

Don't increase Pentagon spending while decreasing spending for human needs

A letter from 70 organizations

March 14, 2006

Dear Senator:

We are national and regional groups, writing to you regarding the discretionary portion of the FY07 budget resolution. We urge you to adequately fund human needs. Please do not reduce non-defense discretionary spending while at the same time increasing Pentagon spending.

National security is essential. However, it does not make Americans secure to increase funding for the Department of Defense and the nuclear weapons portion of the Department of Energy while cutting funds for other vital programs. In FY06, we are spending \$435 billion on the Pentagon. The Administration request for FY07 is \$463 billion, an increase of \$28 billion, or nearly 7%. That is 53% of the discretionary budget. We note that the costs of wars are not provided for in the Pentagon's regular budget. Emergency supplemental appropriations for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, including the \$65 billion in FY06 funds that Congress is considering now, total over \$445 billion since September 11, 2001.

The increasing funding of the military, both the Pentagon's regular budget and the substantial supplemental appropriations, is directly affecting families' ability to meet their day-to-day needs. In this budget request, non-military discretionary spending is reduced by half a percent, which is \$2.2 billion.

The President has proposed cuts to 141 discretionary programs. Many of these were on the Administration cut or elimination list for FY06, but Congress found them to be too valuable to lose, or to cut excessively. Most of these programs affect low-wage earners and those unable to work, particularly children and the elderly. According to 2004 census poverty data, the number of families living below the poverty level has increased for the fourth year; and these are living in even deeper poverty. Among the most egregious of suggested eliminations are Commodity Supplemental Food Program, Preventive Care Block Grant, Community Services Block Grant, and many education programs.

Significant cuts are proposed for programs such as Section 202 Housing for low-income elderly (26%), Child Care and Development Block Grant (\$1.03 billion) and Community Oriented Policing Services (79%). Each of these is an effective and necessary program. Affordable housing is shrinking, violence is rampant among youth in many communities, and child care funding is being reduced. These provisions put families and communities at even greater risk than now experienced.

It is important that you, Congress, reject the President's plan. You must create a budget that protects and supports healthy communities. The \$28 billion increase in the Defense Department and the nuclear weapons portion of the Energy Department would be better spent on keeping Americans secure at home.



Letter organized by
NETWORK, A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby
and Women's Action for New Directions

Don't increase Pentagon spending while decreasing spending for human needs

A letter from 70 organizations

Page two: Signers

National Organizations

NETWORK: A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby
Women's Action for New Directions
Americans for Democratic Action
Bair Foundation
Business Leaders for Sensible Priorities
Catholic Voices for Economic Justice
Church Women United
Council for a Livable World
Feminist Majority
Foreign Policy In Focus at the Institute for Policy Studies
Foster Family-based Treatment Association
Franciscan Friars (OFM) English Speaking Conference, JPIC Council
Friends Committee on National Legislation
Leadership Conference of Women Religious
Legal Momentum
Peace Action and the Peace Action Education Fund
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
National Coalition for the Homeless
National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA
National Council of Women's Organizations
National Foster Parent Association
National Organization for Women
National Priorities Project
Nuclear Age Peace Foundation
Physicians for Social Responsibility
Presbyterian Church (USA) Washington Office
Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, Congregational Leadership Team
School Sisters of Notre Dame - Global Justice & Peace Commission
School Sisters of St. Francis, US Provincial Team
Service Employees International Union
Sisters of Charity, Blessed Virgin Mary (BVM) Leadership Team
Sisters of Charity, Blessed Virgin Mary (BVM) Women's Office
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas Justice Team
Sojourners
Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations
United Church of Christ, Justice and Witness Ministries
United Methodist Church, General Board of Church and Society
Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, US Section

Regional Organizations

Arkansas Hunger Coalition; Little Rock, **Arkansas**
Arkansas Voices for the Children Left Behind, Inc.; Little Rock, Arkansas
Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy; Redlands, **California**
Sisters of St. Francis of Penance and Christian Charity; Redwood City, California
Sisters of the Presentation, San Francisco, California
The Leadership Team of the Dominican Sisters of Mission San Jose, California
Sisters of Charit, Blessed Virgin Mary (BVM) West Regional Team; Sunnyvale, California
Snake River Alliance; Boise, **Idaho**
Project IRENE; Berwyn, **Illinois**
Sisters of Charity, Blessed Virgin Mary (BVM) South Central Region Leadership Team; Dubuque, **Iowa**
Bread for the World; Farmington Hills, **Michigan**
Citizens for Peace; Farmington Hills, Michigan
Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Leadership Council; Monroe, Michigan
Leadership Team of Franciscan Sisters of Little Falls, **Minnesota**
Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet; St. Louis Province, **Missouri**
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, Regional Community of St. Louis, Regional Leadership Team; St. Louis, Missouri
Citizen Alert; Las Vegas, **Nevada**
Citizen Action New Mexico; Sandia Park, **New Mexico**
Ohio National Organization for Women, **Ohio**
Ohio Youth Advocate Program; Dublin, Ohio
Oklahoma Therapeutic Foster Care Association; Oklahoma City, **Oklahoma**
Benedictine Sisters; Mt. Angel, **Oregon**
Coastal Codepink, Women For Peace; Newport, Oregon and Code Pink Portland, Oregon
Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility; Portland, Oregon
United Nations Association of the USA, Oregon Division; Portland, Oregon
Oregon PeaceWorks; Salem, Oregon
Benedictine Sisters of Erie, **Pennsylvania**
The Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration; La Crosse, **Wisconsin**
Executive Committee of the Racine Dominicans; Racine, Wisconsin
School Sisters of Notre Dame - Milwaukee Provincial Council; Elm Grove, Wisconsin
Sinsinawa Dominican Elected Leadership (Central Council); Sinsinawa, Wisconsin