included in calculating the Defense Department's share of homeland security spending.

Overview

There is some confusion about the meaning of "homeland security." At the federal level, the phrase covers a very broad range of activities conducted by a number of federal agencies. In fact, funding for homeland security flows through literally dozens of federal agencies, so tracking homeland security funding is complicated.

For example, of the \$73 billion requested for homeland security by the White House in FY2014, the largest share — \$35.8 billion — is funded through the Department of Homeland Security. The remaining \$37 billion is funded through various other federal accounts, including the Department of Defense (\$17 billion), the Department of Health and Human Services (\$4.1 billion), and the Department of Justice (\$4 billion).

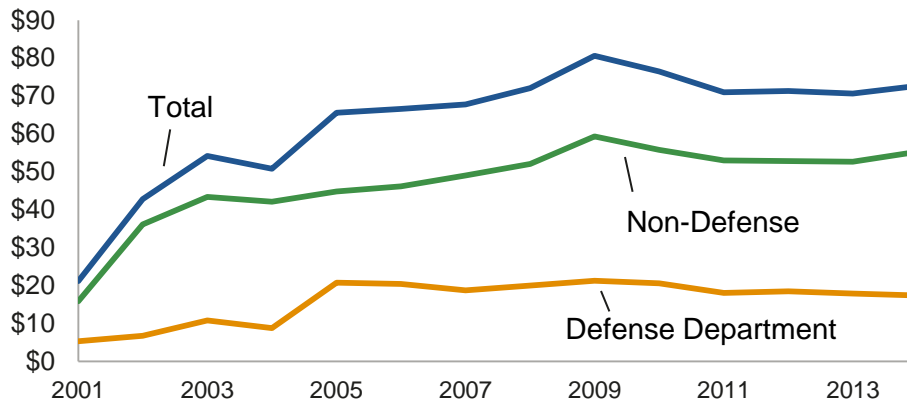
Quick Facts



- Pentagon funding contributes little to protecting the United States from terrorist attacks.
- Homeland security funding grew by 233 percent between 2001 and 2013.
- The Department of Homeland Security has jurisdiction over other federal agencies including the U.S. Coast Guard and FEMA.

Homeland Security Funding Since 9/11

(in billions of FY2014 dollars)



Source: OMB Materials, Assorted Years
National Priorities Project



The U.S. government will spend \$883.5 billion on homeland security following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, through the end of fiscal year 2014. Of this amount, \$163.8 billion was part of the Pentagon's base budget, while the remaining \$658.5 billion was funded through agencies other than the Pentagon. Over that period, total homeland security funding grew by 233 percent, after adjusting for inflation.

Background About the Department of Homeland Security

Congress created the Department of Homeland Security in November 2002 and the agency officially opened its doors on March 1, 2003. Yet funding for homeland security predates the creation of DHS by many years. Meanwhile, while the activities of DHS contribute to “national security” in the traditional sense of defending the nation against a military or terrorist threat, DHS also has jurisdiction over the U.S. Coast Guard and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and is therefore involved in a number of other critical functions, including responding to natural disasters.

Sources and Resources

- Budget of the United States Government, FY2013, "Appendix--Homeland Security Mission Funding by Agency and Budget Account." http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/budget/fy2013/assets/homeland_supp.pdf

What is “Smart” Security? The Unified Security Budget

Argument: In an uncertain world having a strong military is essential to U.S. national security.

Fact: The United States has by far the world’s most powerful military and the largest military budget. By reallocating a very small amount of this money we can greatly increase our ability to prevent international conflict and make us safer at home.

Much of the foreign policy establishment, including former Defense Secretary Robert Gates, believes conflict prevention is under-funded. In 2007, for example, Secretary Gates commented that funding for non-military foreign affairs “remains disproportionately small relative to what we spend on the military and to the importance of such capabilities.”

Overview

Foreign Policy In Focus, a program of the Institute for Policy Studies, publishes the Unified Security Budget (USB) annually. The July 2011 USB states, “since 2004, the Unified Security Task Force has made the case for a rebalancing of United States security resources among the accounts funding offense (military forces), defense (homeland security), and prevention (non-military international engagement). The goal is to strengthen our capacity to prevent and resolve conflict by non-military means ...”

Each year the report’s analysis has found that existing security investment is poorly balanced, with an emphasis on the military rather than on homeland security and preventive diplomacy. The USB finds that military funding is excessive and often misdirected, while essential non-military components of U.S. national security go wanting.

The USB proposes reallocating funds among the three security “baskets” of “offensive,” “defensive” and “preventive” spending while reducing overall security spending primarily through cuts in the Pentagon budget. As the charts below shows, the USB proposes a shifting of funding from military forces (offense) into non-military international engagement (prevention). Funding for homeland security (defense) remains relatively stable.

The USB’s proposals would generate more than \$77 billion in savings within the Pentagon without negatively impacting the readiness and capabilities of the U.S. military. These savings could support \$28 billion in reallocated spending to address critical underfunded non-military security programs. Of the remaining \$50 billion in savings, half could be allocated to job creation through public investment, while the other half would actually help reduce the deficit.

Quick Facts



- A new, smarter approach to national security can make the United States safer, and would cost less than the current military budget.
- Through minimal reductions in military spending, the U.S. could increase spending to address critical underfunded non-military security programs, invest in job creation and actually help reduce the deficit.

Background on the Unified Security Budget

“A Unified Security Budget (USB) for the United States” draws on a task force whose members are experts in U.S. security spending and military and foreign policy. The USB’s proposals to cut military spending are based largely on the recommendations of the Sustainable Defense Task Force (SDTF), a group of national security experts who have outlined ways to cut nearly \$1 trillion in military spending over a decade.

Sources and Resources

- Report of the Task Force on a Unified Security Budget for the United States, October 2012. http://www.fpif.org/reports/unified_security_budget_fy2013
- “Debt, Deficits, and Defense,” Report of the Sustainable Defense Task Force, July 2010. <http://www.comw.org/pda/fulltext/1006SDTFreport.pdf>
- “Remarks as Delivered by Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates,” Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas, November 26, 2007. <http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1199>

Less Spending, More Security: Report of the Sustainable Defense Task Force

Overview

The Sustainable Defense Task Force released its report, “Debt, Deficits and Defense: A Way Forward,” in June, 2010. The Sustainable Defense Task Force was formed in response to a request from a bipartisan group of House members lead by Rep. Barney Frank (D-MA). Its goal was to explore possible defense budget contributions to the deficit reduction efforts of President Obama’s 2010 National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform that would not compromise U.S. national security.

The Task Force report looked only at the Pentagon’s annual “base” budget. It did not include any recommendations related to the cost of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. The report’s combined recommendations cut \$960 billion over ten years, an average annual reduction of roughly 16 percent below current spending levels.

The Task Force used a specific set of criteria to identify savings that could be achieved. The report focuses on:

- Pentagon programs that are based on unreliable or unproven technologies,
- Missions that exhibit a poor cost-benefit payoff and capabilities that are not cost-effective or are of limited utility,
- Weapons and capabilities that don’t match or substantially exceed current and emerging military threats, and
- Ways to provide needed capabilities and weapons at lower cost through management reforms.

The Task Force looked at six areas where savings could be achieved by cutting or eliminating Pentagon programs, changing the size and structure of the military, improving Pentagon management and operations, and reducing personnel costs.

“Rethink, Reset, Reform:” The Task Force acknowledged that while meaningful, these changes are not part of a comprehensive national security strategy. For the longer term, putting America’s defense establishment on a more sustainable path will require new thinking about our nation’s security commitments and goals to focus on what concerns us the most and what we most need to meet these goals. We need to think more broadly about the various tools — military and non-military — that are available to promote our national security, how to use them more cost-effectively, and we must reform the Pentagon’s procurement system so that it is more likely to provide affordable programs that meet actual security threats.

Quick Facts

- We can make our nation more secure by focusing on the actual current and future threats to U.S. national security.
- By rethinking and refocusing our national security goals, we can generate almost \$1 trillion in savings from military spending.



Estimated Annual Savings From Task Force Recommendations

(“National Defense” Function 050 in Billions of 2010 Dollars)

Fiscal Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2011-20
Savings	21	53	70	84	105	114	123	134	129	127	960

Options for Savings in Defense

Strategic Capabilities (Nuclear weapons and Dept. of Energy, missile defense, space)

1. Eliminate bombers from our nuclear forces; cancel the Trident II missile; and reduce the U.S. nuclear arsenal to 1000 deployed warheads, 7 “Ohio” missile submarines, and 160 Minuteman missiles [Saves \$113.5 billion].
2. Limit modernization of nuclear weapons infrastructure and research [Saves \$26 billion].
3. Selectively curtail missile defense & space spending [Saves \$55 billion].

Conventional Forces (The Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force and their equipment)

4. Reduce troops in Europe and Asia, cut size of force by 50,000 [Saves \$80 billion].
5. Reverse the buildup of Army & Marine forces related to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan [Saves \$147 billion].
6. Reduce size of the U.S. Navy fleet to 230 ships [Saves \$126.6 billion].
7. Retire two Navy aircraft carriers and naval air wings [Saves \$50 billion].
8. Retire two Air Force fighter wings, reduce F-35 fighter purchases [Saves \$40.3 billion].

Procurement and R&D (Weapons development and acquisition)

9. Cancel USAF F-35 fighter, buy replacement [Saves \$47.9 billion].
10. Cancel Navy & Marine Corps F-35 fighter, buy replacement [Saves \$9.85 billion].
11. Cancel MV-22 Osprey aircraft, field alternatives [Saves \$10-12 billion].
12. Delay KC-X Airborne Tanker, interim upgrade of some KC-135s [Saves \$9.9 billion].
13. Cancel Expeditionary Fighting Vehicle, field alternatives [Saves \$8-9 billion].
14. Reduce total spending on research & development [Saves \$50 billion].

Personnel Costs

15. Reform military compensation [Saves \$55 billion].
16. Reform DoD’s health care system [Saves \$60 billion].
17. Reduce military recruiting expenditures as wars recede [Saves \$5 billion].

Maintenance and Supply Systems (Logistical support network)

18. Improve efficiency of military depots, commissaries, and exchanges [Saves \$13 billion].

Command, Support, and Infrastructure

(Administrative support network)

19. Require savings in command, support, and infrastructure commensurate with a smaller force with less equipment [Saves \$100 billion].

Sources and Resources

- “Debt, Deficits, and Defense,” Report of the Sustainable Defense Task Force, July 10, 2010. <http://www.comw.org/pda/fulltext/1006SDTFreport.pdf>
- Report of the Task Force on a Unified Security Budget for the United States July, 2011. http://www.fpif.org/reports/unified_security_budget_fy2012

Jeopardy List of Questions and Answers

Let's Play Budget Jeopardy!

These are the answers and questions to be used by the Emcee during Budget Jeopardy. They are the same as those on the Jeopardy board, and are included here for the Emcee's convenience.

Federal Budget 101

\$100

The Answer is... Each February this branch of the federal government releases a budget proposal for the coming fiscal year.

The Question: What is the White House? (also acceptable, "The President," "The Executive Branch")

\$200

The Answer is... This non-binding legislation sets overall spending caps used by the House and Senate as their spending "blueprint."

The Question: What is the Budget Resolution?

\$300

The Answer is... It is the term for the actual funding legislation that must be enacted by Congress and signed by the president as part of the annual budget process.

The Question: What is an appropriations bill?

"Don't Have a 'CoW' " (The Cost of Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan)

\$100

The Answer is... If you GOOGLE the phrase "cost of war," this is the number one website that pops up.

The Question: What is NPP's "costofwar.com?"

\$200

The Answer is... Until recently, this funding was not included in the Pentagon's annual budget.

The Question: What is war funding?

\$300

The Answer is... \$1.44 Trillion

The Question: What is the total cost of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan to date?

“We Are the World” (U.S. Military Spending vs. the World)

\$100

The Answer is... This nation accounts for almost 40 percent of global military spending.

The Question: What is the United States?

\$200

The Answer is... The United States, together with this group of allies, account for two-thirds of total global military spending.

The Question: What is NATO?

\$300

The Answer is... This nation has the second largest military budget in the world, and is still outspent by the United States by more than 4 to 1.

The Question: What is China?

“The Pentagon”

\$100

The Answer is... This is the informal name for the Department of Defense, and also the building where much of it is located.

The Question: What is the Pentagon?

\$200

The Answer is... The budget for this federal agency accounts for more than half of the funding approved by Congress each year.

The Question: What is the Pentagon?

\$300

The Answer is... This federal agency has never successfully completed an audit.

The Question: What is the Pentagon?

“Elephants”

\$100

The Answer is... Name one area of federal investment that generates more jobs per \$1 billion invested than the military?

The Question: What is education? Health care? Clean energy?

\$200

The Answer is... True or False? U.S. military spending has been cut in recent years.

The Question: What is “True?”

\$300

The Answer is... Contrary to popular belief, benefits for this group are not funded through the Pentagon budget

The Question: Who are veterans?

“FINAL JEOPARDY” QUESTION

The Category is “Pentagon Spending”

The Answer is... The City of XXX contributed how much to the total Pentagon budget for FY2012?

The Question: What is \$XXX?

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.¹

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.²
- **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.³
- **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.⁴ 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.⁵
- **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.⁶

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.⁷
- **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.⁸

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.⁹

Sources and Resources

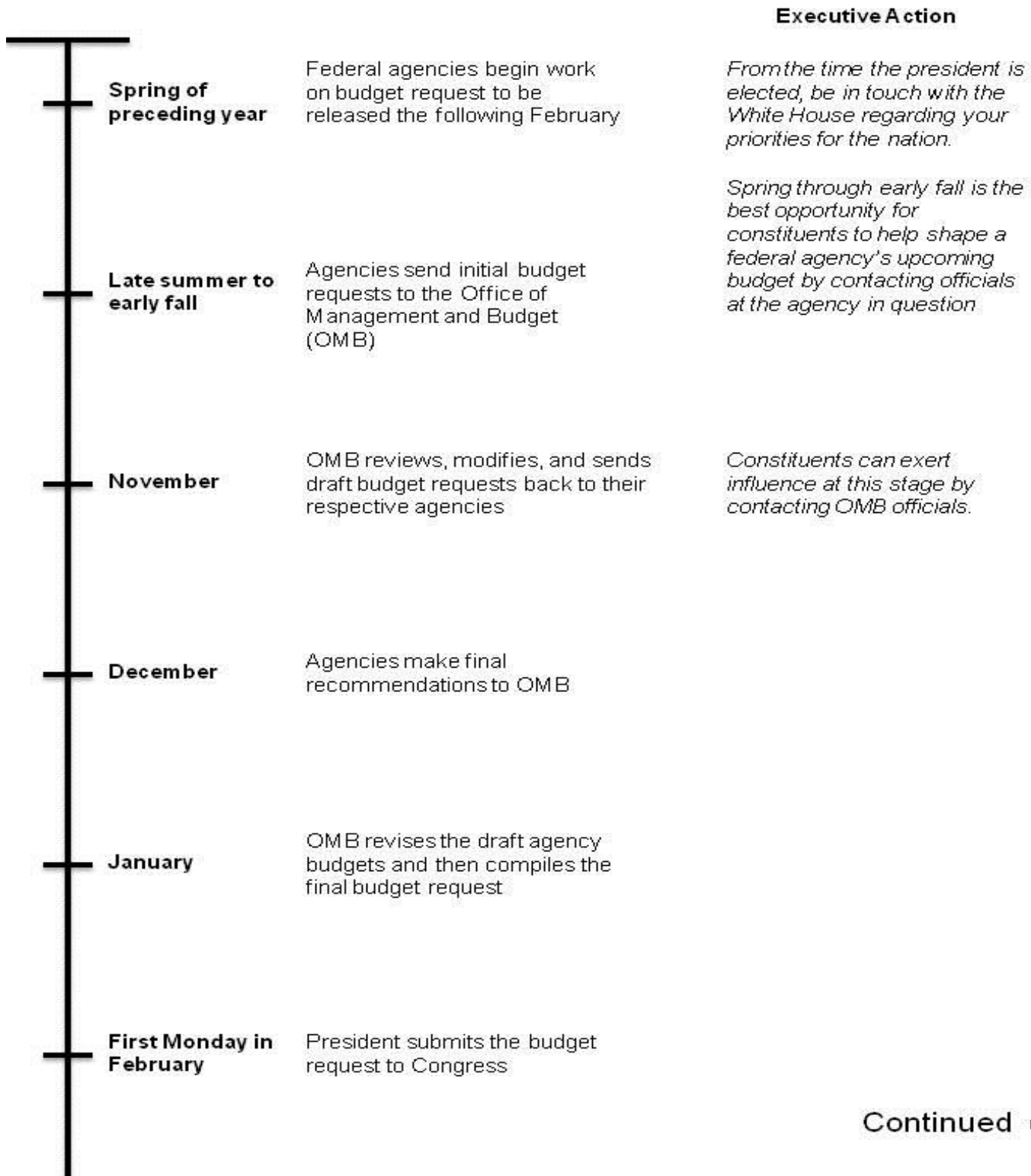
1. Richard Fry, Rakesh Kochhar, and Paul Taylor, "Wealth Gaps Rise to Record Highs between Whites, Blacks and Hispanics." Pew Research Center, July 26, 2011, <http://pewresearch.org/pubs/2069/housing-bubble-subprime-mortgages-hispanics-blacks-household-wealth-disparity> (accessed January 6, 2012).
2. 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, (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.
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>.
7. Christian E. Weller, "Economic Snapshot for December 2010: Briefing Paper," Center for American Progress, last updated December 13, 2010, <http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2010/12/econsnap1210.html>.
8. Miriam King, et al., Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, Current Population Survey: Version 3.0. [Machine-readable database], University of Minnesota, 2010, <http://cps.ipums.org/cps/index.shtml>.
9. Original analysis of U.S. Census Bureau March Current Population Survey data.

The Federal Budget Timeline: Opportunities to Take Action

The annual budget process offers a number of opportunities to make your feelings heard about our government's spending priorities. Here's a timeline of the budget process, with information about the best opportunities to shape the outcome.



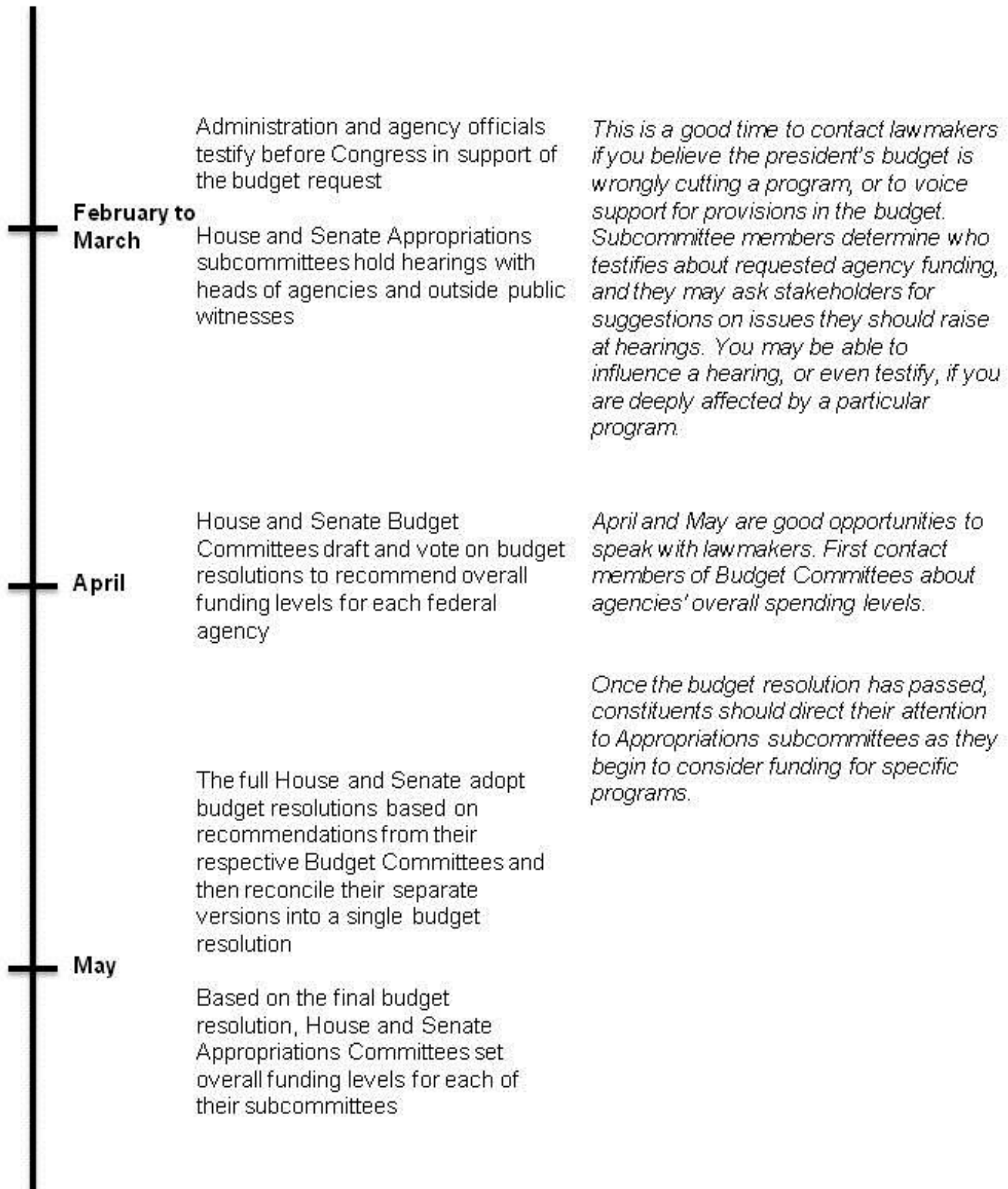
Opportunities to Take Action



Continued →

Opportunities to Take Action

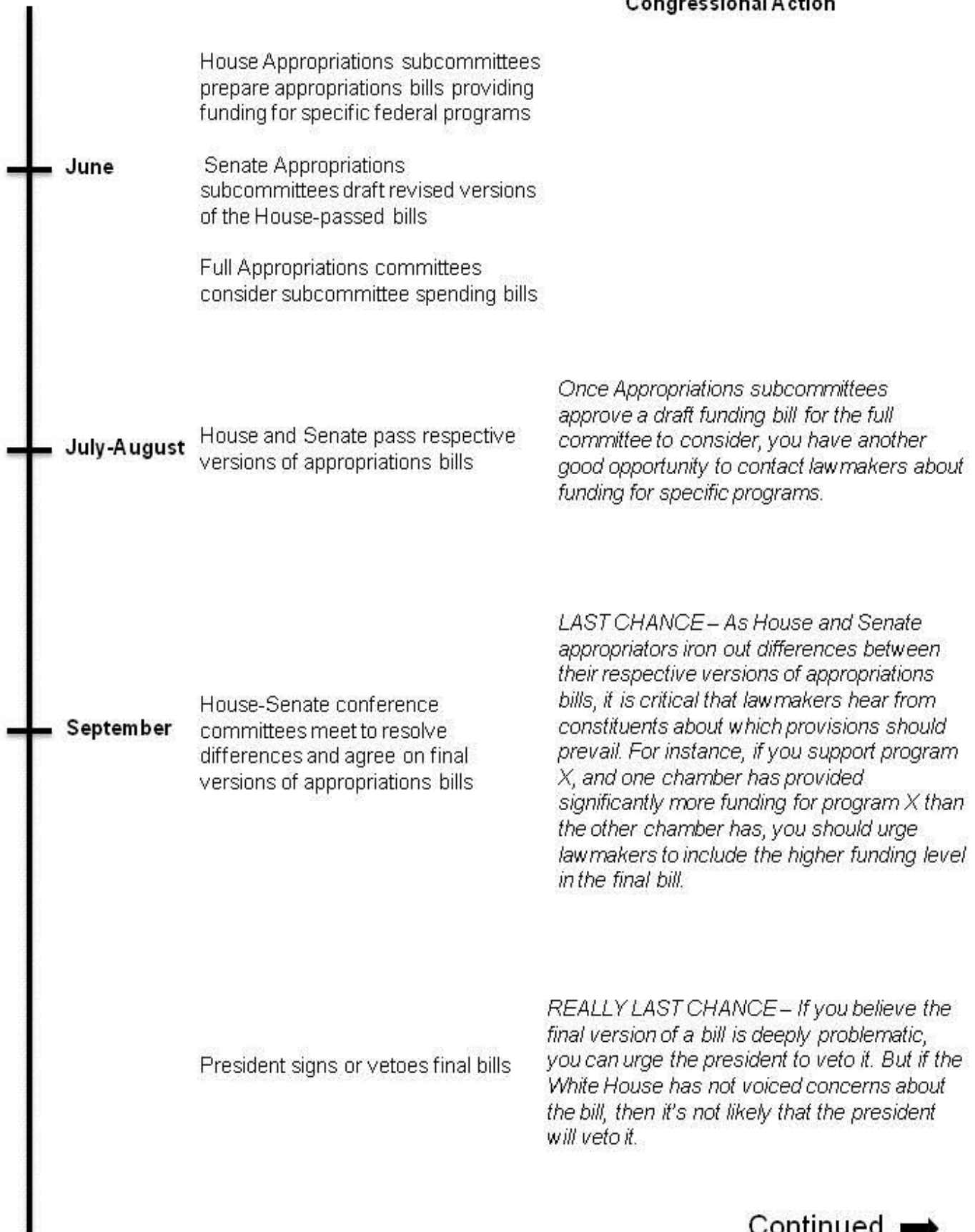
Congressional Action

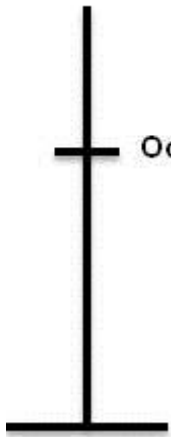


Continued →

Opportunities to Take Action

Congressional Action





October 1

New fiscal year begins

For any of the 12 annual appropriations bills not yet enacted by October 1, Congress passes continuing resolutions (CRs) to maintain funding for the agencies without appropriations bills. Once Congress completes its work on the outstanding spending bills, they are signed by the president .

U.S. Military Spending

Overview

After more than a decade of sustained growth in the Pentagon's annual "base" budget – which does not include the costs of wars in Iraq and Afghanistan or nuclear weapons activities at the Department of Energy – Defense Department funding is now projected to decrease slightly over the next few years. This is the result of caps on discretionary spending mandated in the Budget Control Act of 2011, and from the automatic across-the-board spending cuts known as sequestration.

The Obama Administration is seeking \$526.6 billion for the Department of Defense base budget as part of its fiscal year 2014 budget request. Adjusted for inflation, that's a 1.6 percent cut relative to the enacted FY2013 level. These figures do not include the effects of sequestration.

Sequestration

In FY2013, sequestration reduced the Pentagon's budget by \$42 billion, or 7.8 percent. The president's FY2014 budget assumes that the cuts of sequestration – which are scheduled to continue through 2022 – will be cancelled in fiscal 2014 and thereafter. If sequestration did continue, the Pentagon would see funding reductions every year over the next decade.

But these automatic cuts would have a much greater impact on funding for non-defense discretionary (NDD) programs than they would on Pentagon spending. Here's why:

First, the military accounts for more than half of all discretionary spending. So, while the projected dollar amounts of the cuts are split evenly between the Pentagon and NDD programs, the NDD cuts come from a smaller portion of the total discretionary pie.

Second, and more significantly, Pentagon spending has grown much faster over the last decade than NDD funding. Pentagon spending, not including war costs and funding for nuclear weapons, grew 35 percent between 2002 and 2012, after adjusting for inflation. Over that same period NDD funding has grown by 12 percent. [Note: These figures differ from those included in other NPP fact sheets because they include only DoD's "base" budget – i.e. they do not include war costs and nuclear weapons funding.]



Quick Facts

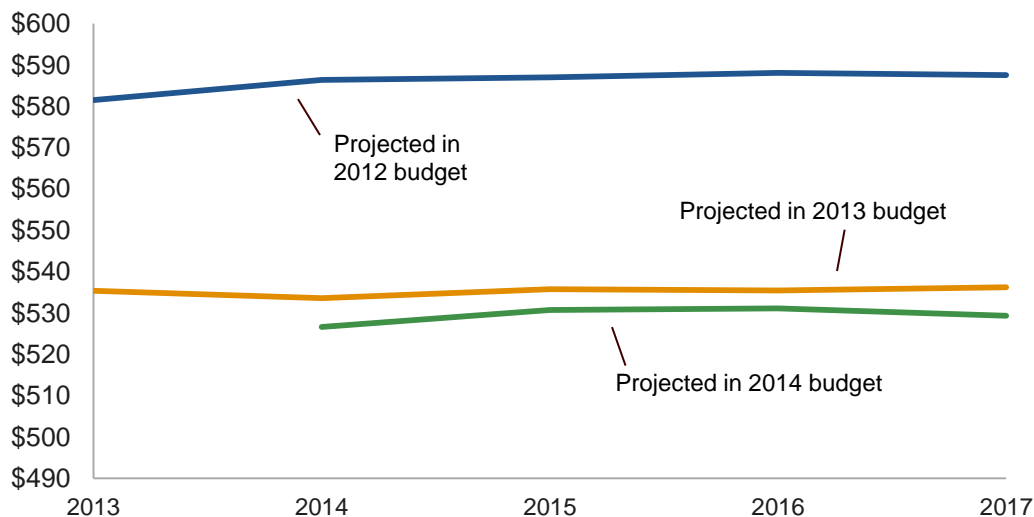
- The Pentagon's spending "cut" is largely the result of comparing one year's long-range spending projections to more recent, lower spending projections.
- Sequestration will reduce Pentagon spending by 7.8 percent in FY2013
- Pentagon spending has grown 35 percent over the last decade, adjusted for inflation. Over that same period, non-defense funding has only grown by a third of that amount, or 12 percent.

Argument: Military spending is already being cut. Any further reductions would undermine U.S. national security.

Fact: Prior to the cuts of sequestration in 2013, most of the Pentagon's so-called cuts existed only on paper. These cuts were the result of comparing long-term Pentagon spending projections from previous years to more recent projections. As the chart below shows, when you compare the FY2012 budget proposal to those of FY2013 and FY2014 you see a significant reduction – the Pentagon expects to generate \$256 billion in “savings” over five years based on these lower projections. But when you look only at the FY2013 and FY2014 proposals, you see that these more recent projections do not represent deep cuts, but rather that funding will remain essentially flat in the coming years. [Note: Chart does not reflect the impact of sequestration, which took effect in FY2013 but may not continue in subsequent years.]

Comparison of Pentagon Funding Projections

(in billions of FY2014 dollars)



Source: OMB
National Priorities Project



The Discretionary Budget: Military v. Non-Military

Overview

The federal budget includes two major types of spending: mandatory and discretionary, as well as a third, much smaller category: interest on the federal debt.

Mandatory spending refers to federal money that is spent based on existing laws that govern particular programs or functions. Mandatory spending includes entitlements, which are money or benefits provided directly to individuals such as Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, food stamps, and Federal Retirement. Mandatory spending is not part of the annual appropriations process. It represents roughly two-thirds of total annual federal spending.

Discretionary spending is the portion of the federal budget that the president requests and Congress appropriates every year. Congress may choose to increase or decrease spending on these programs from the amount proposed by the president.

The discretionary budget includes national defense, as well as expenditures for education, housing assistance, and many health programs. It represents roughly one-third of the total annual federal budget.

As the chart below shows, in FY2014, a proposed 57 percent of the discretionary budget is allocated to the military. This is consistent with previous budgets in which national defense has accounted for at least 50 percent, and sometimes close to 60 percent of discretionary spending.

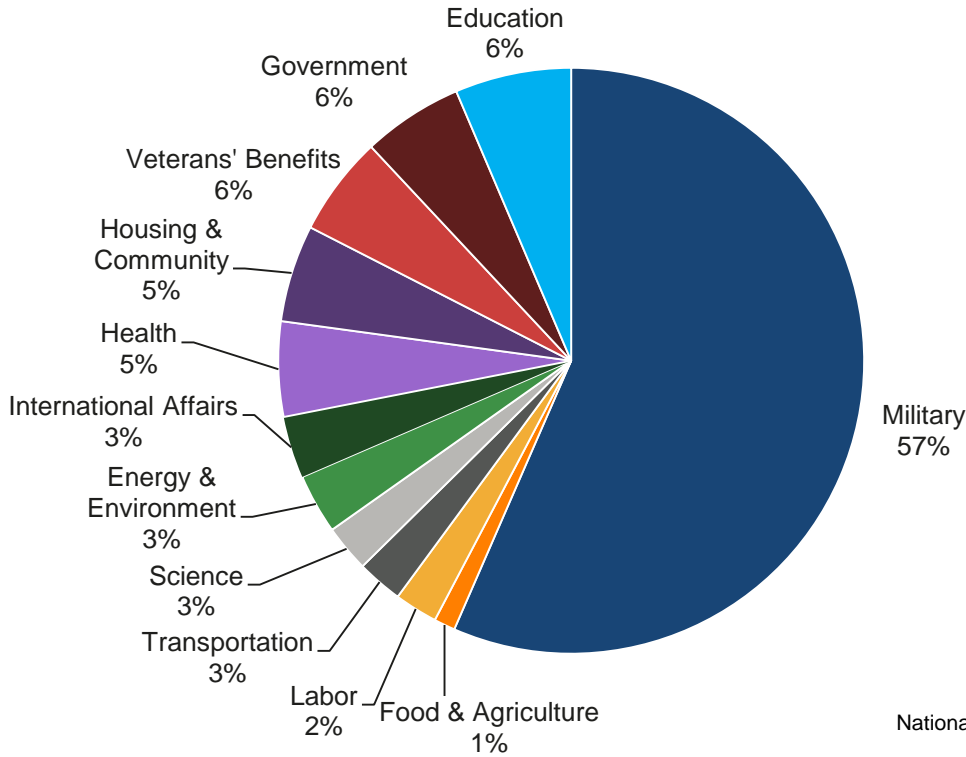
Quick Facts



- The federal budget includes both mandatory and discretionary spending, as well as interest on the federal debt.
- Mandatory spending is federal money that is spent based on existing laws that govern particular programs.
- Discretionary budget items are those whose allocations Congress may adjust each year.
- In the FY2013 budget request, discretionary spending is 31 percent of total budget authority.
- Military spending accounts for more than 50 percent of discretionary expenditures.
- From FY2002 to FY2013, discretionary U.S. military expenditures increased by 39 percent, from around \$470 billion to \$651 billion, adjusted for inflation.

President's Proposed Discretionary Spending

(Fiscal Year 2014)

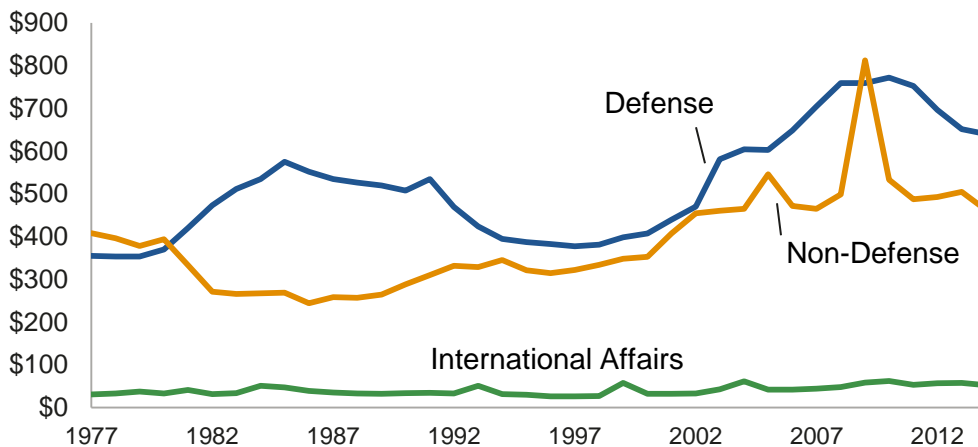


Source: OMB
National Priorities Project

The line chart below illustrates that discretionary spending for the military and war costs was on an upward trend from the late 1990s until around 2012. From FY2002 to FY2013, while domestic discretionary expenditures increased by around 11 percent, discretionary spending on national defense increased by 39 percent.

Discretionary Spending 1977-2014

(in billions of constant FY2014 dollars)



Source: Budget of the U.S. Government, Fiscal Year 2014, Historical Table 5.6
National Priorities Project



Sources and Resources

- NPP's Analysis of President Obama's Fiscal Year 2013 Budget, <http://nationalpriorities.org/en/analysis/2013/president-obamas-fiscal-year-2014-budget/>
- Budget of the U.S. Government, FY2014, Historical Table 5-6: Budget Authority for Discretionary Programs: 1976-2017, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/budget/fy2014/assets/hist05z6.xls>
- Budget of the U.S. Government, FY2014, Historical Table 10.1-Gross Domestic Product and Deflators used in Historical Tables: 1940-2017, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/budget/fy2014/assets/hist10z1.xls>
- Budget of the U.S. Government, FY2014, Analytical Perspectives Table 32-1: Budget Authority and Outlays by Function, Category and Program, http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/budget/fy2014/assets/32_1.pdf

Sequestration — What is it? Why do I care?

Background

Sequestration refers to automatic spending cuts that occur if Congress fails to achieve certain levels of deficit reduction. The most recently enacted legislation that contains a sequestration provision is the Budget Control Act of 2011 (BCA).

The BCA was enacted in August 2011 as the result of an agreement between the Obama Administration and Congress that would reduce budget deficits by more than \$2 trillion over 10 years. The BCA called for initial savings of \$917 billion between fiscal years 2012 and 2021, generated by capping discretionary spending.

The BCA also created a 12-member super committee made up of six House members and six Senators, evenly divided between Democrats and Republicans. The committee was charged with coming up with a plan that would further reduce the deficit by at least \$1.2 trillion over 10 years. The BCA also included an automatic process for reducing spending – known as sequestration – by as much as \$1.2 trillion if the recommendations made by the committee failed to achieve such savings, or if Congress failed to enact legislation that achieved such savings.

The super committee was not able to reach an agreement on a deficit reduction plan prior to the November 2011 deadline set by the BCA, nor did Congress on its own act to pass legislation which would have met the \$1.2 trillion target. As a result, sequestration was scheduled to go into effect on Jan. 2, 2013. Provisions of the deal reached by President Obama and Congress to avoid the so-called fiscal cliff delayed the automatic spending cuts until March 1, 2013.

The additional two months did not, however, result in a deal to prevent sequestration, which went into effect on March 1. As a result, the federal government cut roughly \$85 billion from spending in FY2013. According to March 2013 analysis by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), this will result in a 7.8 percent reduction in the military budget (excluding war costs) and a 5 percent reduction in non-defense discretionary (NDD) programs.

Some Details about Sequestration

- Sequestration was never meant to happen. It was intended to be such a bad option that Democrats and Republicans would feel pressed to come up with a compromise.
- It is spending cuts only – in other words, there are no increases in tax revenue as part of sequestration.
- The majority of the \$85 billion in cuts in FY2013 come from discretionary spending, though Medicare – which is part of mandatory spending – will be cut by around \$12 billion in FY2013.

Quick Facts



- Sequestration refers to the automatic, across-the-board spending cuts called for under the Budget Control Act of 2011.
- It will have a significant impact on the FY2013 discretionary budget, reducing funding for programs ranging from grants to public schools and federal work study to cancer clinics and Meals on Wheels.
- It will affect both defense and non-defense spending.
- Defense funding is better able to absorb cuts under sequestration than is non-defense funding, because of substantial growth in defense funding in recent years.
- Sequestration will have a greater impact on the non-defense sector of the economy than on the defense sector, because non-defense industries create more jobs per dollar than the military does.

- If sequestration continues in FY2014, it will cut discretionary spending by even larger amounts – roughly \$110 billion in FY2014 and subsequent years, out of a total discretionary budget of around \$1.15 trillion.
- These cuts will be in addition to spending caps called for in the first part of the BCA.
- The White House budget request for FY2014, which was released on April 10, 2013, assumes that sequestration will not continue in FY2014. In other words, the administration is assuming that some sort of deal will be reached with Congress to avoid additional cuts under sequestration after FY2013.

Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA), Chairman of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services and Education, and Related Agencies, released a report in July 2012 giving national and state-level data on the potential impact of sequestration on dozens of education, health and labor programs. Noted Sen. Harkin, "Sequestration wouldn't apply only to defense. It would also have destructive impacts on the whole array of Federal activities that promote and protect the middle class in this country."

Sources and Resources

"Under Threat: Sequestration's Impact on Nondefense Jobs and Services,"

A report by Sen. Tom Harkin, Chairman, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies

<http://harkin.senate.gov/documents/pdf/500ff3554f9ba.pdf>

U.S. Military Spending vs. the World

Overview

The United States is easily the global leader in military expenditures. World military spending in 2012, the most recent year for which data is available, reached just under \$1.7 trillion. The United States accounted for 39 percent of this total. Although accurate data for 2012 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 39 percent of total global military spending.
- U.S. military spending dwarfs the budget of the #2 country — China — which it outspends by more than 4 to 1.
- The United States and its NATO allies account for almost two-thirds of total global military spending.
- U.S. military expenditures are greater than the total expenditures of the next 10 largest countries combined.

Top 10 Countries Ranked by Military Spending, 2012

(dollars in billions)

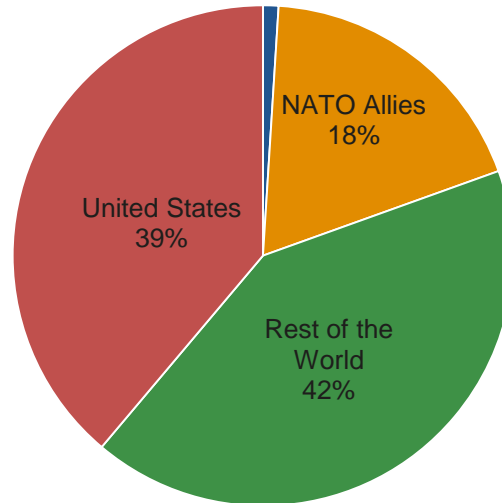


Source: SIPRI
National Priorities Project

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, 2012

Cuba, Iran, N. Korea, Somalia, Sudan, Syria 1%

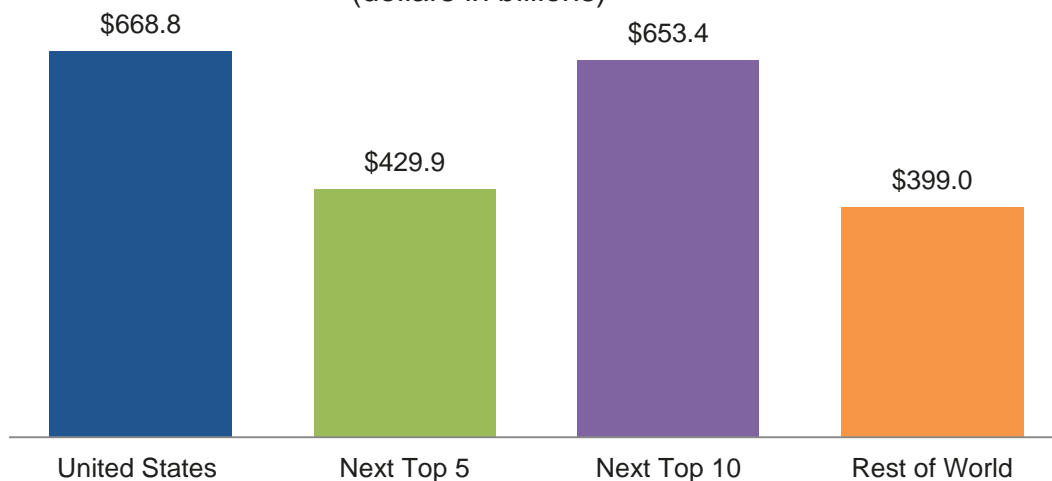


Source: SIPRI
National Priorities Project



U.S. Military Spending Compared to Other Top Spenders, 2012

(dollars in billions)



Source: SIPRI
National Priorities Project



Sources and Resources

- Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) "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

Director, Arms and Security Project, Center for International Policy

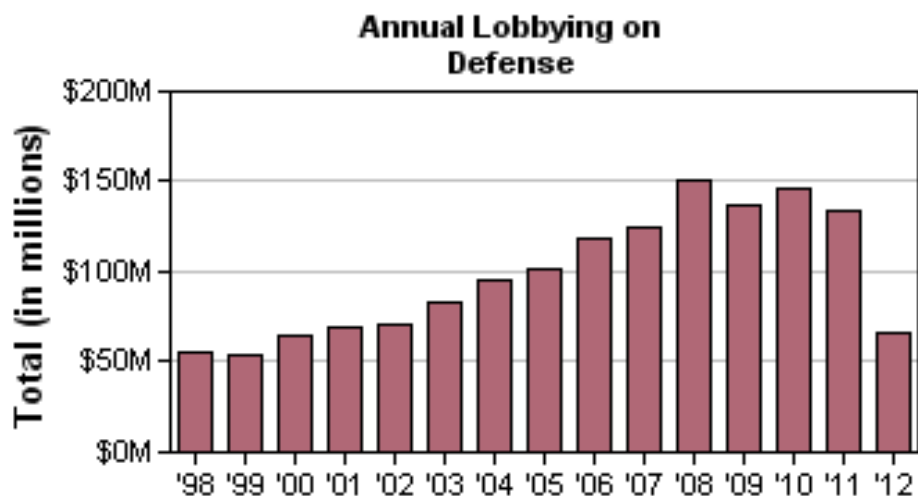
whartung@ciponline.org

Introduction

On January 17, 1961, President Dwight D. Eisenhower gave his famous speech in which he warned of the danger of “unwarranted influence” wielded by the military-industrial complex.

Today that danger is even greater than it was when Eisenhower made his remarks. Military spending is over 60 percent higher than it was 50 years ago, and Pentagon contractors receive hundreds of billions of dollars in funding from the federal government every year. Lockheed Martin alone receives nearly twice as much as the operating budget of the entire Department of State.

As the debate grows over how best to reduce the federal budget deficit, the Pentagon, the arms industry, and key members of Congress are using every tool at their disposal to maintain Pentagon spending at the highest possible levels. The largest beneficiaries of this process are military contractors that receive billions of dollars in government funding while their executives receive millions in compensation — all paid for with our tax dollars. This is the military-industrial complex at work.



Tools of Influence

The weapons industry has numerous tools of influence that it can use to get its way in battles over Pentagon spending and military policy.

- **Campaign Cash:** Pentagon contractors spent \$25 million in political contributions in the 2008 and 2010 election cycles, targeting key members like House Armed Services Committee Chair Howard P. “Buck” McKeon, who has received \$750,000 in contributions from the arms industry since 2009.
- **Lobbying and the Revolving Door:** The defense industry employs almost 1,000 lobbyists — nearly two for each member of Congress. Over two-thirds of these lobbyists passed through the revolving door. This means that they moved from jobs in Congress, the Pentagon, or the uniformed

military to work for the same Pentagon contractors that they were in charge of regulating while they were in government. This process gives weapons makers the inside track in battles over government spending and defense policy.

- **Pork Barrel Politics:** Pentagon contractors often work hand-in-glove with key members of Congress to steer funds to key districts in support of military bases or weapons projects. For many weapons systems these contracts are spread across dozens of states and scores of Congressional Districts, thereby giving many members a vested political interest in supporting these projects. Members whose districts benefit from particular programs form caucuses to promote them, including groups that support the F-35 fighter, Unmanned Aerial Vehicles, and Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs).
- **The Jobs Card:** Contractors frequently argue that cutting back Pentagon spending will eliminate large numbers of jobs and undermine economic growth. While reductions in any form of spending will displace some workers, the arms industry fails to note that military spending is virtually the worst way to create jobs compared to any other use of the same money. A tax cut, or spending on education, infrastructure, health, or alternative energy all create more jobs than Pentagon spending.
- **Advisory Panels — Defining the Threat:** Current or former employees of the same firms that benefit from high Pentagon budgets are often placed on government advisory panels, where they help shape major policy decisions on issues like procurement reform, arms export policy, missile defense or the future of stealth technology. By helping to define the threats that the Pentagon budget is supposed to address, these firms help expand the market for their own products.
- **Funding Think Tanks — Shaping the Public Debate:** Arms contractors like Boeing and Lockheed Martin frequently contribute to think tanks like the Heritage Foundation, the Center for Security Policy and the Lexington Institute. These organizations then turn around and make the case for higher military budgets, looser regulations over Pentagon contractors, and a more aggressive foreign policy — all positions that ultimately benefit these companies' bottom lines.
- **Beyond Campaign Spending — Currying Favor with Key Politicians:** In addition to campaign spending and lobbying activities, Pentagon contractors seek other ways to gain influence over key members of Congress. For example, when Patricia McKeon, the wife of House Armed Services Committee chairman Howard P. "Buck" McKeon, decided to run for the state legislature in California, major contractors like Lockheed Martin and Northrop Grumman immediately gave donations in support of her campaign.
- **Advertising:** When funding for a given project is threatened with budget cuts, weapons contractors often turn to advertising to make their case. The ads are usually placed in specialty industry or political publications and web sites that are read by Congressional staffers and key Executive Branch officials, but at times they make placements in mainstream publications as well. For example, when the Obama administration was trying to terminate the F-22 fighter plane program, Lockheed Martin and its partners in the project took out so many full-page ads in the *Washington Post* that one reporter there joked the ads were the only thing keeping the paper afloat.

The Bottom Line: The Arms Lobby is *Not* All-Powerful

The most important part of President Eisenhower's military-industrial complex speech is his call for an "alert and knowledgeable citizenry" to take action to blunt the influence of the weapons lobby. Despite all of the tools of influence at the arms industry's disposal, over the years citizen's movements have won major victories in helping to reduce nuclear arsenals, end unnecessary projects like the F-22 fighter plane, and force the Pentagon to scale back its ambitious spending plans. Much more needs to be done, but there is ample evidence to suggest that citizen action can make a difference. Understanding how the military-industrial complex works can serve as an important element of public education campaigns designed to rein in runaway Pentagon spending and promote more sensible budget priorities.

Sources and Resources

- Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SPIRI) "Military Expenditure Database" using constant (\$2010) prices.
- The Center for Responsive Politics (CRP): CRP maintains a comprehensive data base on campaign and lobbying expenditures and the revolving door. It can be used to find information on specific weapons contractors and key members of Congress: <http://www.opensecrets.org/>
- The Project on Government Oversight (POGO): POGO's web site provides information on corruption, conflicts-of-interest, and cost overruns in weapons contracting: <http://www.pogo.org/>
- Taxpayers for Common Sense (TCS): An excellent source of data on issues like how members of Congress and weapons contractors collude to add military projects to the budget that go beyond even what the Pentagon has requested: www.taxpayer.net
- William D. Hartung, *Prophets of War: Lockheed Martin and the Making of the Military-Industrial Complex* (Nation Books): for more information see www.prophetsofwar.com. For a summary of some of the issues raised by the book, see William Hartung, "Pentagon Contractors and Congress: Defending Special Interests or Promoting the Public Interest?," *Huffington Post*, July 17, 2012, available at: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/william-hartung/pentagon-contractors-and-_b_1680068.html.

How to Talk About the Pentagon Budget

Rethink Media

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."

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."

SAY: "We need a Pentagon budget that addresses 21st 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."

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.”

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.”

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.”

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.”

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.”)

How to Train a Bird-Dog

Courtesy of New Hampshire Peace Action

Introductions (5-10 Minutes)

Current Political Landscape (5 Minutes)

Define Bird-Dogging and Why It Is Important (5 Minutes)

- A bird dog's job in hunting, is to find hiding birds, and scare them into flight, or "flush them out" so that they are in the open and vulnerable. Similarly, a political bird-dog forces candidates out into the open, and exposes their stance on issues.
- Bird-Dogging should be employed on both parties, and all candidates, it serves three distinct purposes.
 1. **Educate the Public:** Bird-Dogging gives activists a public stage – frequently the media is present at candidate events, and at the very least, there will be a group of people listening to the candidate. When you ask a question, you can include facts that some of those folks don't know, and you can challenge them to think about the issue in a new light. The right question to the right candidate can make national news: EG: NH Peace Action volunteer bird-dog Dave Tiffany asked presidential candidate John McCain the question that elicited his statement that he wanted to keep troops in Iraq for another hundred years.
 2. **Educate the Candidate:** You will have the ear of a potential future decision maker; maybe you can tell them something they don't already know.
 3. **Make Candidates articulate their position:** Good politicians are masters of rhetoric, but never actually say where they stand on an issue, form questions that are specific enough to force a yes or no, and politicians have to take a stand.

How to Get a Chance to Ask a Question (5-10 Minutes)

- **Arrive Early**, and **sit close** to the candidate
- **Look like a supporter:** dress up how you imagine a supporter might dress
- Have your **hand up first:** when it sounds like the candidate is wrapping up their stump speech, and about to take questions, get your hand in the air, fast movement catches eyes, and the first hand up almost always gets called
- **Smile:** throughout the presentation, stare adoringly, and smile; candidates pick up on body language and facial expressions, and will intentionally pick folks they think are friendly to their positions
- **Don't give up:** Every candidate has to leave, if you don't get a chance to ask your question, **position yourself along their egress**, and **shake their hand. Don't let go of that hand until you have asked your question**, walk them to their car holding their hand if you have to

Role Play One: Street Walk (15 Minutes)

Without preparation, have the group stand up, and move to an open area, give them a basic candidate briefing (e.g.: My name is George Haddock, I am running as a republican, and associate with the Tea Party. My key issues are taxation and cutting domestic spending)

Trainer is a candidate, and he/she is walking down Main Street. Have each person shake the candidate's hand. The candidate will keep it brief if possible, and dodge taking a position on any given issue.

After the candidate has shaken everyone's hand; break character and talk about what questions if any were asked, and how the candidate responded; now take a few minutes to write down a question. Repeat the exercise now that everyone has prepared to meet the candidate.

Break down and analyze the effectiveness of different questions, have the group cross critique.

Handout and Discussion: How to Bird Dog: the 12 Steps of Bird Dogging (10 Minutes) Courtesy of NH Citizens Alliance for Action

Role Play Two: Town Hall (15 Minutes)

Give a few moments to prepare questions, then go back into role play, where facilitator is playing role of candidate; afterwards critique.

- Were hands up quickly?
- Did participants smile?
- Were questions specific?
- Did they have too much or too little preface and framing?
- How did the way the question was frame affect the way the candidate responded?
- How would you adjust your approach to asking a question based on the form? (event, coffee shop, radio talk show, town meeting, street, house party)
- How would you adjust your approach based on the candidate's views?
- How would you anticipate bird-dogging would change over the course of the campaign?

Coordinating a Bird Dog Campaign

Some tips for coordinating:

- Always go in with a partner; but don't stand together, you don't want to be easily identifiable, and if you are split up, you are more likely to have one of you get called on.
- Report back to whoever you are working with, this way you can adjust your questions to account for what the candidate said last time, and keep a central record of progress.

How to Bird-Dog the Candidates

Courtesy of the NH Citizens Alliance for Action

The term "bird-dog" comes from hunting; the bird-dog's job is to flush the birds out of the bushes and into the open. Politicians are like the birds — they try to keep their positions hidden behind vague rhetoric. Using tightly crafted questions, the successful bird-dog forces candidates to reveal their position on an issue.

Here are some tips on preparing for your bird-dog mission. Most of these are adapted from the Presidential Primary Project of NH's best bird-dogs, our friends at the American Friends Service Committee's NH project.

1. **Find out where the candidate will be and when.** If you are interested in a particular candidate, plan ahead by calling his or her NH campaign office. The phone number is usually available on the campaign Web site.
2. **Know the candidate's position.** Ask a question that shows you know something about the candidate's position (e.g.: "You have said you'd like to increase the use of technology in public schools ..."), and link it to a budget priorities question ("... would you eliminate wasteful spending in the Pentagon budget to pay for classroom computers?").
3. **Have your question ready.** Make sure your question is brief, fact-based and direct. Practice asking your question to yourself and with family or friends until you can do it without notes and in your regular cadence. It's good to have a second question ready, in case someone asks yours before you have a chance to.
4. **Arrive early.** This is especially important if the candidate is very popular, leading in the polls, or if it is late in the primary season. If there is a question-and-answer session you'll want to be close enough for the candidate to see you and call on you.
 - Be forewarned: Campaign schedules change quickly, and it is a rare candidate who arrives on time for an event, so build in some extra time.
5. **Ask your question early.** When candidates invite questions, most people will not immediately raise their hands. If you do, you are more likely to be called upon.
6. **Be calm and reasonable.** Maintaining a respectful tone will get a more positive response from the candidate, their staff and the news media. People who are angry, sarcastic or emotional will be ignored. You can even start your question by praising something the candidate has just said in her or his prepared remarks (e.g.: "Senator, I really appreciate your call for a strong national defense. A group of military experts believes wasteful Pentagon spending actually weakens our defense ...")
7. **Be in the candidate's path.** Many candidates want to shake hands and meet as many people as possible at these events — that's part of what they like about coming to New Hampshire. The informal, unscripted contacts are extra opportunities to ask your questions. Position yourself in the candidate's path, and ask your question as you're gripping his or her hand.
8. **Bring other people with you.** Since bird-dogging can make some people nervous, it is good to go in teams of two or more people. Not standing together will also improve the odds that more than one of you will get to ask the question. Be prepared to ask a follow up question if you feel the candidate dodged your question or if you want more details.

9. **Take notes.** The only way to track the responses of candidates is to have a record of what they said. It is also helpful to have notes if you are trying to frame a follow-up question. If you have a friend with you, each of you can write down the response to the other's question.
10. **Be prepared to speak to the media.** Journalists often like to talk to someone who has asked the candidate a question. Remember to stay on message and talk to the reporter about the issue you asked about. (e.g.: Reporter asks, "What did you think of Senator Loosenuke?" Your response could be: "The Senator says he wants to eliminate government waste. I'd like to know if he's willing to cut the \$60 billion the Pentagon wastes on obsolete Cold War weapons and excessive nuclear weapons to help pay for the things American families and communities really need.")
11. **Be creative and improvise when necessary.** Being a bird-dog is not just about asking questions. Use other ways to raise public and candidate awareness.
12. **Share what you have learned.** Back in your car, or at home, take a few moments to jot down what you asked the candidate and what her or his response was.

Bird-dogging and the News Media

By New Hampshire Citizen Alliance

Over thirty years of fighting for social, economic, and political justice for all

Reporters at a candidate event have a job to do.

Usually, they are reporting generally on the event — what the candidate says and how people react — or they are preparing a more detailed story on a specific issue or the campaign. But regardless of what the reporter's assignment is ...

Bird-dogs at a candidate event have a job to do.

Your job is to ask the candidate a focused question on your issue AND get your position into the reporting on the candidate or the event. There are a variety of ways birddogs can get their issue into the news coverage.

Before the Event

Prepare a quote for reporters just like you prepared your question. The statement should include the issue(s) you are raising and what position you think the politician should take, and why.

Before the candidate arrives identify the reporters in the room. Journalists often — but not always — arrive with the candidate's entourage. Before the candidate arrives, look for people with notepads. If you see news photographers, ask them if a reporter is covering the event with them. Don't assume a reporter will pick you out of the crowd to talk to, but if you **introduce yourself** in a friendly way, chances are they'll be interested in why you're there and what you have to say. Tell them your name and what town you're from. Chat with them by asking what their assignment is — the answer may give you valuable clues about how to get your issue into their story.

- If the reporter is writing generally about the event, use your prepared quote (above) to tell him/her about the issue you hope to explore, the question you hope to ask and what you know, if anything, about the candidate's position.
- If the reporter is writing about an issue other than yours, use your conversation to link the two. For example, if you are birddogging on federal budget priorities and the reporter is writing about the candidate's health care platform, you can tell him or her that the Priorities campaign would help pay for children's health care by shifting to human needs the \$60 billion the Pentagon wastes each year.

Remember that your agenda is probably different from the reporter's. **Stick to what YOU want to say.** If you're asked, "What did you think about what Governor Stuffsuit said yesterday about gas prices?" change the subject by saying "What's important to me is whether he/she will have the guts to stand up to Congress and the military contractors who are wasting our tax dollars." Give the reporters your phone numbers and let them know they can call you with any questions.

When the Candidate Is Finished

Reporters often like to interview people who questioned the candidate about what they thought of the answer. Again, if they don't approach you, **seek them out**, introduce yourself and tell them what you

thought of what the candidate said. This is a great **opportunity to push the candidate** to take a stronger position — the candidate’s staff will definitely read the coverage of the event to see what “real people” said about him/her. A citizen quoted as saying “I’m still not sure what Gov. Stuffsuit’s priorities will be. He didn’t answer the question” or “I don’t think Gov. Stuffsuit knows much about the issue” will really get their attention. You might even get a phone call from the campaign seeking more information.

After the Event

The Letters page is among the most read sections of any newspaper. If the reporter didn’t include you in the article, you can still **make your point through a letter to the editor** describing your exchange with the candidate (or the issue you wish he/she would have addressed) and giving your opinion of the candidate’s views. Be concise and as factual as possible and chances are your letter will be published and will be read by more people than was the original article.

If you have given your phone number out to a reporter, **answer your phone and return missed calls!** Reporters have strange deadlines (when they must have their story finished) — some at midnight, some early the following morning. A missed call from a reporter is a missed opportunity to insert your information, or to clarify misinformation.

How to Organize a Town Hall Meeting

Courtesy of Upper Hudson Peace Action NYS

A town hall meeting is a large public meeting where community members are allowed to share their views with their elected representatives present. Elected representatives have the opportunity to hear from their constituents and to share their own views and positions in return.

The following is a suggestion on how to organize a town hall meeting. You will want to modify it to fit your circumstances.

- Decide who the sponsoring organization(s) should be. To draw a large group it may be good to invite other organizations to co-sponsor.
- Decide on a choice of 3 or 4 possible dates for the town hall meeting.
- Call potential co-sponsoring organizations to solicit their interest. Explain that each co-sponsor can give testimony of 3-5 minutes. Each co-sponsoring group should commit to bringing 10 people to the town hall meeting (or whatever number of people you decide.) When you know who will be sponsoring the event call the appropriate legislators in your area to see if they will participate and what dates would work for them.
- If you can't get elected officials to attend this time, you could turn the event into a Community Teach-In.
- Secure a location to hold the town hall meeting. If you think you will be able to recruit 100 people to come to the meeting, don't pick a room that holds more than 100. If you expect a big crowd arrange for a sound system.
- Decide which topics you want covered in testimony. For example:
 1. Reasons all troops should be brought back from Iraq and Afghanistan.
 2. Testimony on the cost of the war and its impact on the community.
 3. Description of the bills or actions you want the legislators to take. (This works best if accompanied by a written handout that people can take away with them.)
- Invite people you want to testify. If there are victims, invite victims to testify. Co-sponsoring groups can also divide up topics to cover. Based on previous experience it's important to be realistic about the time you have and don't invite too many people to speak. (The entire town meeting, including questions and discussion, should not last more than 2 hours.)
- Carry out publicity for the Town Hall meeting. You need to get enough people to come. A poorly attended meeting can communicate to the elected officials that our cause has little support.
 1. Produce and distribute a poster.
 2. Send e-mail and postal mailings, making use of listservs.
 3. Make phone calls.
 4. Get listed in community calendars
 5. Send out a press advisory. Follow up with calls to ask the media to cover the event.
- Select a moderator, who has the skill to move the town hall meeting along; who can cut off long winded testimony; who can deal with hecklers or opponents who might show up; and who can adjust the times depending on how much testimony there is. Also provide a timekeeper to assist the moderator.
- Prepare the program for the event:

1. Welcome and introduction of event and elected official(s) **5 minutes**
 2. Prepared Testimony **40 minutes**
 3. Audience Testimony open mike with each person limited to 2 minutes **40 minutes**
 4. Elected official testimony **20 minutes**
 5. Closing summary of the meeting and next steps in the campaign **5min**
- On the night of the town meeting, set up with a large banner with your meeting theme. Have a registration table for people to sign in; set up a literature table. Start the meeting on time.

How to Write a Letter to the Editor

Courtesy of Upper Hudson Peace Action NYS

The Letters to the Editor section is one of the most widely read sections of the newspaper, and can help shape the opinions of both the public and policy makers. Remember, most papers have a word limit of 150-200 words, so short and sweet is best!

Four Steps to a Great Letter

Step 1. What was recently in the news that prompted you to write this letter, and what about it moved you to take action? If you appreciate the paper's coverage, say so. Say it in as few words as you can.

Step 2. Choose the one, single most important point you want to make. Make it succinctly, carefully choosing facts or anecdotes as supporting evidence.

Step 3. Include 1-2 facts, observations or personal statements that back up your main point. Personal anecdotes, when relevant, can work great here.

Step 4. In conclusion, drive your point home. You can call for a specific change, from the paper, from a policymaker, from other readers, or some other audience.

More Tips:

- Remember your audience. Do they lean progressive or conservative, or are they somewhere in the middle? Your letter will be far more persuasive if you keep your audience in mind when you choose which points you would like to make.
- Keep it short, and you boost your shot at getting published. Every paper is different, so check your paper's word limit on the letters it publishes. A typical cap on length is 150-200 words.
- Use legislators' names. If your printed letter mentions a representative or senator by name, be sure to clip it out and send it to them or email it to their staff.
- Don't rant (not that you would). Hard-hitting criticism is a big plus, but rants are less likely to get published.
- Get to know the tone and style of letters selected by your paper.
- Use statistics and personal stories when you have them.
- Your letter should be signed and must include your address and telephone number or it won't be published. The paper may call to verify that you wrote the letter.
- Be persistent. It may take you several tries to get a letter published, but even unpublished letters have an impact. The more you submit, the more likely you'll get in.
- Work with friends or groups. Letter writing is a great group or volunteer activity, and the more unique letters on a given subject, the greater the chance that one or more will be published.
- Submit unique letters. It's great to get inspiration from friends for letters, but if editors see that your language is too similar or identical to another writers, they probably won't publish it.

Passing Local Resolutions on National Issues: Why is it important?

Peace Action

What is sometimes called “municipal foreign policy” is the practice of local communities and state governments taking on matters of national and global import through the passage of non-binding resolutions. Some people mock such resolutions as being a waste of time on the part of elected officials and, since local governments have no direct budgetary or legal authority over the issue addressed, outside their purview.

We disagree. In fact, we believe that taking positions on key national issues is a fundamental responsibility of local governments and that resolutions serve a critical democratic function.

Here’s why:

LOCAL OFFICIALS HAVE A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO CONVEY CONCERNS OF THE PEOPLE TO OTHER LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT.

Municipal, county and state elected officials have much closer relationships to the people than do Federal representatives—local officials are the most accessible. It is not surprising, then, that from the earliest days of the Republic, local governments have served as a key conduit for the people to express their views, and resolutions have been the mechanism of choice. Local government is the bridge between the people and their national government.

LOCAL CONSTITUENTS ARE DEEPLY AFFECTED BY NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL POLICIES.

By connecting national policies to neighborhood outcomes, local elected officials can fully represent and stand up for their constituents. Often, local officials are profoundly constrained in what they can achieve for their community as a result of actions taken at the national level. Articulating these constraints and explaining why they exist is a service to constituents.

AN EFFECTIVE PUBLIC SERVANT USES ALL THE LEVERS OF POWER AT HIS OR HER DISPOSAL TO INFLUENCE THE DEBATE AND REPRESENT THE PEOPLE.

Power is not exerted solely through the passage of legislation or of budgets. It is exerted in a variety of ways. Congress, for example, frequently passes non-binding resolutions on issues over which the president—not Congress—has final authority. Such resolutions are never criticized as actions that are outside the purview of Congress. Why should a local resolution be viewed any differently?

RESOLUTIONS ARE POLITICALLY POWERFUL.

Contrary to the view that resolutions are a waste of time in that they do not *directly* alter law or budget, resolutions can, in fact, help to change national policies—and the local outcomes that result from these policies. A resolution, discussed and voted on during a public meeting, becomes part of the official record. By including details that link the issue to the local community, a resolution can be an accessible document that brings great forcefulness to a particular

position. Representing the collective voice of an entire community, resolutions send a strong message to Congress and the President.

Far from being a distraction from the more critical work that a local governing body must do, as some claim, resolutions by local government are arguably one of their key responsibilities. Resolutions provide the pulse of the people to other levels of government, and they clarify the impact of national policies on a locale. They strengthen democracy by giving citizens more of a say in their government. And resolutions can be a powerful force for change regarding issues of great substance, issues that the constituents of local officials often care deeply about.

National and International Issues

1798	Virginia and Kentucky state legislatures adopted the words of James Madison and Thomas Jefferson regarding federal policies concerning France
1800s	Local governments passed resolutions in opposition to slavery
1960s	Many local governments passed resolutions in opposition to the war in Vietnam and to nuclear weapons
1980s	Local divestment campaigns opposed apartheid in South Africa, ramping up pressure on Congress and helping push to victory the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act of 1986
2000s	Local resolutions were passed by many cities in opposition to the Iraq War

In the mid-term, expect to see the federal government begin to respond to the bubbling up of local innovation and pressure. In the long-term, hope to see the triumph of greater local democracy and a more accountable federal government.