

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 16, 2021

President Joseph R. Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden:

As Members of the United States Congress sent to Washington by voters urging us to rebuke the values of the Trump Administration, we are eager to work with you to fulfill that mandate.

Our federal budget is a statement of our national values, and part of undoing the damage of the last four years is re-evaluating our spending priorities as a nation. That re-evaluation should begin with the Department of Defense. Hundreds of billions of dollars now directed to the military would have greater return if invested in diplomacy, humanitarian aid, global public health, sustainability initiatives, and basic research.

Recent reporting indicates that your first budget request to Congress will recommend the same level of Pentagon spending as the last fiscal year. While we are heartened that your Administration is not contemplating expanding the Pentagon's already inflated budget, our new Democratic majorities in Congress along with your Administration should go further. Rather than requesting a flat Pentagon budget, we urge you to seek a significantly reduced Pentagon topline. Thoughtful analysis from experts across the political spectrum shows that significant cuts can be achieved without reducing the support, pay or benefits provided to our men and women in uniform and their families. We could cut the Pentagon budget by more than ten percent and still spend more than the next ten largest militaries combined.

The United States' war on terror has lasted two decades and cost the U.S. approximately \$6.4 trillion. Our men and women in uniform have served bravely and honorably. Yet, the premise of a military-centric foreign policy is a failure. We must end the forever wars, heal our veterans, and re-orient towards a holistic conception of national security that centers public health, climate change, and human rights.

You have spoken frequently about the need to not only reject the destruction of Trumpism, but to build things back better. A broad cross-section of voters and organizations, including conservative, faith-based and progressive groups, support responsible spending reductions at the Pentagon. The same voters who sent you to the White House on this promise sent us to Congress, expecting us to make this vision a reality and to chart a new course. Therefore, we strongly urge you to request a reduced Pentagon budget when you send your Fiscal Year 2022 budget to Congress.

Thank you for the consideration of this request, and we look forward to working with your Administration to implement the changes Americans expect from our leadership.

Sincerely,



Barbara Lee
Member of Congress



Mark Pocan
Member of Congress



Jake Auchincloss
Member of Congress

/s/ Gwen Moore
Member of Congress

/s/ Jahana Hayes
Member of Congress

/s/ Peter Welch
Member of Congress

/s/ Ilhan Omar
Member of Congress

/s/ Raúl Grijalva
Member of Congress

/s/ Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez
Member of Congress

/s/ Mark Takano
Member of Congress

/s/ Alcee L. Hastings
Member of Congress

/s/ Jared Huffman
Member of Congress

/s/ Adriano Espaillat
Member of Congress

/s/ Alan Lowenthal
Member of Congress

/s/ James P. McGovern
Member of Congress

/s/ Anna G. Eshoo
Member of Congress

/s/ Rashida Tlaib
Member of Congress

/s/ Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress

/s/ Steve Cohen
Member of Congress

/s/ Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress

/s/ Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress

/s/ Ayanna Pressley
Member of Congress

/s/ Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress

/s/ Jesús G. "Chuy" García
Member of Congress

/s/ Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress

/s/ Frank Pallone, Jr.
Member of Congress

/s/ Pramila Jayapal
Member of Congress

/s/ Nanette Diaz Barragán
Member of Congress

/s/ Grace Meng
Member of Congress

/s/ Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress

/s/ Bobby L. Rush
Member of Congress

/s/ Carolyn B. Maloney
Member of Congress

/s/ Jamaal Bowman, Ed.D
Member of Congress

/s/ Cori Bush
Member of Congress

/s/ Judy Chu
Member of Congress

/s/ Mondaire Jones
Member of Congress

/s/ Ritchie Torres
Member of Congress

/s/ Daniel T. Kildee
Member of Congress

/s/ Katie Porter
Member of Congress

/s/ Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress

/s/ Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress

/s/ John P. Sarbanes
Member of Congress

/s/ Bonnie Watson Coleman
Member of Congress

/s/ Jimmy Gomez
Member of Congress

/s/ Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress

/s/ Ro Khanna
Member of Congress

/s/ Lori Trahan
Member of Congress

/s/ Andy Levin
Member of Congress

/s/ Marie Newman
Member of Congress

/s/ Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress